



<b>Meeting</b>	Board
<b>Date</b>	Wednesday, 26 January 2022
<b>Title of report</b>	Family Forum
<b>Purpose</b>	For information
<b>Public/private report</b>	Public
<b>If private, exemption reason (see appendix 1)</b>	Choose an item.
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<b>Appendix</b>	Cafcass Board Family Forum update PowerPoint

### KEY POINTS

- The development of the Family Forum is taking shape. We now have an established group who have developed key priorities for improvement, working with our members and through 'Listen and Learn' conversations with children and families, the key themes from the feedback will drive practice improvement for the children and families we work with in future.

## 1. AIM AND PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide the Board with an update on the Family Forum.

## 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The objective of the Family Forum is to use feedback to better understand how families experience our service and use the learning to improve, and where possible co-create services to improve outcomes for children. A recap on the Family Forum model is provided in the PowerPoint attachment.
- 2.2 Four workshops have taken place with our partners, to consider how we engage with families where we have identified a learning opportunity. We continue to develop our restorative offer for children and families with our partners. Our partners have helped us to create the format for the 'Listen and Learn' conversations with adults. 'Listen and Learn' conversations provide parents with an opportunity to discuss feedback which they have previously given, regarding their experience of our service. These conversations adopt a restorative approach and are therefore separate from other feedback mechanisms currently in place. These conversations have enabled us to invite parents to join us on our journey to establishing the Family Forum.
- 2.3 To date more than 250 complaints have been reviewed and we have held 13 Listen and Learn conversations. An additional 14 parents will be offered a Listen and Learn conversation once they are no longer involved with court proceedings. Unsurprisingly common themes have emerged from Listen and Learn conversations, and these are the areas of practice which the Family Forum would like us to improve.

- 2.4 FJYPB are continuing to support the Family Forum to ensure that the child is always at the centre of our work. Currently there are five FJYPB Family Forum leads who work closely with the Family Forum Facilitator. Alongside the FJYPB, we have undertaken 'How was it for You' conversations to gather feedback from children and young people. We have reviewed 15 child complaints in the last 12 months and to date have held four 'how was it for you' conversations with children and young people.
- 2.5 14 parents and carers have joined the Family Forum and the new members attended an induction workshop in July and August 2021. The first Family Forum meeting took place in September and the members shared their thoughts on the areas of practice which they would like us to focus on over a 12-month period. Based on the themes from the Listen and Learn conversations, the members agreed on three Family Forum priorities in October 2021: 1) early intervention, 2) welcome packs and 3) sharing recommendations. The members attend Family Forum meetings bi-monthly and monthly focus groups to work specifically on the Family Forum priorities. Information on the Family Forum priorities workplan is provided in the PowerPoint attachment.
- 2.6 The Family Forum and 'Listen and Learn' conversations have the potential to generate many learning points for Cafcass and the key themes are discussed at a monthly Learning Review Panel. At the Learning and Review Panel actions are agreed to improve practice across Cafcass and the outcome of these actions are then shared with the Family Forum members. Feedback from the Family Forum members is beginning to have an impact on our practice.
- 2.7 Examples of the Family Forum's impact: 1) based on a Family Forum member's experience, a change in our Managing Attendance Policy will reflect clearer guidance for managers to act more quickly when a Family Court Advisor is on extended annual leave or sick leave, to reduce the amount of unnecessary delay in ongoing proceedings; 2) feedback from a Listen and Learn conversation on the importance of using of interpreters with children when English is a second language, resulted in a discussion in all practice teams on the impact on the child when an interpreter is not offered; 3) a Family Forum member's feedback when we did not recommend a section 7 report for an international relocation application and the impact this had on her family, resulted in this learning point, focusing on the paramountcy of child welfare in international relocation cases, being included in our Learning Bulletin which is circulated to all practice staff. This Family Forum member's feedback will also be fully considered during the review of the Child Impact Assessment Framework.

### **3. KEY STRATEGIC AREAS TO CONSIDER**

Our Strategy sets out our aspiration to be a feedback led organisation. We have been working internally to develop our Feedback aspirations to improve the feedback we receive from children and families, but more importantly to understand what it means and what changes and improvement need to be made across the system to ensure we are able to respond to feedback and improve our services. The Family Forum is a central part of our developing feedback processes, working closely with families and supporting them to design some of the changes we need to make and tracking the impact this has on how we work.

### **4. RECOMMENDATION AND NEXT STEPS**

- 4.1 We are beginning to evidence the impact feedback from the Family Forum has on our practice.
- 4.2 Feedback from the Family Forum will become integral to Cafcass's national learning programme, bringing our key learning into practice to drive change.

### **5. ACTION REQUIRED**

- 5.1 The Board is asked to consider the updated information on the Family Forum.