



Family Justice Young People's Board (FJYPB) Report to the Cafcass Board

Recommendations

1. The Cafcass Board is asked to:
 - i) Consider and where desired, ask for further information on the updates below:

Noteworthy updates since 24th October 2014:

1. The Board have now met with all agencies represented at the Family Justice Board to discuss implementation of the National Charter, including representatives from Wales. The Board is due to meet with Sir James Munby to agree final sign off of the Charter. All agency commitments to be signed off at the following FJB meeting in December and by Minister of Justice. An expectation document has been drafted, which highlights the practical ways that the Charter will be implemented by stakeholders.
2. The FJYPB have now started their court review schedule and have taken part in three reviews so far; North Yorkshire, Leeds and Wiltshire. The next two tours take place in December in Essex and Birmingham. The purpose of the reviews is to look at the user-friendliness of court buildings, facilities and staff, hoping to create more welcoming and supportive court environments for children to attend. It also includes meetings with Judges to consider how they engage with children and young people. A report is produced by a Board member, which highlights key findings and recommendations to ensure the voice of the child remains at the front of the mind of everyone involved. The Board will produce a mid-way report in the New Year.
3. FJYPB board members have been involved in developing the two pilot schemes for judges meeting with children and young people and have contributed to training the judiciary and family court advisors in these areas. The York/North Yorkshire scheme commenced the 1st October 2014 and the Leeds pilot commenced on 1st November 2014. A review of the two pilots will be produced in the New Year.
4. The FJYPB held a recruitment interview day on 22 November 2014. There were 9 successful applicants on the day who now sit on the Board. The Board hope to recruit more members in January 2015, including members from Wales. Liaison is ongoing between the Welsh Government and the MoJ regarding how Welsh board members will be funded.
5. The FJYPB are represented on the Vulnerable Person's Working Party and are currently preparing their written response for this group. HHJ Heaton, a member of this group attended the last FJYPB meeting to hear direct from the board on the issues being considered by the working party.
6. A survey is currently underway with board members collating their views on transparency to provide to the President.
7. Simon Hughes, Minister for Justice attended the morning session of the October FJYPB meeting to hear direct from the board on children meeting judges. He is to attend a further board meeting in February 2015.

8. The FJYPB have prepared an article for the newsletter for Children in Care Councils. There will be a joint meeting between representatives of the FJYPB and CiCCs in the new year to consider how they can work together to take forward a shared agenda.

Sophia Fraser
Associate Board Member

1 December 2014