Re: Freedom of Information Request

Thank you for your email of 19 April 2016. You made the following requests for information:

Does CAFCASS use peer-reviewed academic research as a supporting factor or basis for Section 7 custody recommendations or is it simply based on the FCA's personal impressions of each case? If academic research is considered, please can you draw my attention to what research is considered in forming your recommendations?

Please see below for our response.

Reports are completed by Cafcass when ordered by the court under Section 7 of the Children Act 1989 as part of work after the first hearing in private law cases. Please see the Cafcass Operating Framework (sections 4.19-4.24) which sets out what Cafcass practitioners should have regard to when working on a section 7 report. Cafcass practitioners also use a standard form of report which provides template headings for each subsection.

All Cafcass recommendations are based on professional judgement of how a child’s welfare can best be promoted and safeguarded, with reference to the Welfare Checklist, and all recommendations are case specific.

We hope that you feel your question has been answered effectively. If you are unhappy with the decisions made in relation to your request, you may ask for an internal review to be undertaken. If you are dissatisfied with the way the internal review is handled or with the final decision made at that review about the information released, you are free to contact the Information Commissioner’s office (www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk):
Yours sincerely,

Governance Team
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