



Cafcass National Office
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Your ref: CAF 16-84
Our ref: Gov/CAF 16-84

Tel 0300 456 4000

Re: Freedom of Information Request

Thank you for your email of 16 June 2016. You made the following requests for information:

I want to know and see any policies that CAFCASS follow in order for them to prevent a parent from seeing their child during court proceedings or to understand what framework they use to reach this conclusion?

Please see below for our response.

The role of Cafcass is to assess the child's needs and report to court on how their welfare can best be promoted and safeguarded, with reference to the [Welfare Checklist](#). In private law, Cafcass works within the parameters of the national [Child Arrangements Programme](#).

Our Operating Framework sets out how we meet our responsibilities as a family court social work service, and provides relevant guidance for practitioners when making recommendations to the court in relation to child arrangement orders. This framework can be found at <https://www.cafcass.gov.uk/leaflets-resources/policies-and-templates-for-secs/policies.aspx>.

In particular, you may be interested in sections 2.40 – 2.42, which set out Cafcass' duty to assess risk, and section 4, which gives detail about how we operate in private law cases. Our [Child Protection Policy](#) may also be relevant; it details the requirements placed by Cafcass on staff, relating to the statutory function of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

In response to your request for 'any policies that Cafcass follows in order for them to prevent a parent from seeing their child during court proceedings', it is important to note

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that advice and recommendations provided by Cafcass practitioners to the court are case specific, based on the practitioner's professional assessment of the child's welfare. Their primary consideration will be the safety and welfare of the child, based on their analysis of the unique circumstances of each case. In accordance with Government policy, Cafcass supports children maintaining a meaningful relationship with both parents, where it is safe and in the best interests of the child to do so. Recommendations made by the practitioner are open to challenge at court and it is the court, rather than Cafcass, that makes final decisions in family court proceedings about children spending time with their parents.

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.ico.org.uk):

Post

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Wilmslow,
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SK9 5AF

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Yours sincerely,

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