



FJYPB Update

Cafcass Board Meeting July 2026

Priorities 2025 - 2028



1. Improving children and young people's participation in proceedings.
2. Helping professionals understand how domestic abuse affects children and making sure all types of abuse and harmful parenting are thought about.
3. Making sure children know their rights and keeping a focus on them growing up safe and happy.
4. Keeping the focus on reducing delays across family courts because children need certainty and safe final decisions.

IMPACT FJYPB HAS MADE

Cafcass Board
Meeting – January
2026



Busting Words, Building Trust:
Strengthening Practice Through Language



Word Busting Videos

IMPACT FJYPB HAS MADE

MOJ AND BARONESS LEVITT



FJYPB UPDATE: MEETING WITH BARONESS LEVITT KC (6/5/2024)

OVERVIEW:
Small-group discussion with Baroness Levitt KC (Under-Secretary of State for Justice) on family justice priorities and the role of youth voice in shaping policy.

KEY DISCUSSION AREAS

- Safeguarding in family justice
- Child Focus model in practice
- Coercive control across cultural contexts
- Ministerial engagement and policymaking
- Cross-government collaboration (MoJ/DfE)
- International learning and future partnerships

KEY REFLECTIONS

- Open and constructive discussion
- Strong participation from board members
- Specialist input strengthened responses
- Importance of ongoing stakeholder engagement

TAKEAWAY
Young people's perspectives can meaningfully contribute to high-level family justice discussions and influence future practice.

Family Justice Young People's Board
fjypb



CAFCASS STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2029

What children and young people say is important to them

Meeting my FCA earlier helps me form a relationship and sense of trust, which is so important to me.

See me as an individual and don't fit me into a box - my situation might be more complicated than it looks.

Make sure I don't feel rushed or overwhelmed by how quickly your advice is given to the court.

Make sure the people helping me take my experiences of domestic abuse seriously and explain things in a way I can understand.

Having a relationship with the same social worker is important to me. Foster proceedings don't mean better.



Quality time with me counts more than how often I see you.

Help me feel confident that I'm getting real care and attention, not just being moved through the system.



Family Justice Strategy – Public Law Review



25 years of Cafcass: a celebration



What do children need from Cafcass over the next 25 years?



Keeping yourself and others safe

– FJYPB training (May 2026)



“Thanks for a
good session”



“Good
communication
and discussions”



“New outlook
on keeping
safe”

June FJYPB Meeting



NEWSLETTER

June 2026



THE IMPACT YOU'VE MADE

At the recent FJYPB meeting 13th June 2026 members shared their own PowerPoint slides about commissions they've been part of, showing how young people's voices are influencing meetings, guidance, and practice.

Members talked about key commissions they took part in such as Domestic abuse moderation event and practice reference group, Cafcass Board and Meeting with Baroness Levitt on the child-focused model (pathfinder). The support team also shared a few extra updates, including Ministry of Justice family justice strategy developed with Mutual Ventures and Cafcass Strategic Plan 2026–2029.

Working with Cafcass on What Matters

Theresea Leavy, Director for Private Law Reform, joined the FJYPB meeting to share updates on plans to make courts more child-focused and introduce her background in social work and leadership. She explained that new approaches aim to make sure children's voices are heard earlier through direct conversations and a new "child impact report", helping decisions to be made more quickly and safely based on what matters to children.

Members shared important feedback, highlighting that children's views can change and that it is vital professionals speak directly with them and involve them in decisions, saying "with us, not without us". They also explained how the place children are seen can make a big difference, with schools often feeling uncomfortable, and stressed the importance of offering safe, neutral spaces where children feel able to speak openly and be listened to.

Design of "In My Words" Icebreaker Tool

The "In My Words" interactive tool is being developed to help professionals better engage with children through creative activities like avatar building and icebreaker questions, with members sharing feedback on the types of questions they prefer, such as interests and everyday topics, while raising concerns about questions that feel too personal or not inclusive, and this feedback will be used to create a shorter, more suitable set of questions so children can respond in ways that feel comfortable to them, including writing or drawing.



Knowing our rights in
family justice,
growing up safe and happy



Voice of the Child Conference 2026

Wednesday the
29th of July

