

Family Justice Young People's Board

Annual Review



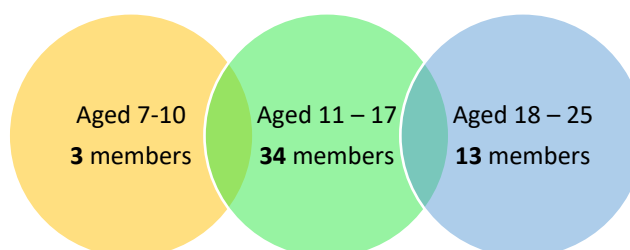
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The 2018 Annual Review gives the Family Justice Young People's Board (FJYPB) an opportunity to reflect on the work which we have carried out over the past year.



The Family Justice Young People's Board - FJYPB

The Board currently has **50** members, two of whom reside in Wales. **40** of the members are female and **10** are male.



As a board we have members from a range of cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. Some of our members also have additional learning and or health needs. Focus continues to be on attempting to recruit more male members.

Due to many of the commissions that the FJYPB are asked to undertake occurring during school term time it is often necessary to use the older board members who have greater flexibility in their availability. The FJYPB's own commissions and workshops are arranged during school holidays and at weekends to allow more of our members to attend. On average the FJYPB undertake **13** commissions per month. Some months or weeks are busier in line with school holidays.



FJYPB Budget

Cafcass funds the running and operation of the Board. This includes the salaries for the co-ordinator and the business service officer, remuneration for members travel, subsistence and the payment for their working and travel hours for each commission.

Some organisations that commission the Board do meet the costs of the work undertaken which enables the board to achieve a greater number of commissions.

What we do

- We have a direct say on the way in which the services within Family Justice are run and on the support they provide to children, young people and their families.
- We are able to represent children and young people's views from across England and Wales to all stakeholders in family justice.
- We share our opinions and experiences in work carried out both within and on behalf of the Family Justice service, including at conferences, training events and responding to Government consultations on request.
- We strive to improve practice e.g. the production of e-learning and top tips for professionals.
- We undertake inspections of various organisations to ensure that they offer a child inclusive service.
- We take part in interviewing new members of staff within parts of the Family Justice service.
- Developing further understanding of the diversity and needs of all young people who go through family courts.
- Attend FJYPB meetings, held on average every three months, usually in London or York.
- We develop and provide feedback on stakeholder documents and policies and work with national organisations on joint initiatives e.g. The Office of Children's Commissioners and the Ministry of Justice.



What we have achieved



Court Reviews	The FJYPB had completed 12 court reviews across England and 4 across Wales. The President of the Family Division, Sir James Munby, further commissioned the FJYPB to review a further nine family courts areas across DFJ areas in England (Central Family Court (London), West London Court, Gloucester, Stoke on Trent, Nottingham, Teesside, Kent, Cumbria and Plymouth). To date the FJYPB have reviewed 8 of these courts.	
	IMPACT:	Courts implement the findings and recommendations following the court visit which assists the court in providing a more child friendly environment and service. The FJYPB are advising on the development of courts of the future.
NACCC (National Association of Child Contact Centres)	The FJYPB have completed 25 supervised contact centre inspections and 3 supported contact centres. We have been further commissioned to review 15 supported contact centres in the north west of England, to provide a training workshop to all volunteers and staff from the inspected centres and to assist NACCC in the re-development of their literature, website and possible app.	
	IMPACT:	All contact centres have been provided with the findings and recommendations for them to implement as part of their NACCC accreditation. Centres are now able to offer a more child friendly environment and service.
	<p>Louis Ruddlesden, Patricia Ross Service Development Managers, National Association of Child Contact Centres commented:</p> <p><i>'The inspections carried out by the Young People were welcomed by NACCC as they enabled our Accreditation Assessors to look at what the Supervised Contact Centres may have overseen. It was clear from the onset that affording the young users of the service to comment extensively on the services offered was going to be of great benefit to all parties concerned. And so it was.'</i></p>	
Cafcass AQR's (Area Quality Reviews)	The FJYPB have been commissioned to be part of the rolling AQRs. These look at the quality of service provided by Cafcass within a specific service area. Members have undertaken training and up to two members will support each AQR Team. The FJYPB will collate Children and Young People's feedback, inspect one office in each identified area and feed our views into the final report	
	IMPACT:	FJYPB directly influence each area's practice and ensure that each area is meeting national expectations and standards of child engagement.
Professionals Training	The FJYPB deliver presentations and workshop training at a variety of professional events such as development days, Local Family Justice Board conferences, judicial meetings and for voluntary agencies. The FJYPB continue to train professionals such as Cafcass staff, social workers, judiciary, court staff and legal professionals on the importance of the voice of the child.	
	The FJYPB have been commissioned by the Judicial College to support with their current e-learning module around the impact of domestic violence on children and young people. We are also currently working with HMCTS to develop a training programme for all court staff around children and young people attending court and an e-learning for Cafcass staff.	
	IMPACT:	Professionals that undertake training delivered by the FJYPB are reminded of the principles of best practice and of how their own practice has a direct impact on the child's experience of the family justice system and what they need to do to improve this. Professionals training also offers the FJYPB the opportunity to raise the profile of the board.

Top Tips	<p>The FJYPB have developed a range of ‘Top Tips’ aimed at professionals working with children and young people. Videos have been produced to distribute alongside the ‘Top Tips’ which will also feature in the updated Cafcass Operating Framework and the FJYPB page on the Cafcass website. The following Top Tips have been developed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with children and young people. • Keeping children and young people informed and keeping them at the centre of their case. • Working with children and young people with a disability. • Working with brothers and sisters. • Respecting children and young people’s diversity. • Working with children and young people affected by domestic abuse. • Working with children and young people with autism. <p>IMPACT: The top tips have been distributed across stakeholders and provide professionals working in family justice with a quick resource that can be shared within staff teams that expresses the direct voice of the child. A number of the top tips have been embedded into the Operating Framework and are available via the following link: www.cafcass.gov.uk/family-justice-young-peoples-board/</p>
Research	<p>The FJYPB have taken part in many research projects with universities. The research projects have included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University of Exeter – Creating pathways for mediation within family justice. • University of London (Birkbeck) - Siblings and Child Law Proceedings. • Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse – Communicating with children and young people. • Coram Children’s Legal Centre – Unlocking Children’s Rights. <p>IMPACT: FJYPB members have a voice in evidenced based research.</p>
Staff Recruitment	<p>FJYPB are regularly commissioned by Cafcass to sit as part of Cafcass staff recruitment panels.</p> <p>IMPACT: Members directly affect the appointment of Cafcass staff who will undertake direct work with children and young people in family law proceedings.</p>
Information For children and young people	<p>The FJYPB have worked with Cafcass, Cafcass Cymru, NACCC, HMCTS and National Family Mediation to ensure that information about the service they deliver is available in child and young person friendly language both in hard copy and online.</p> <p>IMPACT: Children and young people who access services are better informed about the service and in a media that best suits them.</p>
Policy Development	<p>The FJYPB have consulted on national policy reviews and reforms to ensure that they are child centred and understandable for children and young people. These have included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women’s Aid – Developing a policy for children and young people who are living in a domestic violence situation and/or are in a domestic violence relationship. • HMCTS Steering Group – improving services for children and young people. <p>IMPACT: Members are directly able to influence changes in policy to improve the lives of children and young people.</p>
National Charter	<p>The National Charter is a live document so it is regularly reviewed and updated. It aims to reinforce professional practice and sets out the aspirations that children and young people want from family justice services. We are working with all family justice organisations to implement the Charter and to make these aspirations a reality.</p> <p>IMPACT: To date we have undertaken a further update of the National Charter and await sign off by the President of the Family Division. It has been distributed online and through Local Family Justice Boards (LFJBs) and is influencing how agencies work.</p>

Voice of the Child Conference



Our annual FJYPB Voice of the Child conference is completely child-led, organised and run by members of the FJYPB, with an audience of about 200 delegates including senior figures and a range of professions working in family justice.

Our goal is to bring together the key professionals in the family justice world to deliver speeches, participate in a panel discussion and lead workshops that are idea-focused and on a wide range of key family justice topics. The conference also provides the opportunity to interact with and learn from board members and fellow attendees to discuss how to implement best practice when working with children and young people.



The FJYPB held their 5th annual Voice of the Child Conference on 27th July 2017. This year's theme was Diversity and Inclusion. A full summary of the event can be found at: <https://www.cafcass.gov.uk/family-justice-young-peoples-board/>

FJYPB Key Priorities for 2018

1	To work collaboratively with the Department for Education to increase awareness within schools of issues facing children and young people in family justice and of how schools can support them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update and reintroduce the information leaflet for children and young people in schools. • To propose we assist the DFE to develop an e-learning module to raise awareness for educational professionals.
2	To raise awareness of the impact of family breakdown on children and young people's mental health and how professionals can support children and young people build their own resilience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be covered in the 2018 voice of the child conference. • To develop top tips for professionals working with children and young people with mental health issues.
3	To raise awareness of the impact of domestic abuse on children and young people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To continue working with Women's Aid to develop their policy for children and young people. • To support the development and launch of the video about the impact of DA on families with the Judicial College. • To raise awareness in presentations that the FJYPB give in training events. • To continue to publicise the top tips on working with children and young people affected by domestic abuse.
4	Working with agencies to develop understanding and practice as to how and when a child should be involved in their case.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To input into the MoJ strategic children and young person's planning group. • To support magistrates developing their process for when children and young people ask to meet with them. • To develop further Top Tips for practitioners working with LGBTQ children and young people and for working with refugee and migrant children and young people.
5	Explore alternative funding options and ways to make the FJYPB more sustainable.	

Feedback on our work

Anthony Douglas CBE, Chief Executive of Cafcass and a member of the national Family Justice Board and the Adoption Leadership Board

"The FJYPB is a world class children's Board, which has demonstrated high impact at the national and political level over many years, cumulatively so since it was founded in 2005. Made up of 40 young people with experience of the care system and the family courts, the Board has been active in persuading national organisations to change aspect of how they work to make them more child-friendly, child-inclusive and child-focussed e.g., through their programme of court inspections. They have persuaded some of the most senior leaders in the land to change policy to be more child-inclusive e.g., the new proposed Practice direction for children's evidence and child witnesses in family proceedings. They also train family justice professionals such as judges, social workers and lawyers, and they speak at a range of high profile conferences every year. Their reach at the term year point is staggering, starting from zero. They have a highly effective support team in Cafcass and the Board is also value for money in the outcomes it achieves on a relatively small budget. I would say it is one of the most effective user-led Boards of its type, in any sector of public service anywhere in the world".

Jason Dent, Cafcass Service Manager

FJYPB member sat as part of the interview panel for the role of Cafcass Family Court Advisor.

I just wanted to take this opportunity to say thank you so much for helping us out with our recent Family Court Advisor interviews at the Sheffield Cafcass Office – and taking time out to be with us. We were able to offer jobs to three people in the end and fill all our empty jobs so that was a great result for us. A couple of the people we interviewed also told us how impressed they had been with you – and with you being on our interview panel. We feel we were able to get the right people for our jobs with your help.

Sue Cook, Relate Mediation London North East & North Essex.

FJYPB delivered a training workshop for Relate Family Mediation in North London.

The feedback from the group was brilliant. said it was a fantastic presentation and so thought provoking. We all felt we had learnt a great deal and what you both said has made us think hard about how we must appear to the children and young people we see. So we have decided to think about what we heard and how we can improve the experience of the children we see and will meet in January to share ideas and get agreed practices up and running. But some things we can do immediately and your comments on the feel of the building when you arrived really struck home. So, I've spoken to our CEO and the Counselling Manager and we will begin to put some of your suggestions into place. I wanted to thank you for your honest and frank comments; it was exactly what we needed. I believe we will be a far better service after speaking with you both.

Comments from attendees at the Voice of the Child Conference 2017

"Today has been a very inspirational, empowering focus on the active participation of children and young people in all aspects of life. The sentiments of today need to be shared with all professionals working with children and young people".

"Great to hear that everyone is on the same page or working towards it. Nice to hear others compliment your ideas and what we already do. I have gained some good ideas of how to make our practice better!"

"All the members of FJYPB are an inspiration, their experiences and stories will inform my practice and certainly make me think twice about how I am representing them within proceedings."

Contact Us

If you have any questions or queries about the work of the Family Justice Young People's Board or the Annual Review, please contact the general FJYPB mailbox at FJYPB@cafcass.gsi.gov.uk.

Further information about the Family Justice Young People's Board can be found at:

www.cafcass.gov.uk/about-cafcass/how-we-are-organised/family-justice-young-peoples-board.aspx

