



# ANNUAL REVIEW 2018



**Family Justice Young People's Board**

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# THE FAMILY JUSTICE YOUNG PEOPLE'S BOARD

Our **Annual Review** gives us the Family Justice Young People's Board (FJYPB) an opportunity to reflect on the work which we have undertaken during 2018 and the impact of that work.

59  
Members

The FJYPB undertake stakeholder commissions all year round. Often workshops and meetings these are arranged either at weekends or during school holidays to enable board members to attend.

## Types of commissions

- We represent children and young people's views from across England and Wales to stakeholders in family justice.
- We share our opinions and experiences in work carried out both within and on behalf of the family justice system including at conferences, training events and responding to Government consultations on request.
- We take part in interviewing new members of staff across the family justice system.
- We develop practice tools for professionals such as e-learning, videos and top tips.
- We undertake inspections of various organisations to ensure that they offer a child inclusive service.

Budget

Our FJYPB members we represent the voice of children and young people across England and Wales who have experience of family law proceeding or have an interest in children's rights. We are from a variety of cultural and socio-economic backgrounds and we embrace and champion diversity and inclusion.

In Early 2018 the FJYPB opened recruitment and appointed 26 new members to the board and increased membership by 20% from 2017. The FJYPB currently has 59 members and 6 of whom reside in Wales.

Cafcass funds the running and operation of the FJYPB. This budget includes the salaries for the co-ordinator and the business services officer, remuneration for members travel, subsistence and the payment for their working and travel hours for each commission. The Assistant Director Cafcass who has lead responsibility for the FJYPB, contributes time to oversee and support the board.

Cafcass Cymru cover the expenses of the work undertaken on their behalves. During 2018 the FJYPB held an agreement with the National Association of Child Centre to equally share the expenses of a number of child-led inspections of supported contact centre's in the north of England. By receiving funds to cover some of the commissions enables the board to undertake a greater number of commissions.

127  
commissions  
undertaken in  
2018



# WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED

FJYPB Key Priorities for 2018 and the work the FJYPB have undertaken.



1

To work collaboratively with the Department for Education to increase awareness within school of issues facing children and young people in family justice and how schools can support them.

- Members met with **Nadhim Zahawi MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families**. The FJYPB suggested ways in which schools could better support children and young people who are involved to family law proceedings. This included a FJYPB Poster that provides information to children and young people about where they can access on-line support services.
- The FJYPB have requested to attend and present at the Head Teachers Conference in 2019 to increase awareness of the FJYPB and of the issues facing children involved in family proceedings. We are currently waiting for confirmation regarding this.



## IMPACT

- The FJYPB have raised the profile of the FJYPB with the DfE and throughout 2018 have continued to maintain an effective partnership.
- The DfE are currently seeking the support from members regarding policy and strategy.



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.

- FJYPB delivered their Voice of the Child Conference 2018 which focused on **Resilience** *Promoting the resilience of children and young people in family courts*.
- Over the past year, FJYPB members has been working closely with Cafcass to develop and produce an interactive and educational 'voice of the child' e-learning tool for all Cafcass staff. The e-learning not only includes information about the FJYPB but also explores a number of 'real life' scenarios to challenge how good practice can be applied.
- The FJYPB members have continued to develop [Top Tips](#) for professionals working with Children and Young people and are a resource that expresses the direct voice of the child. Each of the Top Tips are available from the FJYPB page on the Cafcass website and they are also available in Welsh via Cafcass Cymru.
- FJYPB members took part in a survey regarding their experiences that was developed by the Department for Education as part of the Public Law Children in Need Review.

## IMPACT

- The FJYPB Top Tips continue to be requested for and available to professionals working with children and young people. This year the FJYPB produced their Top Tips for Separated Parents which have been highly commended and endorsed by stakeholders. Cafcass have included them in their welcome pack letters to parents. Many judicial members have also endorsed the Top and have them available in court to use as a reference for conflicting parents.



### To raise awareness of the impact of domestic abuse on children and young people.

3

- The FJYPB deliver presentations and workshops at a variety of stakeholder events such as: Cafcass staff development days, Local Family Justice Board conferences, judicial training events, where members represent the voice of the child and the FJYPB key priorities.
- FJYPB members have worked with Women's Aid to support the development of a policy for children and young people.
- Those members who have experienced domestic abuse took part in the Department for Education's survey that sought their reviews regarding the possible difficulties in the family courts when a parent, carer or family member has been a victim of domestic abuse.

### IMPACT

- By attending stakeholder events the FJYPB are able to remind professionals of the principles of best practice when working to support children and young people.
- FJYPB members promote the awareness of domestic abuse at the conferences and workshops that they attend and present at.



### Working with agencies to develop understanding and practice as to how and when a child should be involved in their case.

4

- The FJYPB sit as part of the HMCTS Children and Young People's Working Group. This strategy focuses on the commitment of HMCTS to engage children and young people in the design of future court services.
- Meeting the newly appointed **President of the Family Division Sir Andrew McFarlane**. Members provided a history of the FJYPB and updated on more recent achievements. The meeting was also a chance to discuss the FJYPB [National Charter](#) and the possibility of updating the judicial sections of the document.
- Members recently met with **Lucy Frazer QC MP, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Ministry of Justice**. Members shared their views on how parents can resolve their conflict quicker and without needing to go to court.
- The FJYPB continue with their role as part of the Cafcass rolling AQRs. These look at the quality of service provided by Cafcass within a specific service area. Members have undertaken training and a member 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

- The feedback that FJYPB members provided to HMCTS regarding their experiences in court and with court services have been embedded into the plans for the modernisation of family courts.
- Maintaining effective working relationships with stakeholders ensures that opportunities for FJYPB key messages are considered and that the voice of the child is central to government policy and service delivery.
- Through the Cafcass AQR's the FJYPB directly influence each area's practice and ensure that each area is meeting national expectations and standards of child engagement.

*In addition to these the FJYPB have also completed:*

#### Child led inspections

At the request of NACCC, the FJYPB have continued to undertake Support Contact Centre inspections in the north of England.  
HMCTS commissioned the FJYPB to undertake 13 review of family courts from the perspectives of children and young people.

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Each inspection/review results in a star rating and members make a number of recommendations for staff to consider and implement to further develop their service. Each report is also submitted to NACCC or HMCTS and the FJYPB produce an overview of all the Centre's or courts and identify areas of excellence alongside common issues related to service delivered.

#### Training

Presenting at stakeholder conferences, workshops and training events.

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The FJYPB update on the work of the board, reinforce key issues of children and young people involved in family law proceedings and promote the FJYPB priorities of work.

#### Recruitment

Cafcass  
Cafcass Cymru

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Members directly affect the appointment of staff who will undertake direct work with children and young people in family law proceedings. Members have also been involved in the recruitment of senior roles across Cafcass and Cafcass Wales including the appointment of the Cafcass CEO, Deputy Chief Inspector and Head of Operations for Cafcass Cymru.

# Voice of the Child Conference

Our annual Voice of the Child conference is completely child-led, organised and run by members of the FJYPB. Attendees of up to 300 include senior figures and professionals working in and across 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 ideas-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 6<sup>th</sup> Voice of the Child conference on the 24<sup>th</sup> July 2018 and was held in Manchester. This year's theme was **RESILIENCE** *Promoting the resilience of children and young people in family courts.*

A full summary of the event can be found at [www.cafcass.gov.uk/fjypb](http://www.cafcass.gov.uk/fjypb)

*"Always manages to reaffirm the importance of keeping children and young people at the centre of processes involving/affecting them, alongside reinvigorating commitment to this work. It is a truly inspiring conference"*

*"I have never been so engaged in a conference. Emotive, fun, lots of learning. Amazing venue, excellent food and really brilliant. I hope to come next year"*

*"Very impressed by top tips for separating parents and will consider how we embed these in our work"*

*"Amazing conference - thank you so much to the amazing children who shared their experiences with us today. I feel humbled and in awe of their strength, bravery and courage"*

**Cafcass** @MyCafcass · Jul 24  
#VOTC2018 Sir James Munby pictured with FJYPB members at his last ever FJYPB Voice of the Child Conference 2018.

1 6 16

Cafcass Retweeted  
**Anna Callaghan** @AnnaC\_TLC · Jul 24  
@TLC\_Charity were privileged to be part of @MyCafcass Voice of the child conference, organised and delivered by some amazing young people from the Family Justice Young Peoples board. Resilience, passion and general greatness oozing from them all, thank you #VOTC2018

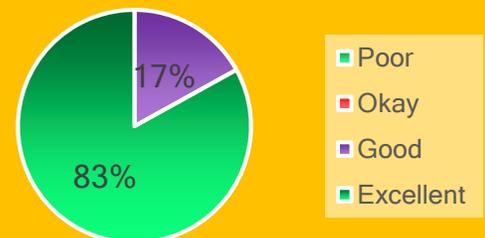
Cafcass Retweeted  
**Sukhchandan P Kaur** @Bhuchal · Jul 24  
Powerful, moving and heart wrenching account of the brave young people who have changed adversity into opportunity. Hats off to you- the real heroes 🇮🇳 #VOTC2018

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Cafcass Retweeted  
**Mandy Kelly** @mrsmkelly · Jul 24  
#inmyshoes The stories of the young people today were sooooo powerful, insightful and inspiring! #believeinchildrenandyoungpeople #VOTC2018 #FJYPB2018 @MyCafcass #beresilient

1 5

How would you rate the overall conference?



# ➤➤ FEEDBACK AND IMPACT OF OUR WORK

*"Your presentation really made us think and helped focus us on issues for the young person involved in court proceedings and gave us clear insight into the impact upon the young person. .... Some of our colleagues have already said how useful your presentation was as well as the day itself due to its immediate relevance to their practice."*

**Ruth Fern - Cafcass Practice Supervisor**

*"The FJYPB are now at the heart of the culture of the family justice system. They are a constant reminder of the needs of children at every stage of the court process - how the timescale of the child should be the driving force in when a case is heard and concluded: how a court works for children who need to be in court; and how decisions are reached in a child's best interests. The FJYPB do so much. They inspect courts: they speak at conferences; they campaign on big issues for children: they sit on recruitment panels; and they produce stellar products like the Top Tips series which is now being cascaded to schools throughout England - they are that good. It is hard to imagine a family justice system without the FJYPB, and their reputation and impact is now spreading internationally. By every definition, the FJYPS is outstanding and they have had another outstanding year".*



**Anthony Douglas - Cafcass Chief Executive Officer**

*Cafcass Cymru has strengthened its engagement with the FJYPB this year and together we have accomplished some very successful and impactful pieces of work. Involving FJYPB members in the development and delivery of our national staff conference stands out for me. It was a very powerful and a unique reminder for our staff of how considering the individuality of each child is vital to the work we do. Another highlight has been the direct involvement of FJYPB members in selecting our new staff, including our Deputy Chief Executive, this helps in ensuring we appoint people who share our child-centred aims and values. I would also like to thank the FJYPB members that made themselves available to contribute their thoughts to our recent inspection by the Care Inspectorate for Wales.*



*The work of the FJYPB and its members is consistently impressive and fueled by their passion for improving service delivery for children across England and Wales; they never fail to make a positive impact.*

*Including the voice of children and young people who have experience of family proceedings is vital to ensuring service developments reflect the need of our young service users and our collaboration with the FJYPB is something we plan to continue strengthening in the future.*

**Nigel Brown - Cafcass Cymru Chief Executive**

Each year the FJYPB is sad to say goodbye to some of our members, this may be due to a change in their circumstances or it may be that they have reached the age of 25 years which is the board agreed retirement age of its members. **In 2018 we said goodbye to five FJYPB members.**

*Thank you for making our last meeting so special. In fact, thank you for making these last 10 years so special. It sounds weird, but I'm actually grateful that I went through everything that I did when I was younger, because without it I wouldn't have ended up on the board, wouldn't have met as many amazing people as I have, wouldn't have experienced the things that I have and definitely wouldn't be the person that I am today. I just want to say thank you again to both of you and Marie and Anthony for making it all possible for us to be able to have the impact that we do.*

**Bethany**

*My time on the board has helped me to grow in so many ways, both personally and professionally. The diversity of the amazing members on the board has taught me that there is a wealth of experience among children and young people in the UK who have had experience of family court proceedings, and that each and every one of them have taken their experiences and have somehow used it to empower them in their unique ways. Being on the board has greatly developed my confidence and presentation skills which has been a great help to me as the vast majority of jobs I've had outside of being on the board have required me to give various presentations to quite diverse audiences. It is hard to put into words the impact the board has had on the family justice system since its conception, but it can be said that it has now become a pillar and a very honest marker of best practice for those who are impacting the lives of children and young people every day.*

*Khadija*

## » FJYPB PRIORITIES 2019

The FJYPB will be focusing on the following priorities in 2019.

1

To work collaboratively with Cafcass on their Children and Young People Strategy and ensuring the voice of the child is embedded into any policy or practice changes.

2

Host the Voice of the Child Conference 2019.

3

To continue to work 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.

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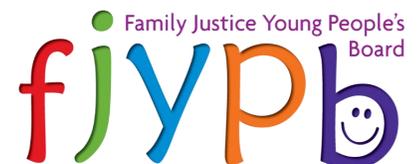
Improving or developing an effective communications strategy to engage all stakeholders to ensure we are able to effectively share our tools, resources and key messages to have a wider impact.

5

To continue to raise the awareness of the effects on family law proceedings on the mental health of children and young people.

## » 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.gov.uk](mailto:FJYPB@cafcass.gov.uk).



Further information about the Family Justice Young People's Board can be found on our webpage on the Cafcass website at: [www.cafcass.gov.uk/fjypb](http://www.cafcass.gov.uk/fjypb)