



# FJYYPB UPDATE

Cafcass Board Meeting January 2025

# FJYPB Support Team



**Leona Edwards**

- FJYPB Business Services Officer



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**Cafcass Principal Social Worker**

- Dawn Goodwin Cafcass **Principal** Social Worker
- FJYPB Lead

# FJYPB Priorities 2024-2025

FJYPB Priority	Workplan update	Impact
<p><b>1. Improving children and young people's participation in and experience of their proceedings.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The FJYPB will continue to work with Cafcass and partners on a range of areas to further amplify children's voices and improve children's experiences.</li> </ul> <p>Links to Cafcass Priorities 1, 7 and 9.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribute to Take Me Seriously programme, supporting Cafcass with script development and animation of 6 information videos. 1<sup>st</sup> video, '<a href="#">Letting you know how we help</a>' and 2<sup>nd</sup> video, 'Sharing Recommendations', completed.</li> <li>Planning underway to create the 3<sup>rd</sup> video in February 2025, with dates to be agreed for co-creation of remainder of programme.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children and young people have access to information that explains Cafcass, the court process, what they can expect to happen, how they will be engaged and be heard, and where they can get support from.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parenting Plan – Cafcass' National Commissioning Team has translated views and feedback from the FJYPB into a new Parenting Plan – Our Child's Plan.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting the 25,000 families who access the Parenting Plan each year to keep their children's best interests and needs at the heart of arrangements. Children and young people will be involved in the creation of their Parenting Plan and will receive a summary of this.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contributed to the redesign of the Improving Child and Family Arrangements (ICFA) service. Child-centred proposal has been included.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children and young people will be clear about the purpose and aims of the ICFA service and will be better engaged throughout the referral and programme stages.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribute to the improvement of children's and young people's experiences of private law proceedings. This includes work being undertaken with:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Private Law Pathfinder</li> <li>Cafcass Working Group; Relationship with Children in private law - FYPB review of child engagement tools and resources has been completed, and feedback has been provided to the working group.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Influence the work undertaken with and for children in private law proceedings. Review and design of resources to be used in direct work with children and young people.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creating a Safe Family Time guide for professionals – this has been completed and shared.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children will be the priority for professionals when considering their family time, both within and beyond proceedings. Guidance will support professionals in enabling children to actively participate in the decisions about their lives, by expressing their own views and tailoring family time to children's individual needs. Professionals will be able to explain to children how and why they think their family time is safe.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To meet with and agree a work programme with Local Authority lead professionals.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Meetings completed with around 40 LA's. Future actions / projects to be taken forward will be agreed early 2025.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Current FJYPB recruitment campaign is focused on children and young people with public law experience.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To work collaboratively with Local Authorities to increase the voices of children and young people who are in public law proceedings (45,000 in 2023-24), and in supporting recruitment to the FJYPB of children and young people with public law experience.</li> </ul>

FJYPB Priority	Workplan	Impact
<p><b>2. Impact of domestic abuse to children and young people, expanding our focus to include all types of abuse and harmful parenting.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cafcass worked with more than 137,000 children in proceedings in 2023-24; it is estimated that around 60% may have experienced domestic abuse. We will continue to work with Cafcass and others to share our lived experiences and to provide feedback and ideas around further strengthening practice where domestic abuse and harmful parenting is known or alleged.</li> </ul> <p><b>Links to Cafcass Priority 2</b></p> <p><b>Links to Family Justice Board Private Law Priority 3:</b> Improve the experiences of children and survivors of domestic abuse involved in private law proceedings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to co-chair the Living With and Experience of Domestic Abuse Practice Reference Group (with SafeLives).</li> <li>VOTC conference 2024 – members created the content for and delivered the conference in July 2024, with a focus on children’s experience and impact of domestic abuse and harmful parenting.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensures the voices, needs and interests of children and young people who experience domestic abuse are listened to, are at the centre of and influential in further developing and improving practice. Children and young people’s input has shaped how work is undertaken with children to understand what life is like for them and improvement in practice builds confidence and trust for children and young people about the quality of this</li> <li>Engaging in discussion with and sharing our experiences and key messages to professionals from across family justice. Improving professionals understanding about how harmful parenting impacts children and young people and setting the FJYPB challenge, for which we will continue to seek feedback about progress and impact.</li> <li>At its peak we had 499 attendees join the conference (an increase of 18% from our conference in 2023) with an excellent feedback rating of 4.79 (out of 5). Attendees shared actions they would take forward in response to our key take-aways and 2024 challenge.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Increasing awareness about family separation and change within schools.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FJYPB members identified a need within schools for discussion about family separation and change.</li> </ul> <p><b>Links to Cafcass Priority 9</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Following discussions with the DfE and introduction to the PSHE Association the FJYPB has helped develop a school lesson plan, to help teachers explore with children the impact of changes in families.</li> <li>Resource has now been completed and was launched on 18/09/24 via the PSHE Association website.</li> <li>DfE is supporting <b>promotion</b>, and aim is to pilot in selected school/s and evaluate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the year ending March 2023 there were an estimated 3.8 million children living in separated families. This school lesson resource, developed with FJYPB members, aims to eventually reach all school aged children in KS3 and will help them have a better understanding of changes in families and of why and when family courts may become involved.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key learning outcomes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Impact of proceedings and family separation on children and young people.</li> <li>Childrens rights when families change.</li> <li>Role of the family courts.</li> <li>The roles of professionals and why and when they become involved.</li> <li>How to support a friend experiencing proceedings.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. Reducing delay in the family courts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue our focus with Cafcass, PRFD, MoJ and others on reducing delay for children who are in proceedings.</li> </ul> <p><b>Links to Cafcass Priority 8</b></p> <p><b>Links to Family Justice Board’s 2024-2025 Public Law Priorities 1, 2 and 3 and Private Law Priorities 1 and 2,</b> centred around reducing delay.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Members will meet with Cafcass, PRFD, MoJ and HMCTS to review actions taken to reduce delay – next meeting is being planned for early 2025.</li> <li>FJYPB attendance at annual regional Performance Boards within Cafcass areas with a focus on delay for children in local areas.</li> <li>FJYPB attendance twice yearly at LFJB Chairs network meetings and annual LFJB conference. The FJYPB has a focus on delay with LFJBs and has challenged them to consider how children and young people’s voices can be best represented within their areas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children and young people are able to challenge key stakeholders on what actions they are taking to reduce delay, holding decision-makers to account.</li> <li>Delay is reducing following the FJYPB challenge set in 2022 around not normalising this.</li> </ul>
<p><b>5. Promoting the uniqueness of neurodivergent children and young people.</b></p> <p><b>Links to Cafcass Priorities 1 and 9</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create Top Tips for working with children and young people who are neurodiverse.</li> <li>This has been completed and was launched at the VOTC on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2024.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This will help children and young people who are neurodiverse, creating Top Tips based on their own experiences and insight. This will also help professionals consider how they can effectively engage children and young people in services and support. We will ask Cafcass staff and other professionals for feedback about the impact of this in their work.</li> </ul>





# ARTWORK

*Quentin Blake*

# Voice of the Child in LFJB's

New Guide  
in 2025



Reeya and Olivia represented the FJYPB at this year's national Family Justice Board Conference.

- + Presentation on Safe Family Time
- + Workshop: Voice of the child in LFJB's
- + Participated in a Q & A session



# OTHER RECENT WORK



## Judges writing to children

FJYPB have been working with the Nuffield and Judiciary to create a 'Judges writing to children' toolkit with the aim of launching this in January / February 2025.

## Adoption England

FJYPB sharing experiences of adoption and relationships - to create resources supporting adults to understand the importance of maintaining relationships with people they care about. Video to be created early 2025.

## Cafcass - Guardians Letters to IROs

We are working with Cafcass to think about what information children and young people want their Guardians to share with their IROs at the end of proceedings.



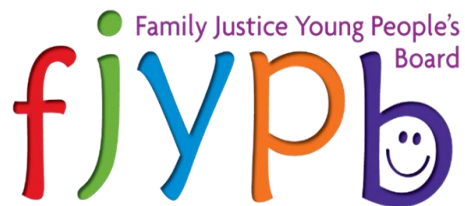
We have an opportunity for more children and young people to join the FJYPB.

We are specifically keen to recruit more members with public law experience.

We have recently ended our application period and will share with you the number of successful applicants once interviews are complete.

**WE ARE  
RECRUITING**

**INTERVIEWS  
February 2025**



# VOICE OF THE CHILD CONFERENCE 2025



**Save the date**

**Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> July  
2025**

*Virtual Event*

