



Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service

2019-20 Annual Report and Accounts

An executive non-departmental public body



Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service

2019-20 Annual Report and Accounts

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HC 735



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We have used the following format of listing proper nouns in full the first time it is used, with the acronym or initialisation then set out in brackets. We then use the acronym or initialisation.

All months should be read as falling within the period this report covers (1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020) unless otherwise specified.

Drawings and artwork: Thank you to the children and young people who have provided artwork for this report. Drawings have been submitted by Nicole Law, Phoenix Smith and others.

Introduction and overview

- Foreword from the Family Justice Young People's Board
- Introduction from the Interim Chair and Chief Executive
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- A child and family journey with Cafcass - public law
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Foreword from the Family Justice Young People's Board

This annual report comes at a time that members of the Family Justice Young People's Board (FJYPB) will remember for many years to come. Even though we hope that unprecedented times such as Covid-19 will never happen again it will certainly have a lasting impact on us, on our families, on our relationships, education, wellbeing and career prospects. As children and young people with direct experiences of family court proceedings, reflection is a skill that has helped us to drive change within the sector. So, reflecting upon the work that we have undertaken over the last 12 months allows us to think about how and where we can make the most difference for children and young people throughout the year ahead.



Amongst other things, our priority is to keep focusing on the voice of the child within all of the work that we do for the family justice system. Through maintaining a child focused outlook, we will be able to strengthen professional practice and crucially, ensure that the FJYPB is involved in all deliberations. Over the coming year the FJYPB hopes to offer suggestions for further sector wide improvements with the essential support from Cafcass.

Through collaborating with the Chief Executive Jacky Tiotto, we have been able to increase our national platform within Cafcass and ensure that we can be seen and heard all over the country! We were afforded the opportunity to join her leadership roadshow journey and bring together key members of the senior leadership team. Members assisted with speakers, hosted quizzes and importantly showed our friendly faces. This was a great opportunity for us to understand some of Cafcass' challenges and provide suggestions for how they might be tackled so that children and young people are always heard.

Another key commission for us has included assisting Cafcass to develop their organisational strategy. This involved us taking part in 'keeping it real' sessions with senior Cafcass leaders and was our opportunity to ensure that Cafcass remains accountable to the delivery of its organisational priorities, and that these will inevitably have a positive impact on all the children and families that Cafcass works with far beyond the next 12 months. Not only has this ensured that our messages and priorities are circulated throughout the organisation, but we could be sure that the content and explanation of the approach taken was clear and meaningful for children. Also, in relation to the strategy, we have been an instrumental voice when discussing diversity and inclusion and how the individuality of all children is recognised and embedded within current and future practice.



We all hope to continue to promote our messages nationally through the Family Justice Board and we want to ensure that everyone is aware of how to contact us, commission us and keep up to date with our progress and our work. For example, through the FJYPB Champion initiative there is a mutual point of contact for each Cafcass service area and we are looking forward to strengthening this communication route. We are equally eager to assist with local practices and service development ideas. Through our work, children and young people have a presence in family justice thinking. We feel respected to influence decision making and so are always pushing for more.

Recruitment is another area where we are keen to increase our work. It has certainly been rewarding to have a board member sit on internal recruitment panels and contribute towards such essential decision making for the future achievement of Cafcass. However, we aspire to escalate our role within the recruitment process in relation to attracting recruits too.

The Department for Education is one of our key partners. In 2019, we were commissioned to produce a poster to be circulated within schools. Some of our members reported feeling unsupported by their schools when they were in proceedings as if it did not affect their education. Others felt that school was a place with caring and thoughtful staff members who were happy to listen to them. So, the purpose of this commission was to signpost children during proceedings to someone independent who would listen. This was a success because we were able to actively make changes and do something that some of our members felt was missing from their experience.

Being afforded these valuable opportunities has also provided us as board members with the important time to spend together and share our experiences, to help each other and bring together innovative ideas.

As members, we provide support for each other and despite our individual experiences we have a shared passion to make family law proceedings the most effective that they can possibly be, given the emotional reality and unique dynamics of every single child and their family.

The next 12 months will inevitably bring its own hurdles and pressures having already recognised the implications of Covid-19 upon children currently within proceedings. We are more determined than ever to ensure that the voice of the child is heard in every family court case. This will by no means be an easy task, but we want to continue to work alongside and challenge Cafcass and their staff to listen to our unique contributions. We will also strive to ensure that the whole system recognises our suggestions and continues to seek sector wide improvements.



Introduction from the Interim Chair and Chief Executive



Sally Cheshire
Interim Chair



Jacky Tiotto
Chief Executive

“The best way to understand children and families is to listen to them.”¹

We introduce this report to you at the conclusion of a year which has been characterised not just by our own internal organisational changes, but also by unrelenting record demand for our services and a once in a lifetime crisis – the global pandemic that is Covid-19. Each of these pressures has presented opportunity in addition to challenge, but common to them all has been the need for us to prioritise and focus on both our vision and our purpose:

“For every child whose future is decided by the family courts, we provide a service that prioritises their safety, their voices and their needs, taking full account of their families and those connected to them.”

As a new Chief Executive and Interim Chair team, our first words here must be in tribute to our 2,190 staff who have shown themselves throughout the challenges of this year to be truly remarkable.² Between them they have served 141,253 children during 2019-20, managed 63,747 new private and public law cases, worked on 22,693 section 7 reports requested by the family courts, attended or contributed to 210,705 hearings, managed 1,446 complaints, received 743 compliments and transformed over four days in late March from an organisation with 33 staffed offices across the country to being fully remote with the capacity to cover each and every one of our functions. We and our Board are so proud to lead a team of individuals relentlessly committed to supporting families, understanding the experiences of children wherever they are living and striving every day to make a positive difference through our contact. Thank you!

We made mention at the start of this introduction of the opportunities that have presented themselves to us during the year. These include our new three-year strategy (published in September) that has required us to give strong thought and leadership about where we can make the most and the best difference to the children and families we serve. Our partnerships across the family justice system, already effective, have improved further during the Covid-19 crisis as we work together to share system leadership and plan for system recovery. Our performance, which despite pressure at a level not seen before, has remained strong and innovative. These opportunities comfortably partner the challenges which lie ahead and which will benefit from brief reflection here.

¹ Derived from Ralph G. Nichols - scholar and author. Known as the 'Father of listening' and a major force in our understanding of the complexities of listening behaviour and listening research.

² Refer to table on page 81 for full staff breakdown



We are determined to sustain the effectiveness of our work to support children and their families in the family justice system and to build on our existing strong performance. Our strategic plan sets out how we intend to do this by building further on our practice and delivery systems. Key to our improvement will be the development and implementation of a new practice framework (matched by a new case management system) designed to elicit family strengths at the same time as supporting our social workers to set out clear assessments about risks to children and the reasoning for their recommendations to the courts. Our work and priorities will be more strongly informed by feedback (including a review of our complaints process) that we will seek and then use to understand and learn from children, families, carers and other professionals.

The investments we have made in making our working environment the best it can be in terms of both professional and technical support have in turn enabled us to act quickly and decisively as the nation moved to the Covid-19 lockdown at the end of March 2020.

Such investment will remain a priority in the years ahead, led by our forward-looking business services and technology teams, who are so vital to the delivery of our frontline social work.

Additionally, during 2019-20, whilst our staff turnover was 10.3%, comparing well against other social work employers, we intend to prioritise retaining the talent we have, attracting new people to join us and using our footprint as the largest employer of social workers in England, to have more influence and voice particularly in the reform of family justice.

In respect of our strategic focus on demand and pressure, this report sets out the detail behind and the impact of the overall growth of 2.5% we saw during 2019-20. Whilst there has been a reduction of 3.8% in care applications during the year, there have been increases in other types of public law work,³ meaning that the system has remained at the record high levels of previous years. Private law demand has increased in year by 4.2% overall with forecasts of a continued rise of 7.9% during 2020-21. This builds on the 12.8% rise over the last three years. It is desperately sad and difficult for children when their families have to use the family court to make decisions about their futures. Increased demand of the volumes we have seen in this past year and which are forecast for the foreseeable future, also make it very difficult for courts and Cafcass to be as effective as they wish to be for children. The private and public law working groups established by the President of the Family Division have now reported.⁴ Their recommendations are significant and forward looking. Both call for much needed radical change and brave system leadership. We are committed to managing demand as a strategic priority and as an integral aspect of wider family justice reform.

We intend when we come to write our annual report for 2020-21, to describe positive changes to our ways of working that were required as a result of the Covid-19 crisis and made sense to continue. In addition, we intend that the recommendations of the President's working groups will have been tested and implemented with better arrangements to manage demand agreed and being trialled. Our priority in the year ahead will be to protect our people, and the quality of their work with the children we serve, from the risks associated with continuing high demand and work that cannot be allocated. We will work closely with our government sponsors and our partners, sharing our thinking and our actions whilst speaking loudly and responsibly about the need for urgent action to find family solutions for private family disputes about children's futures outside of the family courts.

3 Cafcass received 5,351 public law non-care cases in 2019-20 (+3.3%). This category includes a wide range of application types such as discharge of care order, supervision (section 31), revocation of placement and non-agency adoption.

4 <https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/PRIVATE-LAW-WORKING-GROUP-REPORT.pdf>
<https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Public-Law-Working-Group-Child-Protection-and-Family-Justice-2019-1.pdf>



We began this introduction with a reference to the importance of listening as a means of understanding people. The Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 established Cafcass as a service independent of the courts and local authorities. We are proud that we hold the privilege and responsibility of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in respect of family proceedings about them. In order to serve them properly, we have to continue to listen and listen well. In so doing, we believe that we will be able to learn from them, to be kind and to make the best possible assessment of their best future interests.

Our final thanks go to all members of the Family Justice Young People's Board whose help and wisdom we continue to need and use, to Julie Brown, our Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Resources who ably led the organisation in its transition of the last year and to Christine Banim, our National Service Director who retires this year and whose leadership has been critical to many Cafcass successes. Last year saw the departure of our former Chair, Edward Timpson and three board members. Edward stood down following his successful re-election as a Member of Parliament and Francis Plowden, Fay Selvan and Stuart Smith served us diligently and well for the maximum time permissible. The Cafcass Board is a fundamental and highly effective aspect of our governance. Committed and experienced members work with us to provide challenge, guidance and support. We are indebted to those who have left us but delighted to welcome Helen Jones, Eileen Munro and Rohan Sivanandan as new board members. This is going to be another productive year - one which excites us both but which is also underwritten by our commitment to be the best leaders we can be. Predictably the scale and nature of this crisis has had a profound and long-lasting impact on both our organisational arrangements and our capacity to support children and families in the present and long into the future. At the time of writing, we are operating remotely in respect of all of our work, our staff availability is largely unaffected, we are processing applications and allocating work to our Family Court Advisers. A short summary of overall impact is set out on the following page.

Signed: Sally Cheshire CBE, Interim Chair of the Cafcass Board



Signed: Jacky Tiotto, Chief Executive of Cafcass



The impact of Covid-19

Early in 2020 we became aware of the emergence of Covid-19 and we understood that Cafcass needed to develop a Covid-19 plan in the event that it became a pandemic. Our Incident Management Team (IMT) met on a regular basis and on 2 March we issued the plan to all staff, alongside briefings for managers. We also established a dedicated intranet page to host frequently asked questions (FAQs).

A daily Gold command structure was established from 16 March. Regular opportunities to hear about the operational impact across all regions were also set up and (at the time of writing) continue to run alongside our Gold command. On 20 March, all 33 Cafcass offices were closed to staff and to children and families. After this date, without exception, all work was carried out remotely.

Impact on our practice and the children and families with whom we work

During the early phases of social distancing and particularly when ‘lockdown’ was imposed, we were overwhelmed with enquiries about the individual circumstances in which families found themselves. The most prevalent concern related to contact arrangements for children where parents were separated. We also heard of the same anxieties for children in the public care system whose contact with family networks and carers was being disrupted. We issued guidance for families and worked closely with the Family Justice Young People’s Board to produce guidance for children.⁵ At the same time, guidance about contact was issued by the President of the Family Division and we established a daily meeting to discuss the administration of family justice, the impact on families and children, particularly with the advent of remote courts and remote engagements with social workers and guardians.⁶ Those discussions and the associated planning continue at the present time and are regularly reviewed as issues arise.

The average number of cases received by Cafcass was consistently high during quarter four of the reporting year. This changed significantly during March 2020 when the number of people infected with Covid-19 exceeded 10,000 in the UK (13 March), as services began to close and social distancing became mandatory (23 March).

After an initial system ‘shock’ which saw Cafcass’ demand reduce significantly from 16 March 2020, daily levels have recovered in respect of public law and are operating at about 90% in respect of private law.

We anticipate demand will return fully to previous levels during 2020-21 and will be complex to manage given the likelihood of backlogs from lower rates of applications during the early phase of the crisis and the impact of adjournments, delayed and unscheduled hearings which we know are already building. Positively, the remote family justice system is still able to operate effectively and at the time of writing hearings are continuing to be undertaken remotely using technology. At the time of writing approximately 80% of these remote hearings have been conducted via telephone and 20% via video technology such as Skype.⁷

5 <https://www.cafcass.gov.uk/covid-19/advice-for-parents-and-carers-on-covid-19/>
<https://www.cafcass.gov.uk/covid-19/young-people-advice-on-covid-19/>

6 https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Presidents-Guidance_Covid-19-2.pdf

7 As at 31 March 2020



Impact on our people

Cafcass staff have undoubtedly been affected by Covid-19 but it is remarkable that the overall proportion of the workforce who have had absence through illness or other reasons due to Covid-19 has only been 3.5%.⁸ Our colleagues have been quick to adapt to remote working. They have been innovative finding ways to secure the views and experiences of children and their families and to work alongside them. Our first priority in this crisis has been to protect our colleagues and to enable them to work effectively whilst they are safe. This remains our priority, since without a workforce able to operate to capacity, we are not able to serve children, their families or the courts.

Partnership and recovery planning in the family justice system

The Covid-19 crisis has necessitated closer and more frequent work with all our partners as we respond to both the short and longer term issues that arise. Our experience is that this has been effective and has enabled us to share information and to make decisions quickly in the best interests of children, their families and carers. Whilst we continue to address current issues, we are also focused on the need to start managing recovery which will undoubtedly take longer as we manage existing and backlogged demand. A family justice planning group has been established to map out recovery priorities and to plan together accordingly. Local authorities, the Judiciary, Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS), the Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS), the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), the Department for Education (DfE), Cafcass Cymru and Cafcass will be working collaboratively and efficiently to enable access to family justice and in our own case to prioritise the voices, experiences, wishes and feelings of the children who we represent.

⁸ At the time of writing (31 March)



Helping children and their families

Cafcass stands for Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service. Cafcass independently advises the family courts in England about what is safe for children and in their best interests.

We operate within the law set by Parliament (Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000) and under the rules and directions of the family courts. Our role is to:

- Safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Give advice to the family courts.
- Make provision for children to be represented.
- Provide information, advice and support to children and their families.

We may be asked by the court to work with families in two main areas:

- **Private law**, including arrangements for children after parents have divorced or separated. In these cases, a Cafcass social worker will be appointed by the court to act as a Family Court Adviser (FCA). Their job is to provide information to the court about what is needed for a safe decision to be made about arrangements for who the child lives and spends times with and what is in their best future interests.
- **Public law**, including care applications where a local authority has serious concerns about the safety or welfare of a child. In these cases, a Cafcass social worker will be appointed by the court to act as a children's guardian. Their job is to work alongside the local authority to make sure that the plan for that child is in their best interests and will secure a safe outcome for them.

Cafcass supports over 140,000 children every year by understanding their experiences and speaking up for them when the family court makes critical decisions about their futures. Throughout the year, we worked with both children and families that are new to Cafcass and with children and families who have ongoing applications from previous years. We refer to 'new children and families' throughout this report. This refers to applications that opened between 1 April 2019 - 31 March 2020.

Cafcass governance

We work to strategic objectives agreed by our sponsor department, the Ministry of Justice, and contribute to wider government objectives relating to children. We also set our own strategic plan that describes what we are aiming to achieve. Our strategic priorities align against three specific areas; practice, people and partners. For more information on our strategic intentions, see section 4 of this report.

We are a non-departmental public body accountable to the Secretary of State at the Ministry of Justice. Our Chief Executive is supported by five directors. Our Corporate Management Team (CMT) is accountable for the leadership of the organisation and is in turn accountable to the Cafcass Board.⁹ Our Operational Management Team (OMT), led by the Director of Performance, meets monthly to manage and oversee the quality of practice of Cafcass operational teams. Monthly service area meetings take place to cascade information from OMT and CMT to all staff. We also have a range of internal boards and groups managed by CMT. For more information about our organisational structure please see section 6 of this report.

⁹ See section 6 for membership and functions

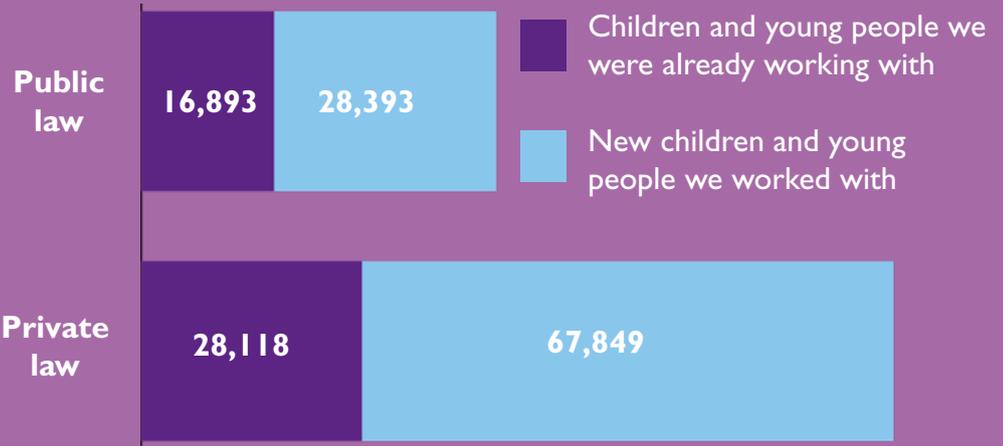


2019-20 in numbers

We worked with



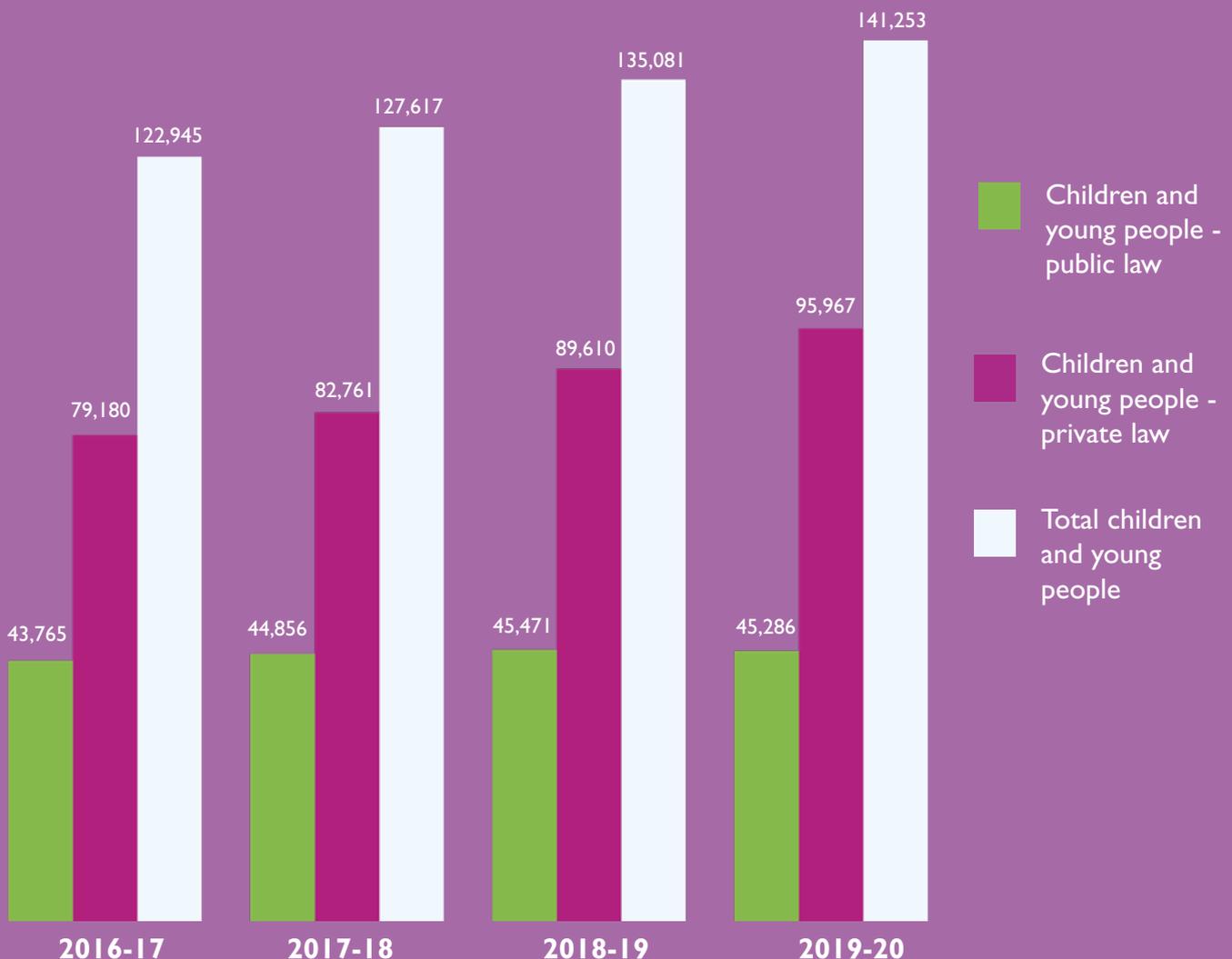
children and young people



We worked with 4.6% more children in 2019-20 than in the previous year: a small drop (0.4%) in children involved in public law cases; and a substantial increase (7.1%) in children involved in private law cases*.

The increase this year would have been even higher if the flow of applications received by Cafcass from the courts had continued at the same levels before the Covid-19 pandemic. Overall, Cafcass received 15-20% fewer new cases in March 2020 than expected based on the levels of demand in the last quarter of previous years. Daily demand levels in the second half of March were a record low.

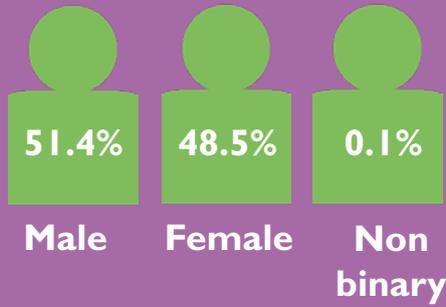
Change in number of children and young people worked with 2016-17 - 2019-20



*More in-depth analysis of the changes in the volume of our work in 2019-20 can be found on page 117 in the appendix of this report.

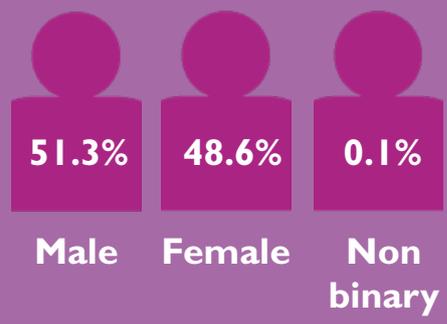
Characteristics of the children and young people with whom we work - new cases

Public law



We received 63,747 new public and private law cases in total, relating to 96,242 children. There are important differences between the age profile of children involved in new cases in public and private law. New public law cases involved a much higher proportion of infants under 1; and a higher proportion of children aged 10 and above compared to private law cases. The increasing rate (in comparison with the underlying population of children) at which local authorities are issuing care proceedings involving infants and newborns has been the subject of important national research using our data and we will be releasing more routine statistics on this issue in the coming year.

Private law



*not disclosed includes not recorded, unknown and refused.

Our work with new children and families in numbers - public law



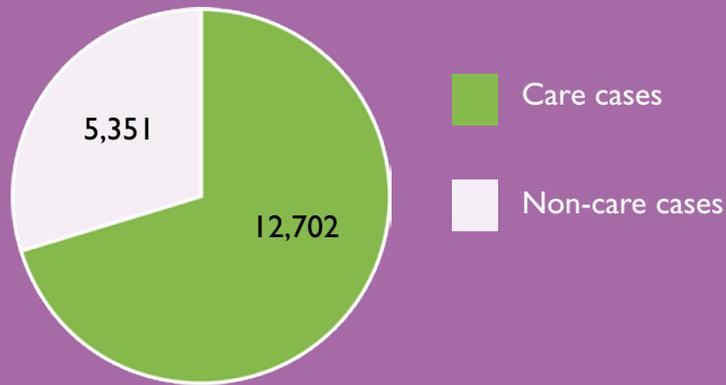
public law case demand in 2019-20



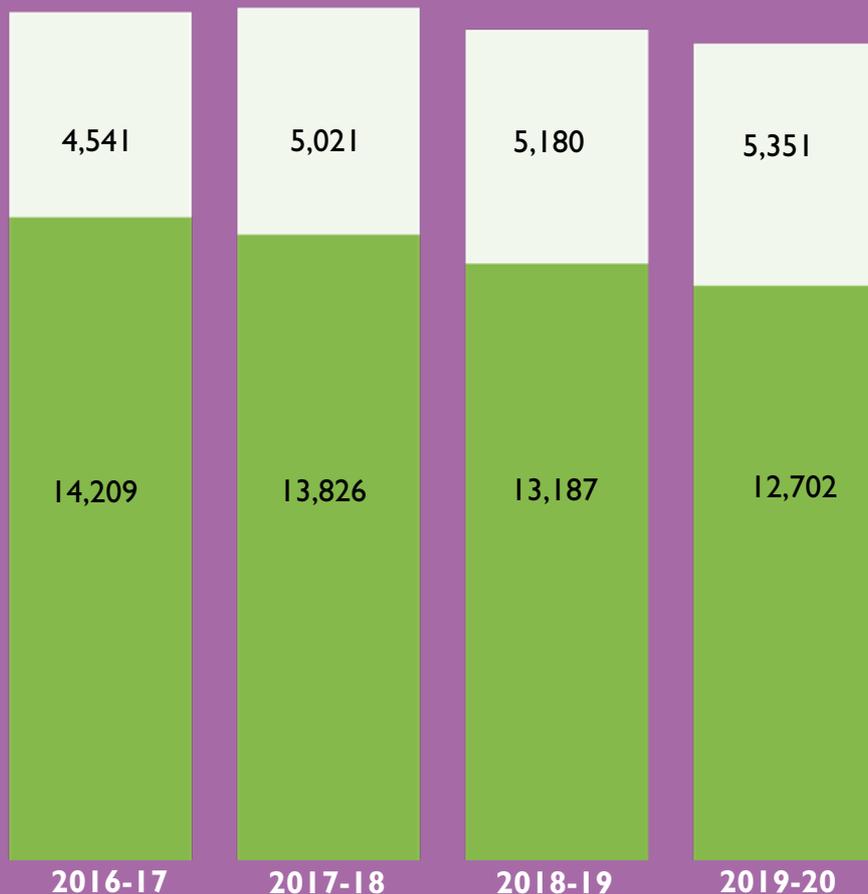
public law applications received in 2019-20

We worked on 18,053 new public law cases this year, involving 24,488 applications, 13,060 of these were section 31 care applications. An individual case can involve more than one application – either because different arrangements are proposed for individual children in the family or because of the stage of involvement with a family. For example, an application for an Emergency Protection Order may subsequently become a care application. The individual applications in a case relate to ‘section 31 care arrangements’ or to ‘other public law’ matters. These are described in the glossary.

Care and non-care cases 2019-20



Comparison of care and non-care cases 2016-17 - 2019-20



A child and family journey with Cafcass - public law

Billy is 10 and lives with his mum and dad. The local authority has judged that Billy cannot be safe with his parents, and have made a **care application** for him to be a looked after child.

Cafcass received 13,060 care applications this year, relating to 21,061 children and young people.

After receiving the care application, a Cafcass **children's guardian** is appointed. The children's guardian is an independent person who is there to help the court decide what is best for Billy.

The **children's guardian** reviews the local authority's work, speaks to Billy and meets with his parents and close family. It is the guardian's role to understand what is best for Billy and to ensure his voice is heard.

The **court makes a final decision** about what's best for Billy based on the information and evidence provided by the children's guardian and local authority.

The average length of time it took for Cafcass to complete care and supervision cases in 2019-20 was 34 weeks, up one week from the previous year.

The court thinks it is best for Billy to live with his grandma until a point where it might be safe for him to live with his parents again.

On average, each public care case had 6.1 hearings in 2019-20.

The **court issues an order** for Billy to live with his grandma and still be able to see his parents on a regular basis.

Our work with children and families in numbers - private law

45,694

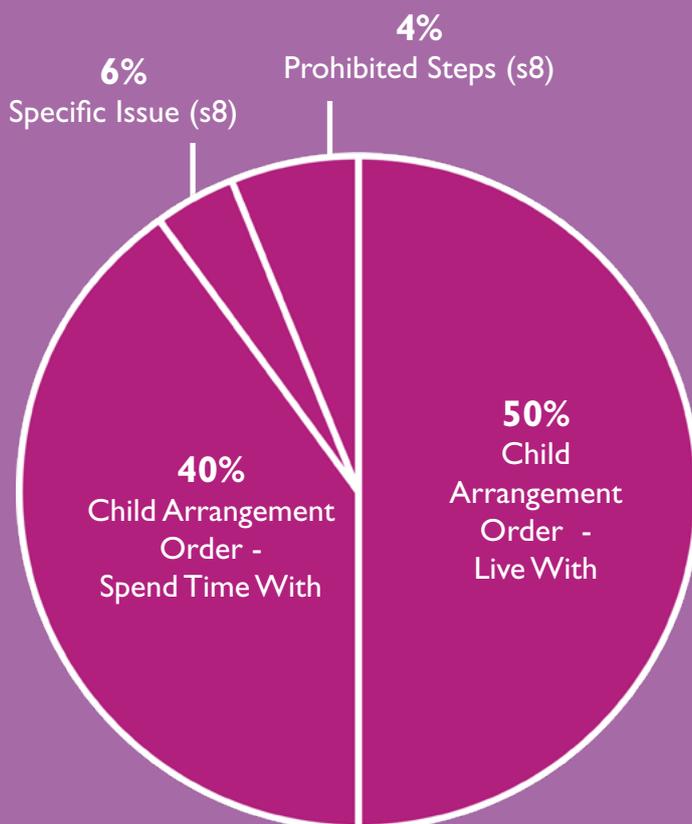
private law
case demand
in 2019-20

78,755

private law
applications received
in 2019-20

We worked on 45,694 new private law cases this year, involving 78,755 applications. Of these cases, 36,569 (80%) related to child arrangements: this includes who the child lives with, and who they spend time with. A small proportion related to 'prohibited steps' or other 'specific issues' (9%) such as passport applications. A smaller minority (1,120 cases) related to the assignment of parental responsibility, mostly applications for 'family and friends' care through a Special Guardianship Order. Other applications assigning parental responsibility related to Parental Orders which transfer parental responsibility following surrogacy, and other applications for parental responsibility often involving step-parents.

Applications for child arrangements



Child Arrangement Order - Live With	20,160
Child Arrangement Order - Spend Time With	16,409
Specific Issue (s8)	2,470
Prohibited Steps (s8)	1,545

Applications for the assignment of parental responsibilities



Special Guardianship (s14A)	525
Parental Order (s54 HF&E)	369
Parental Responsibility (s4)	226

Section 7 reports

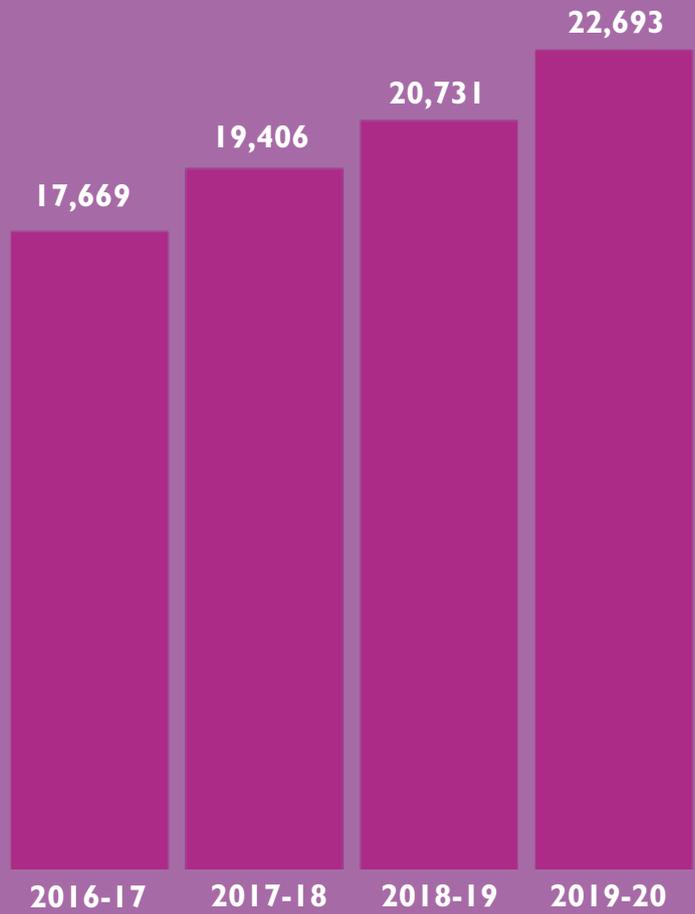
This report is ordered by the family court and makes either Cafcass or the local authority investigate all the circumstances of the family, often including the wishes and feelings of a child or young person, and send a report to the court.

22,693

Section 7 requested
2019-20

Over the last three years from 2016-17 to 2019-20, the number of section 7 reports ordered by the courts and the appointments of a children's guardian under rule 16.4 increased to a greater extent (+29% and +54% respectively) than the overall increase in private law case demand (+13%).

Comparison of section 7 reports 2016-17 - 2019-20



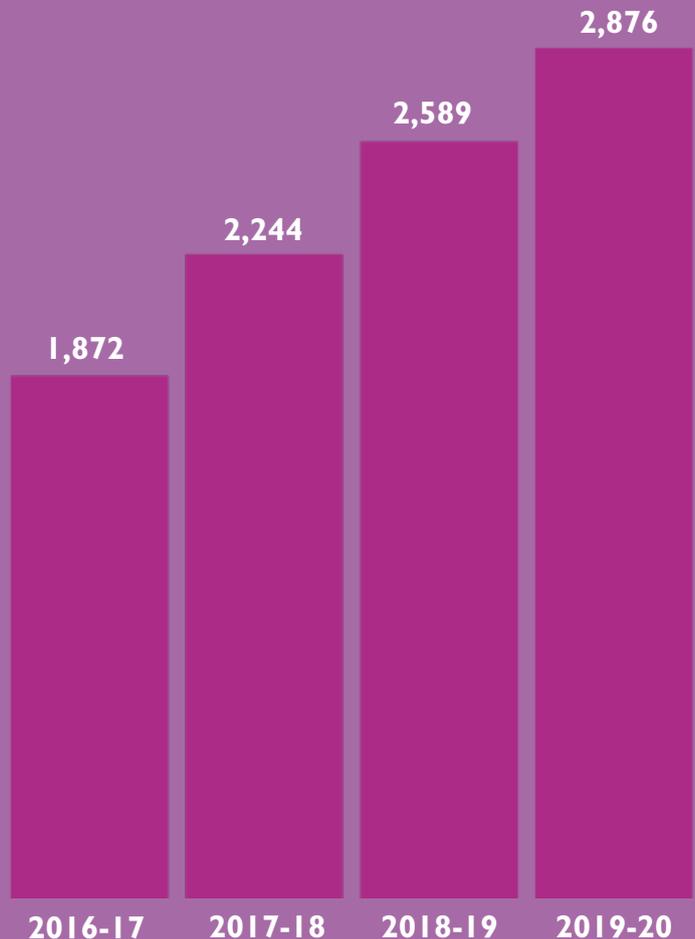
Comparison of rule 16.4 cases 2016-17 - 2019-20

Rule 16.4 cases

These are particularly difficult or complicated family court cases where the judge decides to make the child a party to the case under rule 16.4 of the Family Procedure Rules 2010. A Cafcass guardian will be appointed to represent the child in the case.

2,876

Rule 16.4 case
demand 2019-20



A child and family journey with Cafcass - private law

Martha is eight years old and lives with her mum. Her parents, Jerome and Penny, have been separated for two years and Martha has not seen her father for several months. Jerome has applied for a **Child Arrangements Order** in order to establish more regular contact with Martha.

35.9% of the private law applications we received in 2019-20 related to the time a child spends with a parent (child arrangements orders).

We wrote 45,711 safeguarding letters and completed 96,243 Level 1 police checks in 2019-20.

The family court asks Cafcass to find out more. Cafcass carries out police and local authority checks on both parents, and a Family Court Adviser (FCA) from our Early Intervention Team speaks to each of the parents separately. All this information is written in a safeguarding letter, which is provided to the court.

Cafcass reports that the level of parental conflict means that Martha's needs are not being prioritised. She is becoming very anxious about her divided loyalties. The court orders Cafcass to complete a section 7 report to determine what is best for Martha. A Cafcass FCA speaks to both parents and Martha to understand what they would like to happen, and makes a recommendation to the court.

There were 22,693 section 7 referrals in 2019-20.

After submitting the section 7 report, it becomes clear to the court that the issues are complicated and difficult to resolve. The court rules that Martha should be independently represented to ensure the focus remains in her best interests. A children's guardian is appointed under rule 16.4 to do further work to understand what is best for Martha, and to appoint a solicitor to represent her in court.

We received 2,876 new rule 16.4 appointments where a children's guardian was appointed, in 2019-20.

The Cafcass guardian identifies the parents could be eligible for the **Cafcass Positive Co-Parenting Programme (CPPP)**, to which the judge agrees.

During the 12-week CPPP, Cafcass works with the family over several structured sessions to improve communication between the parents and voice Martha's wishes and feelings through a message to them both. The sessions help Martha's parents determine what will be different in their relationship with Martha going forward.

Martha's parents agree arrangements for Martha to spend time with her father in a way that works for her, and also promise not to involve her in their arguments. The Cafcass guardian writes a report to the court to inform them of the agreement.

CPPP has been used in a small but rising proportion of rule 16.4 cases, with results so far showing on average shorter case durations.

The court confirms the new arrangements for Martha at a final hearing, and the case is closed to Cafcass.

How we work with partners

Cafcass is one of a number of organisations working together to administer family justice so partnership is essential to every aspect of our work. We regularly engage with a range of partners at local and national level to learn from each other, and to improve how the family justice system operates for children and families. In all our relationships with partner agencies our role is to provide independent advice and challenge in the best interests of children.

In working with children and families we are ordered to undertake assessments by the courts. We work closely with the judiciary and HMCTS to ensure information flows smoothly between our organisations and to complete work within agreed timescales. We also work closely with local authorities to understand their previous involvement with families and any concerns they may have about a child's safety and welfare. In public law, where the local authority will have brought the application to court, our role is to independently seek to understand and review the local authority's analysis about the safety and welfare of a child. We have to consider the extent of significant harm, whether thresholds have been met, and to assess whether the care plan and the assessment on which it has been based are sufficient to meet the child's need, addressing specifically their own wishes and feelings alongside their safety and welfare. In this work, we are bound by the requirements of the Children Act 1989 and the need to satisfy ourselves that the safety and welfare of a child is at the centre of all assessments and plans. We have to be sure that their upbringing with their family and/or people connected to them has been properly considered in the plans about their futures. Where we recommend that further work is required or we disagree with the care plan, we work constructively with the local authority and courts to challenge respectfully and to agree the timeframe and specifics of the additional work.

We are proud to be the largest employer of children's social workers in England and hold regular engagement meetings with Ofsted, Social Work England, trade unions and social work training providers to promote the quality and standing of the profession. We are supported by a number of social work agencies and Cafcass Associates to ensure we have sufficient capacity to meet the needs of an ever-increasing number of children and families coming before the courts. We provide all locum staff and Cafcass Associates with the necessary support and guidance to complete their work in accordance with Cafcass quality standards.

We have a collaborative working relationship with a range of commercial suppliers to provide a modern working environment for our staff supported by enabling technology, and a friendly and accessible place for children and families to visit when they are interviewed.

On behalf of the MoJ, we additionally lead the procurement and delivery of contracts to offer a variety of services and programmes to families, as directed by the courts. These include expert assessments, DNA tests, Separated Parents Information Programmes, Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Programmes and interventions to support and manage contact arrangements.



At a local system level, our eight assistant directors, their heads of practice and service managers are responsible for managing relationships with designated family judges, local authority directors of children services, and other local partners. They meet with each on a regular basis to agree local working arrangements, including involvement in any local pilot programmes. Cafcass is represented on all local family justice boards in England, and chairs 13 of them. In addition, our senior staff sponsor six boards. As part of our contribution to these local boards, Cafcass supplies a quarterly data report setting out recent data and detail on indicators that may help highlight and explain variations in performance and case outcomes.

At a national level we are represented on the Family Justice Board, Adoption and Special Guardianship Leadership Board, and the Board of the Nuffield Family Justice Observatory. We work especially closely with our sponsor department, the MoJ, to ensure we deliver our statutory functions efficiently and effectively with our resources. We also ensure the feedback and learning from our direct work with children and from our wider operational experience feeds into the development of national policy in the MoJ and beyond. We have particularly close working relationships with the DfE on child protection and on children's social care workforce issues and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) on child maintenance and the reducing parental conflict programme.

We increasingly engage with a wide range of voluntary sector organisations who work with children and families to share intelligence and learning on the needs of children and families, with a view to improving our professional systems and practice and to influence national policy. Our quarterly newsletter is sent to in excess of 400 organisations and receives positive feedback.

We hold open board meetings twice a year and our papers are published. These meetings are attended by civil servants working in a range of departments concerned with family policy, voluntary sector organisations providing support to children and families, trade unions, academics and regulators. This is an important part of our commitment to be open to feedback and influenced by the system in which we work. It is our strong intention to ensure that these opportunities continue alongside strong and engaging partnership with colleagues and professionals who have the interests of children, families and carers at the centre of their work.

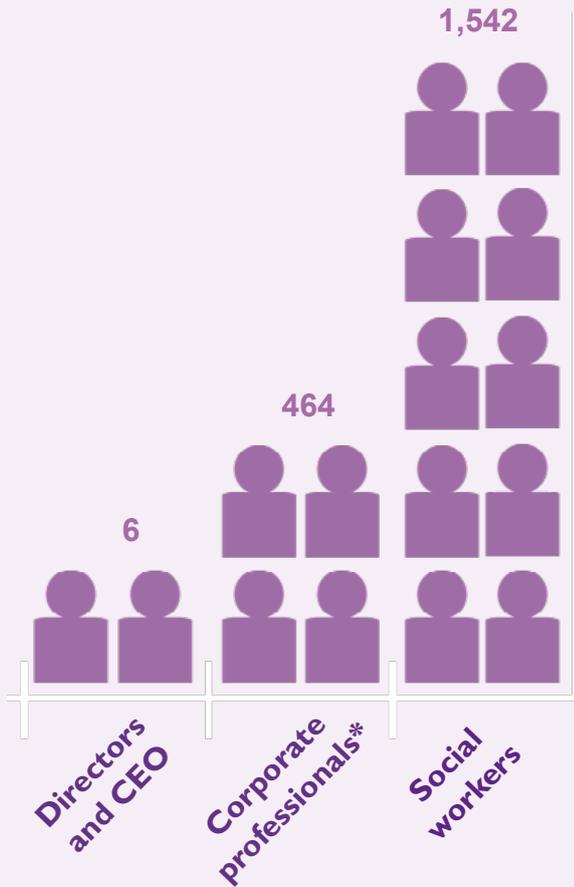


Working at Cafcass

- Investing in our people
- Roadshows
- Supporting staff through positive health and wellbeing
- Awards
- Employee case study



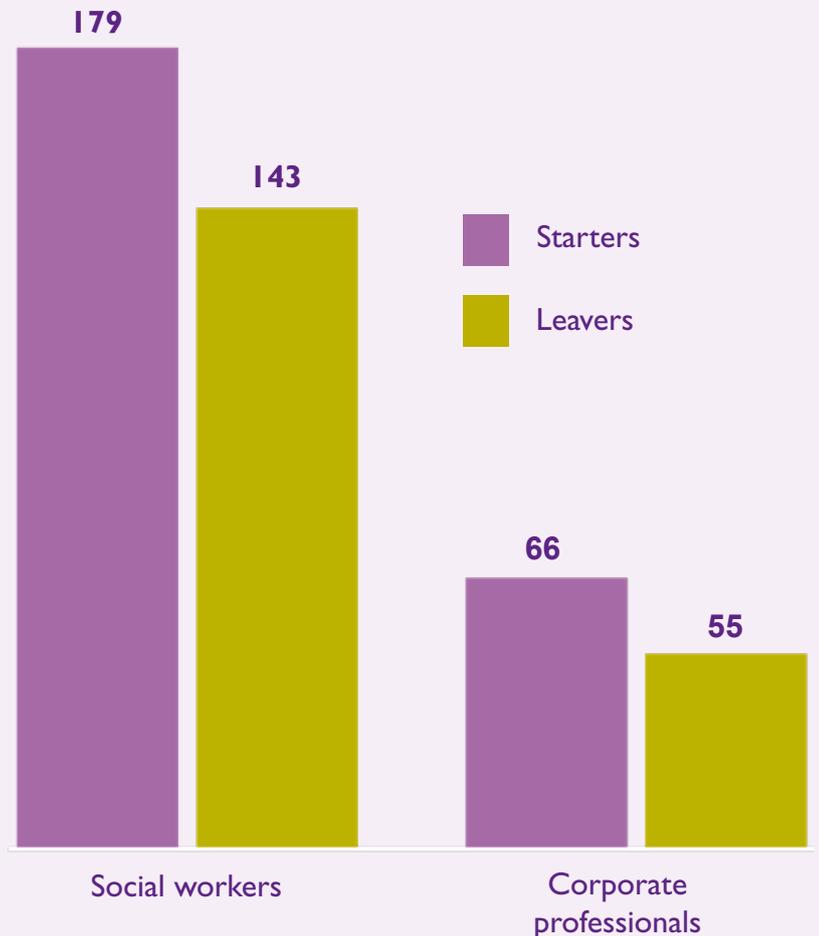
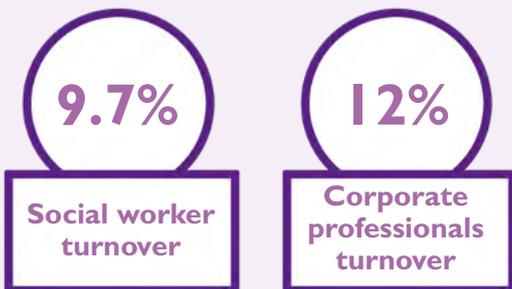
Cafcass is the largest employer of social workers in England.



*Corporate professionals include: senior managers, business services and specialist staff



Starters, leavers and turnover April 2019 - March 2020



Investing in our people

Our people are our most important resource and it is a privilege to be the employer of colleagues who work relentlessly in the interests of children, their families and carers. It is our priority to provide the support, resource and working environment they need to do their best work. To do this, we are focused on learning and development opportunities, effective leadership to nurture and develop talent, strong management oversight and effective systems and processes to support consistent practice. We expect all managers to be accessible to their colleagues, seeking out and responding positively to feedback. We are committed to sustained improvement through the regular oversight of performance, collaborative challenge and a kind operating culture.

Statement from Sarah Parsons – Cafcass Principal Social Worker

“Social workers employed by Cafcass strive to provide the family courts with clearly reasoned, well-balanced and analytical risk assessments about the children whose experiences, wishes and feelings they take into account when making recommendations about their futures. These assist the courts to make child-centred decisions based on what is in their best interests. Our staff also try to listen to each child, parent or carer they meet so that they understand their experiences and views, before they reflect on the recommendations they will make to court.

“Most of our assessments involve multiple risks, complexity and often opposing accounts of what has happened in a child’s life and what is likely to be the best way forward. In order to support FCAs to make the best possible assessments, Cafcass has developed a strong approach to practice leadership, supervision, practice oversight and to learning and development. Some highlights are described in the learning and development section below.

“To stretch the quality of our practice still further, we have started work on developing our Practice Framework, obtaining more and better feedback from children, families and our frontline staff, as well as working more collaboratively with our social work practitioners and families during our quality audits. We are also learning about our future operating models from what has worked well and has proved to be challenging during the Covid-19 crisis. It is a privilege to hold the role of Principal Social Worker for England’s largest employer of social workers and I am very much looking forward to leading our practice improvements over the next few years.”

Learning and development

On arriving at Cafcass all staff complete mandatory core training relevant to their role, supplemented by standard, local team induction.

Everyone has access to CafcassLearning, our engaging learning portal where all staff can find a wide range of learning to support their personal development.



Between April 2019 and March 2020 there were 9,986 eLearning completions – a 186% increase year-on-year. This is in part due to the new mandatory eLearning modules that were launched in this period and it may also be a reflection on the extent to which this form of learning is embedded and established within Cafcass.



Of the 82 eLearning modules completed over the year, the top five (excluding mandatory eLearning) were:



The total amount of time that staff spent on Cafcass eLearning during 2019-20.

Other opportunities for learning and development that are accessible remotely include the quarterly Serious Incident Bulletin, group supervision, access to the Cafcass Psychology Consultation Service, access to the unique and extensive Cafcass library, individual support from in house practice and performance coaches, the dedicated IT trainers, and the network of Peer Practice Specialists.

A key aspect of our learning strategy is the link with the Cafcass Diversity Networks, ensuring all training integrates and is informed by our commitment to working inclusively and valuing difference. Our training to promote cultural competence and sensitivity is available to all of our social work practitioners, covering a broad range of needs and preferences including faith, culture, ethnicity, sexual and gender identity.

Business services and corporate development programmes recognise the integral importance of our business infrastructure in maintaining and enhancing our systems and processes to be efficient and effective whilst demand continues to rise.

We promote a mixed economy of learning opportunities, with centrally developed eLearning and workshop material for local delivery as well as major face-to-face training initiatives. This year a key element of the training programme included the full day training course on the Child Impact Assessment Framework to equip our private law social work practitioners with the skills and knowledge to make highly effective and child-centred analyses of the impact of harm. The course covers domestic abuse, harmful conflict, the reasons children resist or refuse spending time with a parent, and other forms of harmful parenting. Training on 'Dilemmas in Public Law Practice' examines key decision-making in complex cases including sharing and consolidating knowledge around difficult and often ethically challenging topics. Topics include the deprivation of liberty, neglect, permanence, adoption, and post separation contact.

Development for our managers

For our managers, we offer a comprehensive internal management development programme to support existing, new and aspiring managers to select, manage, develop and grow their team. This has included delivery of 22 workshops accounting for 1,515 learning hours.

We also provide expert support and coaching through our team of HR business partners to help managers maximise the capacity and capability of their teams through workforce planning, supporting performance and managing absence. Some examples of feedback from our managers include:



“The training has increased my confidence in tackling more difficult conversations with colleagues and has built my knowledge of different models to consider in conflict management situations.”

“The training was enjoyable, and the trainers were able to give examples which helped put the matter into context.”

Growing talent

We recognise the fundamental importance of investing in professional and personal development among all staff. Our Emerging Talent programme continues to offer opportunities for all our people to showcase their performance and potential. During 2019-20, 18% of our social work staff and 16% of our business services and corporate staff have joined or completed the programme.

Our data shows that people who are or have been participants on our Emerging Talent programme perform well and record more learning hours, have lower sickness absence and better performance and learning review scores.

We are also growing talent through our graduate and apprenticeship programmes. Our two-year graduate development programme came to an end in March 2020. Five of the cohort of 12 were able to stay with us after securing permanent roles within our corporate teams. Using funding from the apprenticeship levy, our apprenticeship programme continues to offer both entry level employment chances for new apprentices and opportunities for existing staff to learn new skills while gaining a qualification. As a public sector organisation, Cafcass has a target of an average of 2.3% of staff studying for an apprenticeship by 2021. At the end of March 2020, 42 (2.1%) Cafcass colleagues were completing an apprenticeship including IT qualifications, business administration, project management, and leadership.

As part of our goal to encourage talent growth, we have also welcomed four newly qualified social workers to join the 11 already at Cafcass, and 33 students during 2019-20. Our strategic plan sets out a further commitment to establish a professional academy offer for social workers, business services and corporate staff.

Talent attraction

Our Recruitment and Retention Policy sets out how we aim to ensure that Cafcass employs and retains a highly skilled, credible and motivated workforce.

In keeping with previous years, talent attraction was a key priority in 2019-20 as we sought the organisational capability and capacity required to meet rising demand for our services.



- We recruited to more than 300 roles using internal and external channels. There were a number of internal promotions including appointments to Head of Practice, Service Manager and Team Leader roles.
- With an even more proactive and engaging approach to working with hiring managers and candidates, the time from a vacancy going live to making an offer was less than six weeks for FCAs and five weeks for corporate roles.
- With increased demand on our services, we had to develop a tailored recruitment approach using a wider range of channels and a coordinated strategy to rapidly bring in additional frontline resource. We used this to appoint an additional 32 FCAs in the first 12 weeks of 2020.

Technological investment

We have invested in new technology projects to enable us to work to a standard that children and families deserve, by creating an environment in which people feel good and can work effectively.



A new case management system called Cafis (Children and Families Information System)

Our case management system is a vital part of the work we do at Cafcass. Our staff were clear that they liked the previous system but that it needed to be improved. The technology it was based on is getting old so we used intuitive design principles to make Cafis easier and quicker to use. The new system is being rolled out in stages to help staff get used to the changes while still being able to record and manage cases efficiently. In 2019-20 we successfully implemented the first module of our new case management system and the first online training module was completed by over 98% of staff. Feedback has so far been positive, with four in five agreeing that the new system is “better, faster and easier to use.”

A new intranet

We require an intranet that is an easy-to-use central hub of information and keeps our staff connected with each other. Our current intranet relies on SharePoint 2010 which becomes unsupported in October 2020 so we plan to launch a new intranet in October. We followed a competitive government-backed procurement process before awarding the contract to the company Sigma. Changes for the new intranet will be led by feedback from staff to make sure all needs are met and will include better organised information, a modern look and improved functionality.

‘Caflon’ initiative

Every year Cafcass staff organise a charity event named ‘Caflon’. The objective is for staff to get involved in enjoyable events outside of working hours to raise money for BBC Children in Need. Each year more and more events have been organised, increasing from 36 events in 2015 to 56 this year, with 1,054 members of staff participating across the country. This year’s events saw teams take part in dance classes, bake sales, team quizzes and even a 5k parkrun in Dublin.

A total of £6,985 was raised for Children in Need which exceeded the target of £2,500. Since Caflon started, Cafcass has raised over £33,000 for the charity.



Roadshows

Between October and December 2019 eight roadshows were held across the country to bring together key members of the senior leadership team and our Board, with staff from all corners of the organisation.

The roadshows focused on our thinking and planning together against the three pillars of our strategic plan – our Practice, People and Partners. Staff had the opportunity to play a proactive role in shaping how we deliver our new strategic plan, and a chance to meet Jacky Tiotto, our new Chief Executive, along with other members of our leadership team, members of the Board and members of the FJYPB.

It was also an opportunity for all Cafcass staff to share their thoughts and experiences, and to connect with colleagues from other areas and teams. In total, 650 members of staff attended the roadshows.

Staff provided feedback on what they thought needed to be considered as part of the strategic delivery plan and what we could do differently. A graphic recorder attended each of the events and captured this information so that it could be visualised in offices and used to inform our delivery priorities and planning over the next three years.



“I was rather concerned that the event would be very much a one-person show. I was positively surprised and really appreciated the opportunity to get involved. Really good engagement - more of this is needed!”

“I thoroughly enjoyed the conference and having a big part in the vision for the next three years.”



Supporting staff through positive health and wellbeing

Investing in wellbeing helps people to continue to give their best and sustain their effectiveness for the benefit of the children and families with whom we work.

We have a dedicated health and wellbeing team to support all staff, being recognised as a sector leader and shortlisted twice for the REBA Employee Wellbeing Awards. The team has also supported other areas of government through delivery of workshops for Cafcass Cymru, the MoJ and the Royal Courts of Justice.

We have a local network of 67 health champions and 22 mental health allies who share health and wellbeing resources, newsletters and promote national campaigns within their local areas. The team has also introduced dementia friends awareness sessions via webinars and we now have 74 dementia friends across the organisation.

Over the last 12 months we have provided learning and support for a range of physical and mental wellbeing topics through face-to-face workshops, eLearning, webinars, podcasts and guides around topics such as stopping smoking, reducing alcohol intake, bereavement, sleep, active commuting, smarter working, and nutrition.

In addition to the dedicated health and wellbeing area of the intranet, we also have a monthly health and wellbeing newsletter. Over the past 12 months we have actively promoted campaigns such as Cervical Cancer Awareness, Time to Talk, World Menopause Day and World Mental Health Day.

A new initiative was rolled out in May 2019 to support our frontline and corporate teams by focusing on the specific wellbeing support they need. The 'Area Stress Survey' identifies significant work and non-work stressors at team level and the outcomes inform an Area Wellness Action Plan. These have been completed in 40% of local areas as well as corporate teams and the National Business Centre. This is helping us put in place support structures to manage stress and promote positive mental wellbeing. Area Wellness Action Plans are being developed to include targeted health and wellbeing support for individual areas over the next 12-18 months.

In March, the Covid-19 crisis required us to focus the priorities of the health and wellbeing team on supporting staff to work remotely and differently, including working at home with children, caring for vulnerable family members and looking after their own wellbeing in the newly isolated working environment. Guidance was developed and provided on balancing effective remote working and a busy homelife, social distancing, and how to manage stress and anxiety. Other health and wellbeing resources included:

- A manager's guide to supporting the health and wellbeing of others
- A guide to balancing effective remote working and a busy homelife
- A health and wellbeing calendar of daily activities
- A dedicated intranet page with briefings and FAQs
- Dedicated Microsoft Teams site for advice and conversations on healthy remote working
- Webinars on various health topics
- Health and wellbeing drop-in webinars for staff



- **20** face-to-face workshops
- **400** staff members attended workshops
- **100** staff members accessed eLearning modules
- **112** staff members attended webinars
- **89** referrals to the health and wellbeing service for 1:1 support

Awards

Social Worker of the Year Awards

Cafcass Assistant Director, Carole Goodman received the Social Worker of the Year Lifetime Achievement award for her outstanding contribution to social work.



The Social Worker of the Year Awards were established in 2006 to recognise and celebrate the achievements of social workers, promote social work and incentivise individuals and teams in the social work profession to achieve excellence.

Cafcass was also nominated in the Creative and Innovative Social Work Practice category for the 'How it Looks to Me' app. The innovative child focussed app enables children to share their thoughts, wishes and emotions through a creative electronic tool. Our social work practitioners can directly embed the results into court reports, bringing the child's voice to life and ensuring that their views are heard and clearly conveyed in court proceedings.

Children & Young People Now Awards

Cafcass won the Family Justice award and the Safeguarding award at the Children and Young People Now Awards 2019 for the Cafcass Positive Co-Parenting Programme (CPPP).



The awards celebrate best practice in the sector, highlighting innovation and the positive impact of social work with children, young people and families. Cafcass was nominated in three categories; the Safeguarding Award, the Family Justice Award and the Social Work Award.

The CPPP is a programme supporting parents to walk in their child's shoes and imagine the experiences they are having amidst family difficulty. Delivered over a 12-week period, it aims to promote change between parents and reduce the emotional harm experienced by the child.

Operational Delivery Profession (ODP) civil service Certificate of Excellence

Cafcass' innovative 'How it Looks to Me' app received a Certificate of Excellence at the ODP celebration event.



The celebration event is held by the civil service and acknowledges outstanding achievements within the various ODP professions. The certificate was presented by the Permanent Secretary to the MoJ, Sir Richard Heaton, in the digital award category.





Employee case study

Celebrating excellence in social work

At Cafcass our key responsibilities include understanding the key issues facing children, families and the family court, improving our services to meet family's needs and influencing the wider justice system. We do this through the work of passionate and dedicated employees. This year, Cafcass Assistant Director Carole Goodman was awarded the Social Worker of the Year Lifetime Achievement award for her outstanding career and determination to make things better for children and families.

Carole joined Cafcass in 2007 and has been at the forefront of many improvements and changes within the organisation including leading initiatives that played a significant part in Ofsted rating Cafcass as outstanding for leadership. From 2016, Carole became Assistant Director with responsibility for our National Commissioning Team. She has been influential in creating key changes throughout the organisation. She has been described by her colleagues as 'always acting as a strong advocate for the voice of the child in the room', 'stretching the boundaries of social work practice' for her innovative and ground breaking programmes, and as having an 'unfailing passion' for improving the lives of children.

The strength of Carole's leadership in improving and implementing best practice became a key part of Cafcass' national improvement. Her vision for what families should receive through these services was quickly adopted by Cafcass and the MoJ. She has delivered significant savings and more consistent provision in service standards and resources for parents regardless of where they live.

Championing various pilots, Carole's innovative and informed leadership has helped shape social work nationally, so that the needs of children and families facing family breakdown are better met. The findings from this work made a significant contribution to central government policy.



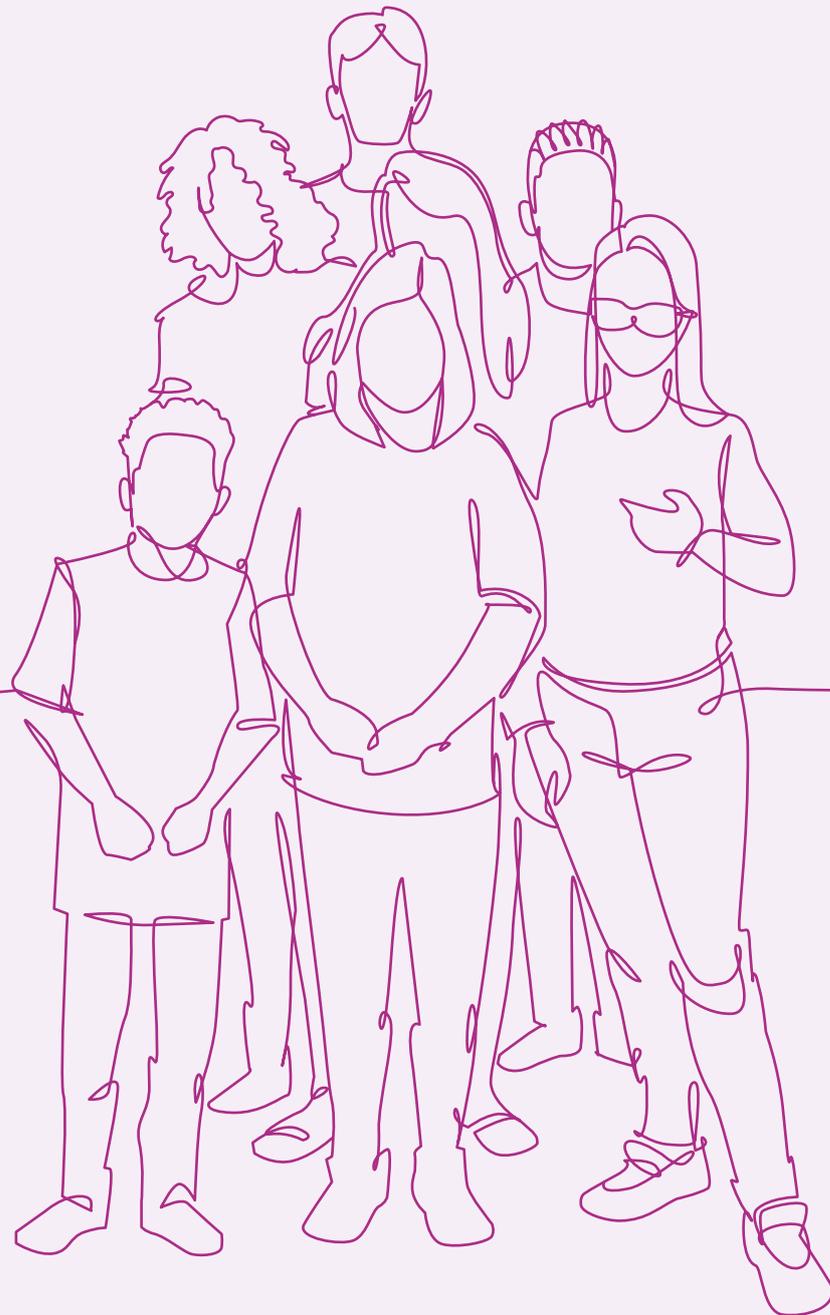
Key achievements

- Carole's service area was the first in Cafcass to receive an assessment of 'Good Progress' by Ofsted.
- Led a review of Cafcass' dispute resolution model, changing the way private law cases are approached nationally.
- Developed a national DfE protocol for communication and understanding of roles between guardians and local authority independent reviewing officers.
- Introduced the 'Co-Parent Hub', offering families a way to resolve disputes online and providing materials to support them in making safe child arrangements.
- Informed the 'supporting separating parents in dispute' helpline pilot.

“Carole shines as an exemplar of social work practice at the highest level. Her unfailing passion for improving the lives of children and young people is obvious to all who have the privilege of working with her.”

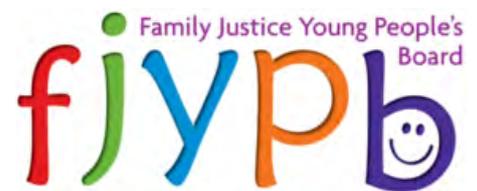
Emeritus Professor
Janet Walker OBE

Family Justice Young People's Board



Family Justice Young People's Board

We are a group of over 50 children and young people aged between 7 and 25 years old who live across England and Wales. We all have either direct experience of the family court or have an interest in children's rights. We aim to represent the voice of all children involved in the family court and to work with Cafcass and other family justice partners to improve the service provided. By sharing our experience of the family court we're able to make sure that the organisations we work with listen to our feedback, learn from this and make improvements. These improvements benefit children who are currently going through family court proceedings and others who will do in the future. We have undertaken lots of varied work this year. Many meetings and workshops take place either at weekends or during school holidays to allow as many members to attend as possible.



“Being part of the FJYPB is liberating. We are all special because we are connected. Each of us have had good and bad experiences but we are all working together to change the family justice system and make it better for those children and young people who may have not found their voice just yet.

“Being on the Board opens you up to share your own opinions and ideas, it helps you develop as a person for the better. Despite our own struggles, we are still standing together. Each of us has developed our own skills such as presenting, speaking in public, and developing our confidence.

“Personally, I feel I wouldn't have been able to get this far without them.”

Fahmida, FJYPB member

Key work with Cafcass

During 2019-20 we completed a total of 95 commissions. Of these, 36 were with Cafcass:

- We assisted Cafcass with setting their strategic priorities. We ensured that the delivery priorities were child centred and promoted the voice of the child.
- We continued our role within Cafcass' rolling Area Quality Review programme looking at the quality of service provided by Cafcass within a specific service area. We collate feedback from children and young people, inspect one office in each identified area and feed our views into the final report. We really enjoy doing these reviews and meeting staff.
- We have worked with the Cafcass Board to increase our involvement and impact at Board meetings. We are given prior opportunity to read papers submitted to the Board, provide feedback, produce our own report for the Board and we now ask some challenging questions. We are really pleased to welcome Sophie Humphreys as our new Cafcass Board link.
- We have participated in recruitment panels and discussion groups as part of the recruitment process.
- We co-chaired the national roadshows led by Jacky Tiotto, Chief Executive.
- We have worked on feedback forms, eLearning, ran training sessions and attended development days with staff.



And we still want to do lots more!

Other FJYPB highlights

- In 2019, the FJYPB updated their previous poster for schools and shared it with Nadhim Zahawi, the then Minister for Children and Families. The poster was shared through the DfE to all UK schools. The poster identifies support services and a named person in school who pupils can speak to if they need support.
- The FJYPB worked with the Judicial College to develop an eLearning training package focusing on the experiences of children and young people who have experienced domestic abuse.

“My favourite part in helping this year has been interviewing. I was included in interviewing for the role of the Assistant Director. I felt like my voice was heard and I had a direct say.”

“It’s nice to see our name - people know more about the FJYPB now.”

“Developing policies and documents for Cafcass is always great. If a young person can look at it before then it will always help as it is directly for children and young people and so it is beneficial for us to help first!”

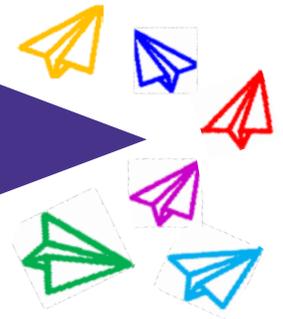
“I have been pleased with the interviews I have been involved with this year. I was involved in the recruitment for the CEO of Cafcass. The FJYPB is continuing to grow and members are becoming more involved as it does.”

“I helped with the Cafcass strategy. It was very interesting to have a say. We were able to have a direct say in something that was very high up and important.”

“It’s good to see we are doing more work for the family justice system and there has been a huge increase in the amount of work for the FJYPB.”



Family Justice Young People's Board Voice of the Child Conference 2019



We held our seventh Voice of the Child conference in July 2019 in Leeds. The theme this year was the mental health and wellbeing of children involved in family law proceedings.



The conference included:



'In My Shoes' presentations where some members shared moving stories of their experiences of the family justice system and how it affected their mental health.



Interactive games including bingo and 'fact or myth' which provided key messages from us, as well as being fun and engaging for attendees.



Interactive display boards encouraging attendees to share inspirational quotes and a random act of kindness.



The President of the Family Division, Sir Andrew McFarlane, delivered a keynote speech and took questions from the audience. He acknowledged that "the FJYPB has been a game changer, that has made a real difference to the way that the family court system works."

"The Voice of the Child Conference last year was really good, there were lots of professionals, as always everyone listened to us, the workshops were powerful, I felt like it had a big impact with lots of different professionals."

Imogen, FJYPB member

"The Voice of the Child Conference, I think it was a massive success, it always is. I walked out thinking yes, people have taken something away from this."

Andrew, FJYPB member

Final words:

We all love being a part of the FJYPB. It helps us, as well as enabling us to help other children and young people within the family court.



Strategic priorities

- Our strategy for sustaining excellence
- Delivery priorities: practice
- Delivery priorities: people
- Delivery priorities: partners



Our strategy for sustaining excellence

We published our new strategy in September 2019, to coincide with the arrival of our new Chief Executive, Jacky Tiotto. This set out our three strategic goals for sustaining excellence over the next three years to 2023.

PRACTICE

to deliver the best quality social work and support services in each case, to improve children's lives wherever they live

PEOPLE

to give our staff the support, resources and working environment they need to sustain excellence in increasingly challenging times

PARTNERS

to share our knowledge, learn from others and use our influence to improve the family justice system and wider family policy

Since September, we have been working with staff across all Cafcass service areas and functions to define our work programme for the next three years, organised under nine delivery priorities.

Collectively, these nine delivery priorities set out the areas where we need to stretch our effectiveness or develop our systems to ensure we are equipped to succeed in an operating environment that presents us with a different set of challenges to those faced under our previous strategy from 2015-20. Current challenges that the strategy seeks to address include:

- Continued increases in new applications, especially in private law, which have resulted in our social work practitioners carrying unsustainable caseloads, and concerns raised by children and families about the impact of resulting delays on their wellbeing.
- Rising demand for additional assessment, advice and input from Cafcass and other professionals: for example welfare ('section 7') assessments and appointment of guardians under rule 16.4 in private law; and increased numbers of position statements, addendum reports and hearings across the board.
- Increasingly serious concerns raised by children and families about an antiquated and adversarial family justice system in which they do not feel heard, and which does not connect them to wider sources of advice and support that could help them.
- Evidence that inconsistent approaches are being taken between different geographical areas that are not fully explained by underlying differences in the characteristics or needs of local populations.
- Recognition that the leadership challenges in sustaining excellence following the achievement of 'outstanding' in our last Ofsted inspection are different from those that got us there.

On the following pages we set out a summary of each delivery priority. Although the main work commenced in 2020-21, we made a start on delivery in 2019-20, and our work programme incorporates projects that were already in the pipeline. The contribution already made to our strategic priorities is summarised in this section.



Delivery priorities: practice

Our unique role as the largest employer of social workers in England and the provider of professional expertise to the family courts across the country remains a significant component in safeguarding children in public and private law cases. The quality of social work practice at Cafcass has been maintained over the last year, evidenced by our Quality Assurance and Impact Framework, benchmarking processes, Area Quality Reviews and newly implemented Performance Boards.

Delivery priority 1: practice led

Our social work practice and advice influences decisions that will have profound and lasting effect on children's lives. To further improve the quality and consistency of our practice across the organisation we need our experienced practice staff to play an active role in leading and implementing change. Our priority will be to take a strengths-based restorative approach in which our advice and decisions are consistent with professional standards and principles including those in the Children Act and supported by clear and transparent reasoning.

- We have initiated the development of a Practice Framework to maintain and clarify the links between effective practice that is supported by evidence, evaluation of impact and the theoretical basis of the work. We are developing new approaches including integrating restorative thinking into our work.
- The case recording processes relating to children have been reviewed to promote the clear and understandable recording of decisions.

Delivery priority 2: feedback informed

We have worked hard to make sure that children are heard in our work. We will now be more proactive in seeking feedback from children and families so that we learn from their experience at what is one of the most difficult times in their lives. This will give us a deeper understanding of what we are doing well and where we need to improve further.

- We have undertaken workshop sessions with members of the Family Justice Young People's Board, social work colleagues and members of our Customer Service Team to review feedback processes and make our approach as engaging as possible.
- We are committed to establishing a Family Forum that will help us improve our understanding of how families experience our service so we can make our approach as kind and helpful as possible, even in difficult circumstances. To help us learn how to do this well, we held a workshop with partner organisations – including local authorities and voluntary sector organisations who have been leading and developing restorative approaches with families.
- Work is in development to implement an effective system to provide children with information about the outcomes of the proceedings relating to them.



Delivery priority 3: learn and improve

We recognise that to improve the work we do on behalf of children and families we must think even harder about what we learn from feedback, practice insights and mistakes we make. We are committed to learning from complaints, family and child feedback, serious incidents, case reviews and critical judgments. We will not only act on that learning, but will evidence the change through improved practice, annual learning events and reports.

- We have developed and implemented a series of Performance Boards across the country to share learning, good practice and develop improvement plans. These Boards bring together members of the Corporate Management Team with the relevant Assistant Director, heads of practice and managers to review practice, continue to build on existing strengths and commit to an annual improvement programme.
- A comprehensive complaints review is being undertaken to build on the existing Complaints Procedure.
- Learning from complaints, serious incidents, case reviews and critical judgments will be considered in an annual learning review and through our audit programme.



WE MAY NOT HAVE IT ALL

together



BUT TOGETHER WE HAVE IT *all*

WE MAY NOT HAVE IT ALL

together



BUT TOGETHER WE HAVE IT *all*

Delivery priorities: people

We always aim to recruit and retain the best people, and will continue to support and develop them to be the best they can be. We will nurture their strengths, so that they can help to protect children and promote their welfare.

Delivery priority 4: respect, recognition, recruitment and retention

We will only meet demand and deliver the best possible services to children and families if we have the right number and profile of staff who are valued, developed and who want to remain with us, whatever their background and role at Cafcass. We can only do this if we have good insight into what makes people come, stay and leave.

- We worked with our diversity networks and our diversity champions to review our progress against our current diversity and inclusion strategy which ends in 2020, and to identify priorities for the next three years.
- We strengthened capacity in key areas, including successful recruitment of an additional cohort of FCAs to help manage increasing practitioner caseloads.
- We initiated discussions with partners about the potential for a Social Work Academy, so that Cafcass can play a role in the development of early career social workers.
- The Emerging Talent programme is continuing to develop high performers drawn from all parts of our service.

Delivery priority 5: efficient and innovative systems and resources

To enable us to work to a standard that children and families deserve we need to create an environment in which people feel good and can work effectively.

- Priority projects will move systems away from SharePoint 2010 which became unsupported in October 2020. In 2019-20 we successfully implemented the first module of our new case management system and commissioned the development of a new intranet.
- We reviewed and strengthened our information assurance arrangements, building on learning from a voluntary audit undertaken by the Information Commissioner's Office.

Delivery priority 6: lines of sight

We will create a positive and connected leadership and management culture that promotes continuous improvement, transparency and inclusivity. Our leaders are expected to be visible and authentic with a real connection to the day-to-day work, as well as each having personal responsibility for delivering our programme of change.

- A new cycle of senior management team meetings has been implemented to create a structured rotation of themed discussions as well as opening up to a wider range of managers' attendance and engagement in these meetings.





Delivery priorities: partners

Collectively, our work with partners has contributed to the evidence base for family justice reform, identified the short and longer term options for change, and strengthened the capacity of the system – through data and relationships – for implementation. This groundwork proved essential when the Covid-19 pandemic hit in March. We were able to quickly establish regular meetings with system leaders to agree emergency responses that built on earlier thinking and kept priority work flowing. We also introduced some key changes that would build the evidence base to support the plan for recovery.

Delivery priority 7: manage demand

The increase in number of children and families involved in the family courts is putting a strain on everyone involved – professionals, children and families – especially in private law proceedings where Cafcass is often the only public service involved and when court may not be the only or best place to resolve the family's issues. This unsustainable pressure has been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. There is an urgent need for a shared plan to make best use of existing resources, manage risk and deliver a fair process and outcome for the children and families who most need us.

- We continued to work with HMCTS on a joint action plan to modernise and improve efficiency in the transfer of information and work between the courts and Cafcass. This includes a project to digitise the court application process.
- We scoped a private law demand reduction plan that includes fast-tracking suitable applications while ensuring robust gatekeeping and maintaining caseloads at our safe maximum with a system to manage excesses. We will work to limit additional assessments, attendance at hearings or rule 16.4 appointments that will not add to effective decision-making in the best interests of children.

Delivery priority 8: accountable for outcomes

Cafcass has a wealth of data, knowledge and insight that could be put to greater use across the system to improve outcomes for children and families. Our strong local, national, and international relationships could be even more productive if we build capacity to improve, share and use what we know collectively to understand variation in performance and outcomes, and take effective action to improve the experiences of children and families everywhere. We will harness learning from wider academic research, from other sectors and jurisdictions, and use this to influence the research agenda.

- In addition to the usual quarterly data reports we share with local family justice boards in England, we developed new analyses to prompt more meaningful discussions about variations and outcomes in care proceedings. We have started to share this data with a small number of local areas on a pilot basis before extending to others.
- One significant academic research project using Cafcass data was published during the year; 'Establishing outcomes of care proceedings for children before and after care proceedings reform' by the University of Bristol. This study examined the impact of reforms to the Public Law Outline implemented in 2013-14 to speed-up decision making in care proceedings. It compared the process and outcomes of two samples of children: one whose proceedings occurred in 2009-10 before the reforms and another group whose proceedings took place in 2014-15 after the reforms were implemented.



- We granted access to our data for eight new research projects and updated our research governance framework. This was fewer than previous years because we invested in the preparation of an anonymised summary data set about all the children and families we have worked with since 2007 (when we introduced electronic case recording).
- In December 2019, we deposited a complete set of anonymised data casefiles from 2007 to October 2019 to the Nuffield Family Justice Observatory's secure data platform at the University of Swansea. This dataset is available to researchers wishing to undertake family justice research in the public interest, subject to an ethical and information assurance approval process. Further data deposits will be made at six-monthly intervals. The Observatory's Chair, former President of the Family Division Sir James Munby, described the database as an 'astonishing breakthrough' for family law.

Delivery priority 9: leadership of family justice reform

Reforms in the family justice system are only possible if partners come together to agree and deliver a strategic reform plan. Options for change are narrowing and becoming clearer and it is vital we use our influence and unique position to drive system-wide change.

- Senior Cafcass staff played an active role in the judicial working groups reviewing the operation of the Public Law Outline and the Child Arrangements Programme in private law and submitted responses to both consultations. In private law, Cafcass co-hosted an event with the Nuffield Family Justice Observatory to develop a common set of principles for community-based provision of support services - as an aide to court - for families experiencing separation.
- To strengthen the leadership of reform we worked with partners to institute a Family Justice Reform Implementation Group to support the Family Justice Board by overseeing the implementation of agreed reforms.
- In addition to our role in the judicial working groups, our strategy team coordinated responses to a number of consultations and calls for evidence. These included: Social Work England's consultation on standards; the Law Commission's consultation on surrogacy reform; and the Family Justice Council's consultation on draft domestic abuse guidance. All our consultation responses are published on our website.





Performance analysis

- Quality of our work
- Commissioned services
- Performance against Key Performance Indicators
- Public law
- Private law
- Sustainability report



Quality of our work

We adopt a range of approaches to assess and evaluate the quality of our work and use feedback to learn and improve on our performance. These approaches include:

- **Practice quality:** thematic and casework auditing; regular Performance and Learning Reviews for individual staff, involving manager and self-assessment; Area Quality Reviews.
- **Feedback from children and families:** including complaints and compliments, received either directly, through Members of Parliament or through the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO).
- **Wider learning:** reviews of serious incidents, case reviews, and published judgments.
- **Other correspondence:** freedom of information requests and subject access requests.

Practice quality

The quality assurance programme for our practice is led by our National Improvement Service and undertaken collaboratively with operational managers and FCAs.

- **Case file audits.** In 2019-20 a total of 9,828 case file audits were carried out by service managers and practice supervisors. Of these, 75% were graded as either 'good' or 'outstanding', an increase of three percentage points compared to 2018-19 (72%). Work graded as not meeting the required standards was 4% which was a small improvement compared with 2018-19 (a reduction of one percentage point from 5%). The proportion of high-quality work as assessed by audit has therefore risen, along with a reduction in work that required improvement compared to the previous year, despite the increased volume of casework this year.
- The focus of improvement activity has been to work on tackling the factors that lead a proportion of our work to be judged as only having 'met' our standards (21%) rather than being assessed as 'good' and to continue to strive to eliminate work graded as not meeting requirements.
- **Performance and Learning Reviews.** These line manager reviews take place regularly for all Cafcass staff and are set quarterly for practice staff. Developed in-house, the system facilitates a two-way interactive process between staff and managers that captures a range of information drawn from self-assessment and management information. The performance conversation covers health and wellbeing, workload, learning and performance, and leads to an action plan for the next period. This process assists Cafcass to obtain feedback on wellbeing and learning needs of staff, which informs planning of training and other additional wellbeing support that needs to be put in place. These assessments demonstrate a high level of skill, knowledge and motivation among our staff, provide feedback on how staff are coping in increasingly challenging times, and help us to identify and prioritise learning and development resources for staff to support continuous improvement
- **Thematic audits.** Seven thematic audits were carried out by the National Improvement Service. These audits focused on issues of national importance relating to: the threshold for Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Programmes, the application of the private law Child Impact Assessment Framework, and the use of experts in proceedings. The outcomes of the audits informed service planning. A key finding from the Child Impact Assessment Framework audit was the correlation between the effective use of assessment tools and increased quality of the court report, highlighting the importance of the skilled assessment to inform clear analysis of all risks.



- **Area Quality Reviews (AQRs).** This rolling programme of area-based assessment is designed to provide challenge and an in-depth review of the quality of practice within each of our 18 service areas and is undertaken by peers from a different area within the organisation. The current three-year AQR programme began in November 2018 and will be completed in October 2021, by which time all operational areas will have been subject to a review. Following each review, the Assistant Director responsible for the service area produces an action plan to address the learning identified. The plan is monitored by the Director of Operational Performance who oversees all service area plans.
- Towards the end of 2019-20 we piloted regional performance boards to provide an additional and complementary quality assurance mechanism involving the CMT in interactive discussions with regional leaders about regional strengths and challenges in practice and performance.

Feedback from children and families



1,434
complaints from
adult parties



3.4
complaints per open
1,000 cases



98%
completed within
15 working days



12
complaints
from children



638
compliments
from adults



105
compliments
from children

Hearing from children and families about their experiences is important as this means we can use this information to improve the services we provide to them. We take account of feedback and use learning from positive and negative experiences to improve the service we provide. Where things have gone wrong, we aim to put things right wherever possible and as soon as we can.



We analyse feedback received from children and families to identify themes, put things right and improve our future service. From complaints, we know that the majority of concerns are reported by adults in private law cases where we are involved beyond the first hearing, and in which we will have undertaken in-depth work with the family.

A significant proportion relate specifically to the content of a report we have written for the court, either the safeguarding letter for the first hearing, or a more detailed welfare assessment ('section 7' report). We encourage our FCAs to be transparent from the outset in their work with families to continually reinforce that the focus of their work is on the child's welfare, and to ensure families know how to inform the court if they disagree with the assessment. This includes improving our communication with families at the beginning, middle and end of proceedings to provide clarity about our role and that of the court. We are also setting up a Family Forum that will help us improve our understanding of how families experience our service so we can make our approach as kind and helpful as possible, even in difficult circumstances.

This year 11 of the 12 complaints received from children arose in private law cases. The most common issue raised in around half of these cases was that the children felt that they hadn't been listened to by the FCA. In two cases the child felt that they didn't have control over what was happening. In each of these complaints, a manager from Cafcass investigated the complaint and the specific learning in each case for the FCA was discussed with them as part of their performance and learning review. We do not want any child to be left feeling we haven't listened to them. We are taking action in the coming year to work with our Family Justice Young People's Board to improve how we secure their feedback whilst we are working together, so that we can take early action if children are not satisfied.

From compliments, we know that children are positive about Cafcass when they understood what was happening, things had been explained to them, and they felt listened to. We are building on this feedback by improving how we communicate with children. This includes providing information to them in a number of ways to explain the work we want to do with them and why. We are building on information already provided to children and young people about our role and what to expect from us, through a new leaflet and standard feedback mechanism after every meeting. We are also improving the way that we communicate with children at the end of our work with them through writing 'outcome letters' and ensuring our case recording is written in a way that could be shared with a child. Where appropriate, we support children speaking directly with the judge and also support judges in writing orders in language suitable for a child to read and understand. Adults are positive about our work when they feel the FCA has listened to them, understood their views and provided them with helpful information. This feedback has been incorporated into our training modules on direct work with children and families.

In addition to feedback received directly from children and families, we received 174 enquiries made by MPs on behalf of their constituents. Some just want to know more about our processes to assist them in supporting their constituents; others contact us on behalf of their constituents to raise concerns about Cafcass or the wider family justice system. Common concerns raised by constituents with their MPs include how we administered their case and the content of the assessments undertaken by FCAs, both of which are common themes within our complaint investigations. We are working with families and stakeholders to improve the information we provide to families about what will happen in their court proceedings, and how to challenge our social work assessments within court.



In the coming year, we want to do more to encourage feedback from all the children and families we work with so we can better understand how they experience us. We want to make ourselves more transparent and accessible to the people we work with, including recognising when things have gone wrong and being more open about the steps we have taken to put things right. We know that our complaints process itself frequently features in feedback, enquiries and complaints, and so a review of our feedback and complaints framework will be a priority in the coming year.

Other correspondence

- We received **194** Freedom of Information requests, with 100% responded to within the required timescale.
- We received **381** subject access requests, with 95% responded to within the required timescale.

Wider learning and feedback

Learning from serious incidents, cases which are subject to case reviews, published judgments and Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman enquiries all serve to improve our understanding of how our service is experienced, and where we need to improve.

Cafcass operates an internal serious incident notification process which alerts senior leaders to incidents of all types which may require immediate action and from which organisational learning and responsive action is derived. During 2019-20, 154 internal serious incident notifications have been completed.

In addition, Cafcass responded to 35 requests for scoping information from safeguarding partners to inform their rapid review meeting. The rapid review is a means to gather information from the various agencies to inform the decision making about whether to recommend a local child safeguarding practice review (previously Serious Case Reviews). We contributed – through submitting reports and participating in meetings - to 23 Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews in 2019-20, with three ongoing at the end of the year. Multi-agency learning and themes emerging from serious incidents are kept under review and inform policy and practice development. For example:

- Guidance issued to Cafcass staff in respect of section 25 Secure Accommodation Orders and Deprivation of Liberty applications.
- Update of our Safeguarding Policy, including escalation to and follow-up with local authorities (see case study on the following page).
- Prioritisation of training on case planning and recording of professional decision making.
- A review of thresholds on working with adults with mental ill health.
- Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Programme referral process review by the National Commissioning Team as part of work on managing risk associated with domestic abuse cases.



An example of how learning from a case review and subsequent coroner's inquest has impacted on policy and practice is as follows:

In 2019, there was coroner's inquest into the tragic death of a child and the mother's subsequent suicide, this followed a case review which took place in 2018. The Coroner sought reassurance that Cafcass had actioned the learning from the case review on the need for more timely and consistent safeguarding referrals to the local authority.

We have used the learning to update our Safeguarding Policy and strengthen our guidance for identifying and escalating risk of harm, including referral to the local authority. This has been both communicated and understood by our practitioners through a combination of cascaded communication, and team learning activities. The embedding of this guidance into practice will be tested through quality assurance and further audit.

There was one Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO) investigation proposed in 2019-20 and one final report received, which was partly upheld. It has been more than three years since the PHSO fully upheld a complaint about Cafcass. The final report we received was for a PHSO investigation that began in 2014, but which related to work we had undertaken between 2005 and 2007. The PHSO partly upheld the complaint finding poor practice in our complaints handling, and that the casework had not been appropriately supervised or recorded. The PHSO was satisfied that our processes have since improved, such as introducing an electronic case management system and introducing electronic recording and scheduling of case supervision.

We will be stepping up our efforts in future years to collate and report on our learning from an even wider range of sources, including the action we are taking to act on that learning.



Commissioned services

The National Commissioning Team (NCT), on behalf of Cafcass and the Ministry of Justice, commissions a range of services for the family court that assist in the safe and sustainable resolution of private law cases and, where appropriate, to help families resolve their issues without remaining in proceedings or applying to court in the first place.

These programmes, delivered by third sector and private service providers, are centred around the needs of children in private law cases. The delivery of these interventions is underpinned by the principle of safe outcomes for those children. Wherever possible, interventions will lead away from the necessity to involve the family court or to resolve cases that do go to court at the earliest possible opportunity.

The three main programmes which the NCT currently commission are:

Child Contact Interventions (CCI) are time limited, court ordered interventions which can include sessions of supervised contact. They are designed to help adults and children establish safe and beneficial contact when this is difficult to do on their own.

In 2019-20 we spent £1.9m to provide a total of 2,107 families with CCI support. Families generally welcome the support; seven out of ten children we asked think things in their family are better after a CCI than they were before.

“Allowed me to spend quality time with my children which was priceless. I loved every second of it.”

“Many good things but talking and exchanging ideas with the CCI worker has taught me a great deal.”

“Helped me a lot to improve my relationship with my son.”

Separated Parents Information Programmes (SPIP) are court ordered and group-based education programmes for those who have responsibility for children, to help them better understand and respond differently to conflict and communication.

In 2019-20, 21,071 parents/carers attended a programme, at a cost of £2.5m. Parents consistently tell us that they have an improved understanding of the effect of parental conflict on their child and that the learning is helpful in sorting out child arrangements with the other parent or carer.



“The session was great – most importantly it focused on the children’s emotional wellbeing.”

“The course focuses the awareness toward the child and helps to identify that conflict is ultimately not in their best interests.”

“The information provided was fantastic, it was good to see what pathways can be used and hear other people’s situations.”

Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Programmes (DAPP) – court ordered activity which aims to help people who have been abusive towards their partners or ex-partners to change their behaviour and develop respectful, non-abusive relationships.

During 2019-20, 1,272 perpetrators and their families were involved in a DAPP, at a total cost of £1.4m. These are delivered through third sector and private service providers. These targeted, court ordered programmes are part of a wider suite of dispute resolution tools available to families. We continue to work with the wider family justice sector to establish future delivery options for families affected by domestic abuse.

In addition to the above services Cafcass has been able, in defined circumstances, on behalf of the family court to facilitate and fund the provision of DNA tests which are directed under section 20 of the Family Law Reform Act 1969 (the Act) by courts in England and Wales. DNA testing is used in cases where the findings will be essential and determinative in reaching a swift and beneficial decision about the arrangements for the child. In 2019-20 courts ordered 440 DNA tests in private law cases, which cost a total of £28,182.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic we saw a slightly lower than forecasted delivery of commissioned services in March 2020. We have been working with providers and family justice system partners to support ongoing support to the children and families we work with by offering remote delivery through digital and other means where it is safe to do so. The learning from this period will inform future planning.



Performance against Key Performance Indicators

How we measure performance

Cafcass has four Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) which are agreed with our sponsor department. These cover our work in both public and private law cases. For each, we include two types of measure: an allocation to an FCA measure and a timeliness measure. Allocation to an FCA is important because work can only start on a case once an individual FCA has been allocated to it. We monitor timeliness because we recognise the impact unnecessary delay has on children, who need safe and stable outcomes as quickly as possible.

For both public and private law allocation to a caseworker the measure is the percentage of 'open' (ongoing) cases, as a snapshot at the end of each month, which have an allocated Cafcass practitioner – a children's guardian in public law care cases (KPI 1) and an FCA in private law cases including the ones allocated on a duty basis (KPI 3). Our target for both KPIs is for at least 97% of cases to be allocated.

For public law, our timeliness measure is how quickly a Cafcass social work practitioner is allocated to a section 31 care case (KPI 2). Our target is for allocation within three working days, although in practice we usually need to allocate more quickly as the majority of the applications we receive are for first hearings taking place in less than seven days.

For private law, our timeliness measure is based on the proportion of section 7 welfare reports filed by the date the court has set (KPI 4). Our target is for at least 97% of reports to be filed on time by the agreed date.

Summary of performance against KPIs for 2019-20

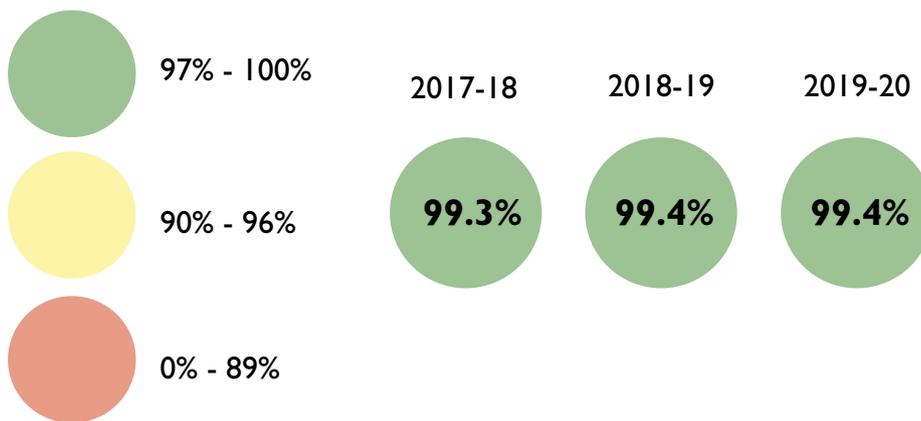
In 2019-20 Cafcass continued to meet all agreed targets against our KPI which is testament to the dedication of our social work staff who are carrying increasingly large and challenging caseloads. Taken on their own, however, these measures mask the current pressure faced by the organisation, and the risks to the quality of our work with children and families. In 2020-21 we will introduce a more detailed range of supporting indicators across our headline KPI reporting that focus on the wider impact of increased pressure on our work, building on the additional contextual information we have included under each KPI on the following pages.



Public law

Public law KPIs

KPI 1: Cafcass will measure the proportion of open public law care workload allocated to an appointed children’s guardian.

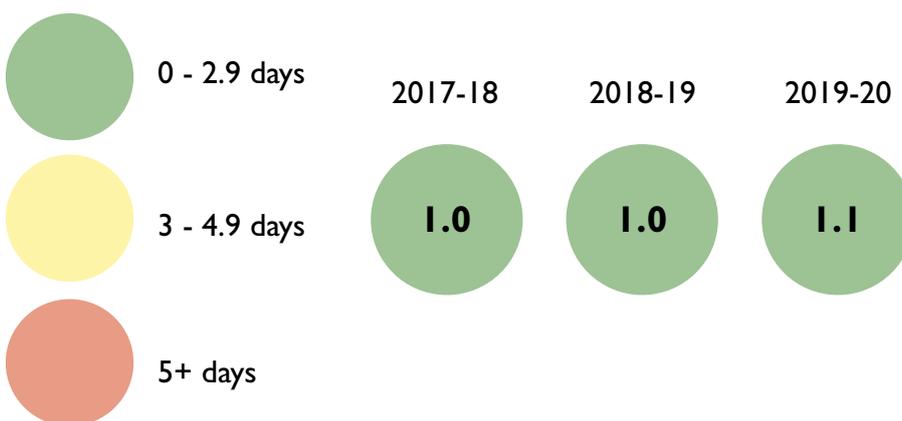


Performance on the proportion of open public law care workload allocated to an appointed children’s guardian has remained unchanged on last year at 99.4%.

All service areas met this target over the 2019-20 period with multiple areas recording over 99% for the full period.

To avoid delay in public law proceedings of all types, we have set a standard that 97% of our workload should be allocated when taken as a snapshot.

KPI 2: Cafcass will measure the timeliness of allocation to an appointed children’s guardian, for all care applications received.



Performance against timeliness of allocation to an appointed children’s guardian for all care applications received decreased slightly to 1.1 working day, however it is still well within the three working days target.

National performance exceeded the green level in each individual month in 2019-20.

One service area has fallen into amber in this period with an average of 3.3 days.

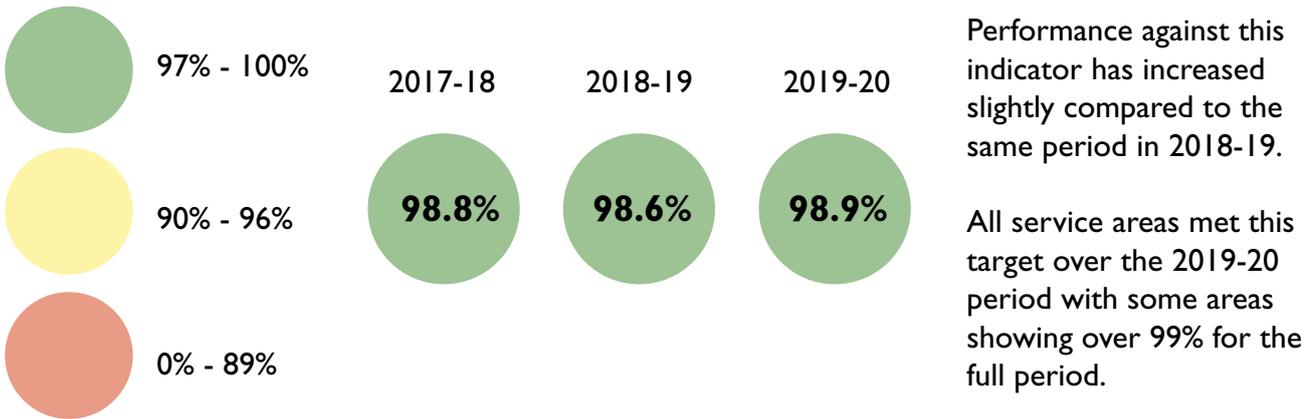
This indicator is a measure of the ability to allocate, on a substantive basis, a Cafcass FCA or Associate FCA as a children’s guardian to all public law care cases within three working days of receipt of the case.



Private law

Private law KPIs

KPI 3: Cafcass will measure the proportion of open private law workload allocated to an FCA.



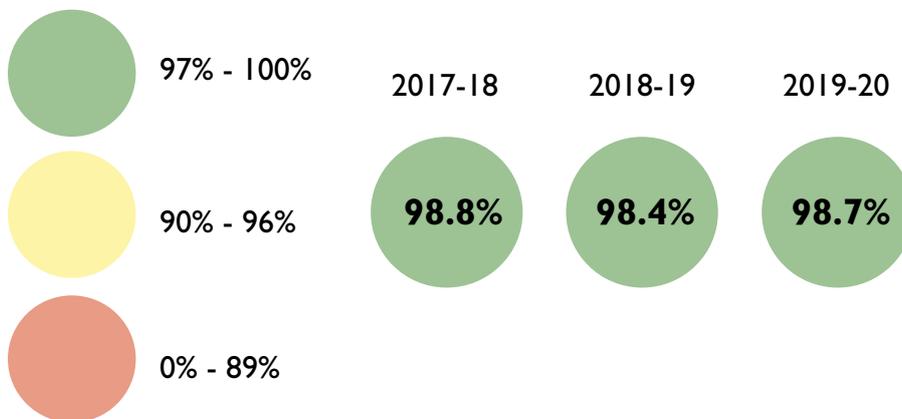
To avoid delay in private law proceedings of all types, we have set a standard that 97% of our workload should be allocated when taken as a snapshot.

As at 31 March 2020, only 0.2% of our work was 'unallocated' and a further 1.9% 'duty allocated' (based on all cases screened and processed ready for substantive allocation). These percentages are lower than the year ending 31 March 2019. This is because following the start of the Covid-19 crisis in March 2020, there was a significant reduction in incoming cases that allowed the backlog of new cases to be cleared and allocated.

Underlying indicators, however, give a more nuanced sense of the strain in the system with more work being 'held' by managers to ensure social work risk assessment and oversight before they can be allocated to an FCA with the capacity to progress it. For example, other measures demonstrate longer periods before transfer to an FCA. For example, cases were 'duty allocated' (providing immediate managerial oversight of a case pending full allocation to an FCA who will progress the work) for an average of 15.2 working days at the end of March 2020. The performance for March 2019 was 12 working days.



KPI 4: Cafcass will measure the proportion of section 7 reports that meet their agreed filing times.



Performance improved for this measure which relates to the timely filing of section 7 reports in private law by the agreed date. Between April 2019 and March 2020, the national average was 98.7% of section 7 reports files by the agreed date.

All service areas met or exceeded this target over the 2019-20 period.

On average, reports that were not filed on time were filed 1.5 working days after their due date (compared with 1.6 working days in 2018-9).

This indicator is a measure of the ability to file the section 7 reports by the date agreed with the court.

The definition of 'agreed date' includes extended dates agreed by the courts following requests by Cafcass. When agreed extensions are removed from the analysis, the proportion of reports filed by the first filing date is far lower.

During 2019-20, 68.2% of section 7 reports were filed by the first agreed date (67% in 2018-19). The large majority (97.8%) of reports were still filed before the hearing date for which they were due.

Caseload measures:

An important indicator for pressure on our services relates to the caseloads of our FCAs.

As at 1 March 2020, the average caseload was 22.7 cases, with 64.9% of relevant staff at or above 20 cases. This compares with an average caseload of 22.2 in 2018-19 and 58.9% of relevant staff carrying caseloads of 20 or more. This measure reflects cases currently open to a Cafcass social work practitioner which have ongoing or future work. This represents a long-term, increasing trend for overall caseload growth.



Sustainability report

Cafcass is committed to sustainable practices which consider our environmental, economic and social impact.

Sustainability Steering Group

We have a Sustainability Steering Group, chaired by the Director of Resources, which monitors our progress and promotes these values within Cafcass.

Performance against our Greening Government Commitments (GGC)

We have met, or are on track to meet, the five GGC target areas. Each target area contains specific targets; these targets, and our performance, are set out in the following tables.

Target area 1: reduce our emissions

We continue to achieve lower greenhouse gas emissions, already exceeding the 2020 target. We continue to reduce travel-related emissions and its related costs even further, mainly through our flexible working policy, our video conferencing enabled laptops with Skype and our encouragement of staff to travel 'sustainably smart'. This has been complemented by our continued policy change from 2015-16 to limit business-critical situations and ensure travel is booked in advanced wherever possible. There has been a decrease in domestic flights during 2019-20 compared to previous years. This has been due to targeted discussions around sustainability issues with key groups which has impacted on the wider community. Smart meters are still used to ensure accurate billing for utilities and our expenditure on energy has reduced.

Below is an explanation of the colours and asterisks used in this section of the report.



Target met



Target on track to be met



Target not yet met

*Data has been compared with 2013-14, as baseline 2009-10 data not held.

**Data has been compared with 2017-18 previous three years.

***Includes credit of £28,000 which distorted the figure.

The baseline year refers to 2009-2010 which was the first year the GGC was undertaken. All our figures refer back to this year as a baseline unless stated otherwise.

Target by 2021	Indicator	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	Baseline	Target progress
Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 43%	Scope 1 and 2 emissions: site based, leased transport and supplied energy (tonnes CO2e)	293	324	358	2,298	
	Scope 3 emissions: business travel using non-owned transport (tonnes CO2e)	1,415	1,450	1,313	884	
	Total emissions (tonnes CO2e)	1,708	1,774	1,671	3,182	Met 46%



Target by 2021	Indicator	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	Baseline	Target progress
Reduce energy usage	Electricity (MWh)	629	712	489	3,380	
	Gas (MWh)	524	473	570	2,913	
	Total energy (MWh)	1,153	1,185	1,059	6,293	Met 82%

Target by 2021	Indicator	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	Baseline	Target progress
Reduce number of domestic flights by at least 30%	Domestic air travel (number of flights)	68	91	103	0	** Met 34%

19-20 – Flights are still based on the 2017-18 figure of 103**

18-19 - Figure calculated on 2016-17 flight data of 115 flights.**

Financial indicators		2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	Baseline	Trend
Energy and travel costs	Total energy (£000s)	127	135	*** 97	338	62%
	Official business travel (£000s)	664	642	788	719	£211,000 saved
	Domestic air travel (£000s)	11	6	7	0	
	Total travel (£000s)	675	648	795	719	6% £44,000 saved



Target area 2: improve our waste management

We have substantially reduced our overall waste generated and have achieved reductions in the proportion of waste sent to landfill, although this has not yet met the 2020 target. Our waste management data is currently calculated using some estimated data due to diverse lease arrangements across our 33 offices.

Recycling is encouraged in all offices and all confidential paper waste is recycled under a national scheme. As part of our social impact practice, IT equipment that is no longer needed is disposed of ethically by donating it to schools or charities where possible.

Target by 2021	Indicator	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	Baseline	Target progress
Reduce landfill proportion to under 10% of overall waste	Hazardous waste (tonnes)	0	0	0	0	Landfill:  49% of total waste Not yet met
	Non-hazardous waste: landfill (tonnes)	16	16	17	44	
Increase proportion of waste which is recycled	Non-hazardous waste: reused/recycled (tonnes)	17	15.5	14.5	263	Recycled:  51% of total waste Not yet met
	ICT waste: recycled (tonnes)	0	5.4	2.3	0	
Reduce overall waste	ICT waste: reused (tonnes)	0	4.3	2.4	0	 Total waste 87% Met
	Total waste (tonnes)	33.0	41.2	36.2	307	



Financial indicators		2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	Baseline	Trend
Waste management costs	Non-hazardous waste: landfill (£000s)	Not held	Not held	Not held	5	
	Non-hazardous waste: reused/recycled (£000s)	3.1	3.4	4	17	82% £13,900 saved
	Total disposal (£000s)	16.2	14	15	92	74% £75,800 saved

Target by 2021	Indicator	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	Baseline	Target progress
Reduce paper usage by at least 50%	Paper consumption (reams)	2,487	2,707	2,618	Not held	* Met

Financial indicators		2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	Baseline	Trend
Paper costs	Paper (£000s)	6.8	7.1	7	Not held	* 85% *£37,200 saved

Target area 3: reduce our water use

Our use of water has met the GGC target and has remained steady over the last three years. Following the deregulation of water companies, we have a plan to tap into the de-regulated suppliers to see if any savings can be further achieved.

Target by 2021	Indicator	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	Baseline	Target progress
Reduce water usage to 3m ³ per FTE	Total water consumption (m ³)	560	793	752	Not held	
	Water consumption per FTE (m ³)	2.29	1.99	2.49	Not held	* On track



Financial indicators		2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	Baseline	Trend
Water costs	Water supply and sewage (£000s)	5	7.8	7	31	77% £23,200 saved

Target area 4: buying 'greener' products and services

We are committed to meeting the Government Buying Standards (GBS) best practice specifications wherever possible which help deliver sustainable procurement to meet GGC targets. All common goods and services are procured by the Crown Commercial Service, which streamlines procurement processes, provides value for money and establishes 'framework agreements' to include a sustainable product that meet the GBS mandatory levels.

Target area 5: being transparent and open

We report our sustainability data to the MoJ quarterly and an annual return is completed at the end of each financial year. Biodiversity Action Planning is not relevant to the Cafcass estate as we do not own any open spaces; we consider climate change within the Sustainability Steering Group.

Sustainable procurement: we are on track to meet the 2020 government target of 33% of procurement spending to reach small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs); spend with SMEs currently remains at 23% of our spend with suppliers. All our contracting requirements over £25,000 are advertised on the Contract Finder website and are open to the SME market.

Improving sustainability 2020-21

Cafcass' Sustainability Steering Group is committed to the continuous improvement of our sustainability agenda. In 2020-21 we will be working to improve key areas which have been identified from the sustainability data above.

- **Strengthen the membership of the Sustainability Steering Group:** SSG has recently changed format to include a wider spectrum of operational staff. The MoJ's sustainability lead also attends meetings and offers wider solutions used by the MoJ.
- **Improve office recycling:** The SSG is currently writing a recycling protocol which identifies gold, silver and bronze levels of recycling within offices. The group intends for this to be implemented on an organisational wide basis over the next year which will in turn impact on the current recycling processes making them much more efficient and effective.
- **Continue to increase our work with SMEs by following the governments SME agenda:** Procurements have been adapted to ensure that future contracts are made with SME's which subsequently impact on the rural community.
- **More contracts are to be awarded with climate change a key consideration:** Several considerations are currently being made, for example all car hire arrangements are only made with cars of lower emissions. In addition, the use of carbon offsets are to be considered if flights are found to be necessary.
- **Understand the impact that Covid-19 has had on sustainability in the work place and use the learning to make positive change:** The Covid-19 pandemic has had the effect of creating a completely different working environment which the SSG are already discussing to see what methods of working can be maintained to have a positive effect on the environment moving forward.



Signed: Jacky Tiotto
Chief Executive and Accounting Officer
Date: 9 December 2020



Accountability

- The corporate governance report
- Remuneration and staff report
- Parliamentary accountability and audit report
- Financial commentary
- Certificate and Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General to the Houses of Parliament



The corporate governance report

This section reviews and evaluates the governance, risk and control arrangements in place in Cafcass. It also sets out how we are organised and who is responsible for managing and running Cafcass, including our Chief Executive, our Chair of the Board, members of the Board, and our Corporate and Operational Management Teams.

- The Directors' report
- Statement of Accounting Officer's Responsibilities
- Governance statement

The Directors' report

The Directors present their annual report, together with the financial statements and auditor's report. Sally Cheshire is Interim Chair following the resignation of Edward Timpson in December 2019. The Board is made up of non-executive members, shown below, who have been approved by ministers and in accordance with the Membership, Committee and Procedure Regulations 2005.

Cafcass Board membership:

- Edward Timpson CBE (resigned 16 December 2019)
- Sally Cheshire CBE, Interim Chair
- Francis Plowden (Chair of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee)
- Stuart Smith (Chair of the Performance and Quality Committee)
- Fay Selvan
- Caroline Corby
- Deep Sagar
- Paul Grant
- Catherine Doran
- Mandy Jones
- Joanna Nicolas, Co-opted Board member
- Sophie Humphreys OBE, Co-opted Board member

Three Board members' appointments ended on 31 March 2020: Francis Plowden, Fay Selvan and Stuart Smith.

The Secretary of State announced the appointments of three new Board members who would commence their appointments on 1 April 2020: Helen Jones, Eileen Munro and Rohan Sivanandan.

Register of interests

Board members have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest; a register of interests can be found on our website.

Personal data related incidents

Cafcass agrees that no unauthorised disclosure of personal data is acceptable but acknowledges that the risk cannot be entirely eliminated. There is a commitment from Cafcass, the Board and the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee to continue the work to focus on mitigation and there are improvements in place to lower the number of data breaches.



The overall number of data breaches remains low considering the high volume of applications and number of communications of personal data by post and email to children and families or stakeholders. In total there were 415 in 2019-20. This reflects incidents in a very small proportion of cases: 0.65% of cases received in 2019-20. Unavoidable incidents occur as a result of incorrect contact information being provided to Cafcass and to mitigate these we continue to look for ways to improve our verification processes to continue to drive these numbers down. Cafcass has robust breach detection, investigation and reporting procedures in place. All reports of suspected data breaches are taken seriously and are logged, investigated and where relevant responded to, with actions, learning and improvement points identified. There were 29 personal data breaches that fell within the legal requirement for reporting to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), which was a reduction from 56 reports the previous year. These concerned medium risk correspondence, such as safeguarding letters, section 7 reports and lost information. None of the reports resulted in any action by the ICO.

In September 2019, the ICO undertook a voluntary audit of Cafcass systems and procedures looking specifically at security of personal data and records management. The assurance rating given by the ICO following the audit was "Reasonable" which is the second highest category. The report prepared by the ICO contained 53 recommendations which have been included in an action plan drafted in response and Cafcass expects to complete the majority of the actions by September 2020. The outstanding actions will be part of a longer-term programme and Cafcass will continue to work with the ICO to ensure the systems and policies are as effective as possible.

The statement of Accounting Officer's responsibilities

Under the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000, the Secretary of State has directed Cafcass to prepare for each financial year a Statement of Accounts in the form and on the basis set out in the Accounts Direction. The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and must give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of Cafcass and of its net resource outturn, application of resources, changes in taxpayers' equity and cash flows for the financial year.

In preparing the accounts, the Accounting Officer is required to comply with the requirements of the Government Financial Reporting Manual and in particular to:

- observe the Accounts Direction issued by the Secretary of State, including the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis;
- make judgements and estimates on a reasonable basis;
- state whether applicable accounting standards as set out in the Government Financial Reporting Manual have been followed, and disclose and explain any material departures in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis.

The Principal Accounting Officer of the Ministry of Justice has appointed the Chief Executive as Accounting Officer of Cafcass. The responsibilities of an Accounting Officer, including responsibility for the propriety and regularity of the public finances for which the Accounting Officer is answerable, for keeping proper records and for safeguarding Cafcass' assets, are set out in 'Managing Public Money' published by HM Treasury.



As far as the Accounting Officer is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which Cafcass' auditors are unaware. She has taken all steps possible to make herself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that Cafcass' auditors are aware of that information.

The Accounting Officer confirms that the annual report and accounts as a whole is fair, balanced and understandable. She takes personal responsibility for the annual report and accounts and the judgments required for determining that it is fair, balanced and understandable.

The governance statement

Cafcass is an executive non-departmental public body for which I, Jacky Tiotto, am the Chief Executive and the Accounting Officer. I am personally responsible and accountable to Parliament for the organisation and quality of the work carried out by Cafcass, including its use of public money and the stewardship of its assets.

There have been no material changes in our governance framework during the financial year. Our governance arrangements satisfy the requirements of the main principles of corporate governance in 'Central Government Departments: Code of Good Practice' that are relevant to Cafcass. I consider our governance framework to be effective.

I consulted with, and received assurances from, the outgoing Accounting Officer prior to completing this statement.

The Ministry of Justice (MoJ)

As a non-departmental public body Cafcass is accountable to our sponsoring department, the MoJ. We work within the strategic objectives agreed with the MoJ. We agree an annual Delivery Plan with the MoJ which reflects our statutory duties, our contribution to the MoJ targets, and our plans to deliver efficiency targets. In 2019-20 regular meetings have been held between Cafcass and the MoJ where performance against these requirements has been scrutinised. We work closely with the MoJ on policy development and we contribute in agreed, defined ways to the MoJ policy objectives for the family justice system.

The Cafcass Board

The Board use their expertise and experience to establish the organisation's strategic aims and objectives. Their work is supported by two committees.

Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC): provides assurance to the Board and Accounting Officer on audit, risk and control issues. **Performance and Quality Committee:** supports the Board in overseeing the performance of services, the quality of casework and the impact of that work on children and families, Cafcass and the courts.

The Board and its sub-committees formally met on a quarterly basis during the year and two meetings were open to members of the public to attend. One of the public meetings was convened as a seminar event for stakeholders and members of the public, which focused on delivery of the Strategic Plan and Cafcass' private law demand reduction plan. Stephanie Brivio, Deputy Director for Safeguarding and Child Protection at the Department for Education also attended to speak about the work of the Child Safeguarding Review Panel.

There is also a Remuneration Committee which is convened as and when needed.



The Family Justice Young People's Board (FJYPB) works across the family justice system to promote the voice of the child in family court proceedings and is integral to the family justice reform process. A representative of the FJYPB attends each meeting and provides an update about their work and to scrutinise the work of the Board.

Meetings attended per member out of those eligible to attend

Board Member	Board	Audit and Risk Assurance Committee	Performance and Quality Committee
Edward Timpson	2 of 2	n/a	n/a
Sally Cheshire	4 of 4	2 of 2*	1 of 1**
Francis Plowden	4 of 4	4 of 4	n/a
Stuart Smith	4 of 4	n/a	3 or 4
Fay Selvan	4 of 4	n/a	4 of 4
Caroline Corby	4 of 4	4 of 4	4 of 4
Deep Sagar	2 of 4	4 of 4	3 of 4
Catherine Doran	4 of 4	4 of 4	n/a
Paul Grant	3 of 4	n/a	3 of 4
Mandy Jones	4 of 4	n/a	3 of 4
Joanna Nicolas	4 of 4	n/a	4 of 4
Sophie Humphreys	4 of 4	n/a	n/a

*Sally Cheshire does not attend ARAC whilst in the Interim Chair role

**Observing

Internal management structure

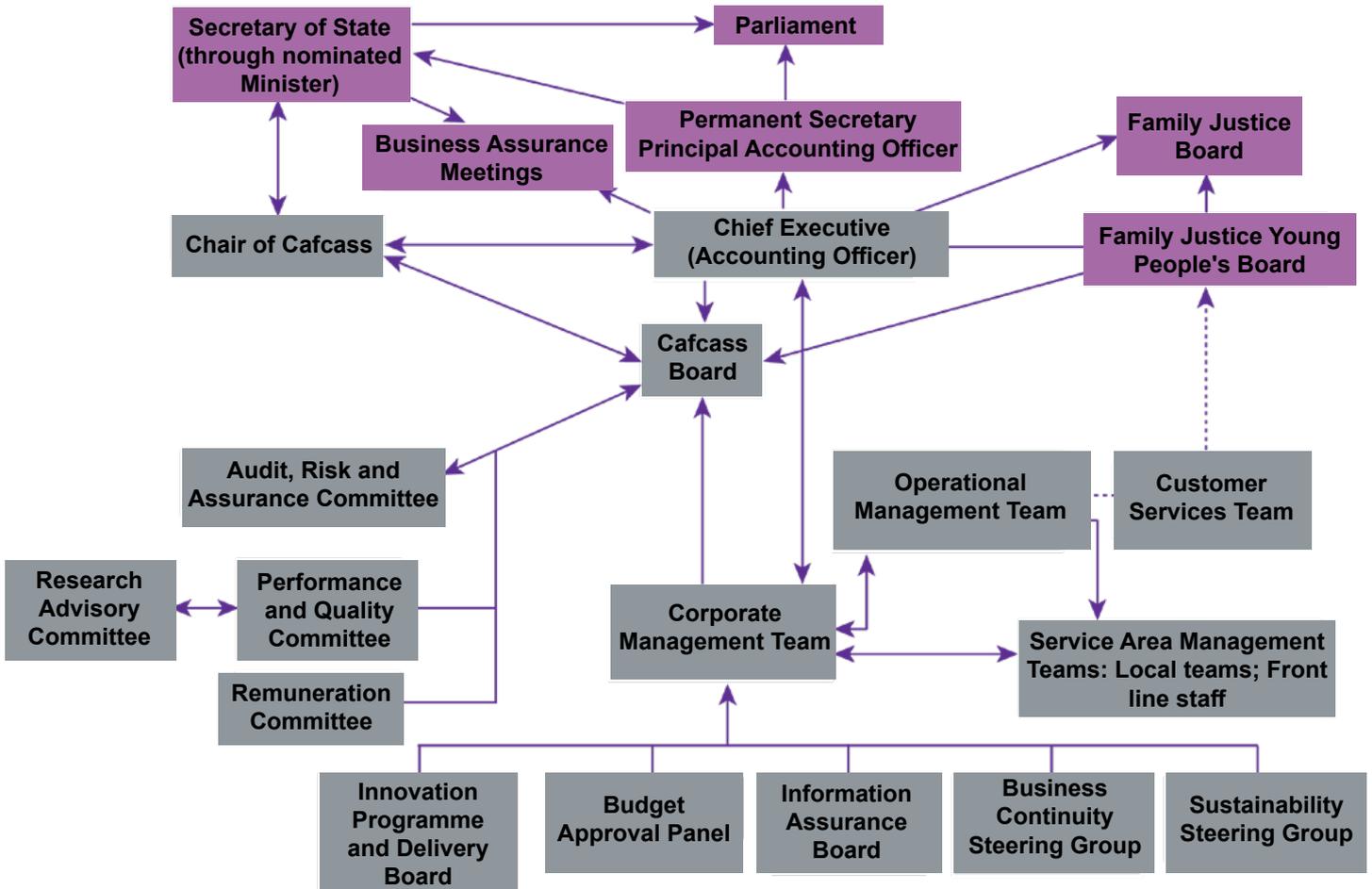
The Chief Executive was supported during the year by three directors and together they make up the Corporate Management Team (CMT): the Director of Strategy, the Director of Resources and the National Service Director. During 2019 two further Director posts, Director of Operational Service Delivery and Director of Operational Performance, were recruited to as part of succession planning for the departure of the National Service Director in 2020. CMT meet weekly using a performance and accountability framework which allows discussion within themed meetings and includes a range of senior managers across the organisation attending.



Our previous Chief Executive, Anthony Douglas CBE retired on 30 April 2019 and the role of Chief Executive was then held on an interim basis by the Director of Resources. From 1 May - 2 September, our Director of Resources was the Interim Chief Executive and held all Accounting Officer responsibilities. Other elements of the Chief Executive role were held across the three directors on a distributed leadership basis. This interim arrangement was agreed with the Board and the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Justice. Jacky Tiotto joined Cafcass on 2 September 2019 as the permanent Chief Executive.

The Operational Management Team (OMT) is led by the Director of Performance. Its membership is made up of the assistant directors, operational heads of practice, and representatives from teams that directly support operational services including finance, human resources and business analysis. OMT meets monthly to manage performance across the country. The Directors of Strategy and Resources meet regularly with their managers to review performance across their respective portfolios.

Service area meetings take place locally every month in each service area to translate the corporate and operational agenda into local actions. Local team meetings complete this cascade structure and process, which includes the learning both from mistakes and from best practice. Periodical meetings within the specialist functional teams also take place for the same purposes.



We have internal boards and groups which are managed by members of the CMT to ensure that we keep abreast of regulations and requirements in line with good governance principles: Operational Management Team, Information Assurance Board, Innovation and Programme Delivery Board, Business Continuity Steering Group and Budget Approval Panel. A Research and Advisory Committee will be set-up at the beginning of 2020-21. We will also be introducing Delivery Boards in 2020-21 to govern the delivery of the Strategic Plan priorities (one Delivery Board for each pillar).

The Board's performance

The Interim Chair of the Cafcass Board is Sally Cheshire who was appointed by the Secretary of State on 16 December 2019 following the resignation of Edward Timpson CBE. During 2019-20 the Board continued to govern and perform its role effectively and Board members continue to work closely with members of the CMT to provide strong leadership to achieve our priorities. In 2019-20 Board members visited Cafcass offices, meeting staff and observing direct practice to which they provided useful feedback reports.

In 2019-20 the Board undertook a review of their performance and for the first time, this included external stakeholders, Cafcass staff and young people.

I am confident that the quality of the data used by the Board is robust. All reports prior to submission to the Board are subject to rigorous quality assurance processes by senior managers. The effectiveness of the systems that generate the financial and performance data contained within the reports is evidenced through positive internal audit and inspection results.

We aim to keep reports clear, concise and focused on the purpose of the Board's reviewing. An example of this is our Performance Report, which provides an overall high-level position and assessment of our performance against our strategic objectives and risks and is aligned with the corporate work programme which drives the actions needed to meet our objectives.

Assurance arrangements

ARAC has oversight of the organisation's governance, risk and internal control frameworks. It receives reports on matters of assurance and oversees the preparation and publication of the financial statements each year.

ARAC oversees the internal audit programme work and delivery arrangements. The Head of Internal Audit role and internal audit programme are provided through the Government Internal Audit Agency.

Internal audit

The planned programme of audit work was met during the year which included six audit reports. Two audit reviews were also carried out in respect of the data breaches, to follow up progress of actions arising from the previous audit, and a review of the Gifts and Hospitality Policy. Cafcass was given an overall assurance of substantial.



Rating: substantial

- IT cyber security
- Freedom of information and parliamentary questions
- Payroll starters and leavers

Rating: moderate

- Risk management
- Assurance framework
- Early Intervention Team

Strategic and business plans

The Strategic Plan was launched in September 2019 and sets the direction for Cafcass over the next three years until 2023. The plan was developed over several months and informed by the views of staff and partners. Setting out a collective vision and values, the strategy looks outwards, with the aspiration of working more closely with partners and families to improve the experiences and outcomes for children and parents involved within the family justice system. The strategy sets out three broad strategic goals:

1. To deliver the best quality social work and support service in every case, to help make things better for children and their families, wherever they live.
2. For our staff to have the support, resources and working environment that enables them to sustain excellence in challenging times.
3. To share knowledge, learn from others and use our collective influence to improve the family justice system and wider family policy.

The related delivery plan is being developed, although with many projects already in progress. This delivery of the strategic plan will be monitored by the CMT and substantive bi-annual reporting to the Cafcass Board.

Business continuity planning

Business continuity planning creates resilience within our processes and tools (such as IT systems) so that we can continue to deliver our service effectively during unexpected disruptive events. Each Cafcass site has a continuity plan in place. Our Business Continuity Steering Group and Incident Management Team support this work.

Risk management and profile

Our risk management policy sets out our approach to risk management and clearly outlines our responsibilities in the management of risk throughout the organisational structure, including how risk is escalated. Our strategic risks are captured in a risk register which is reviewed at every meeting of ARAC and Performance and Quality Committee (for those risks where they are the lead Board Committee) and quarterly by the Board. Our register identifies the risks to the achievement of our strategic priorities. The mitigations are categorised using a three-line of defence model: operational controls, management monitoring, and independent assurance. We also conduct a separate risk assessment of the wider environment in which we work, to provide more transparency around our understanding and management of risks outside the organisation, which do or could impact on our work.



During the year, we identified a number of noteworthy areas within our strategic risk profile:

Our assessment of the risk to maintaining quality of casework remained consistent during the year, notwithstanding the continual increase in demand and the consequent increase in individual workloads.

The in-year funding situation was in the most part manageable, but only through the constant vigilance of budget managers and their management of the tension between workforce capacity, the ability to allocate incoming work with the resources available. Funding for subsequent years remains an area of risk as the level of demand continues to place pressure on the service, driving a need to maintain resources if quality and performance are not to be compromised.

The assessment of residual risk relating to workforce and demand continues to be assessed as high (red), to acknowledge the continued rising demand in private law together with high levels of open work in the system, creating pressure on capacity. The assessment of risk relating to leadership (succession planning) is assessed as amber. Sally Cheshire CBE was appointed as Interim Chair and arrangements to appoint a new permanent Chair will be led by the MoJ. As part of transitional planning for the departure of the National Service Director in 2020 two additional directors have been appointed as Operational Directors for Service and Performance.

Cafcass continues to work collaboratively with the judiciary and legal profession to influence system change on reform through a number of working groups including the judicial working groups.

The assessment of risk relating to Covid-19 was introduced in March 2020. The current assessment is amber. Cafcass' incident management structure has been implemented through gold and silver command groups meeting daily to manage the organisational response and impact.

Information assurance

Our position statement on Cafcass' information assurance arrangements is as follows:

The Director of Strategy is the Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) for Cafcass and is supported in this role by the Governance team, the Information Assurance manager and Head of IT, who is our Chief Information Officer (CIO).

An internal audit of data breaches was undertaken in 2018-19 and Cafcass received an audit rating of 'moderate'. In 2019-20 a follow-up audit was completed at the request of ARAC, to examine the management action taken in respect of the recommendations. The auditors were satisfied that recommendations in the original 2018-19 report had been implemented.

In August 2019, the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) completed a voluntary audit of Cafcass' security and records management. The ICO audit report returned 'reasonable' assurance in both areas. The Governance team has progressed and completed several actions from the ICO audit and continue to work through the action plan of recommendations from the ICO.

The quarterly Information Assurance Board (IAB) meetings are attended by Cafcass' information asset owners who monitor and assess any information management associated risks. The IAB reviews the log of data breaches and monitors any changes in the trends, nature and volume of breaches.



A data breach report is presented to ARAC twice yearly for further scrutiny and oversight. Information stored electronically, which involves all current case information, is considered to be appropriately secure as we maintain compliance with recommended government security levels. This is audited independently, and all electronic devices are encrypted.

- We continue to use Egress Switch which allows personal sensitive information to be sent securely via email to families and external agencies.
- Cafcass has IT, Information Assurance, and Case Recording and Retention policies which are reviewed and updated regularly to ensure they reflect best practice.
- We promote awareness and good practice through regular news items and training. We have a Cafcass-specific training module 'Protecting Information in Cafcass' which is mandatory for all staff. Completion rates of the training are at 98% and are monitored by the IAB.
- Security incident returns are submitted quarterly to the MoJ. We report our position annually in relation to the Security Policy Framework and planned future work to the Cabinet Office via the MoJ.
- We continue to self-assess at a high level of assurance.
- In summer 2019 Cafcass appointed an Information Assurance Manager at a senior level to advise on and promote an organisational culture of information security so that all staff and teams have an understanding and appreciation of their responsibilities. The Information Assurance Manager also holds the statutory role of Data Protection Officer for Cafcass.

We continue to promote good practice and ensure compliance through training and shared learning:

- Targeted training on data breaches was delivered to business services teams in 2019 and all teams based at the National Business Centre (NBC).
- Data protection training tailored to HR was delivered to the HR Transactions and Resourcing Team at the NBC in January 2020.
- A cyber security eLearning module was launched in 2019-20 which is mandatory for all Cafcass staff to complete.
- Cafcass continues to deliver an information assurance awareness campaign to staff. The objective of the campaign is to deliver key messages on important data protection issues and stimulate discussion about how to continue to reduce data breaches. These campaign messages are delivered via various channels such as intranet news articles, webinars and posters.
- Data protection and data breaches is a mandatory item at all team meetings for teams based at the NBC and for all early intervention teams.
- As part of the actions arising from the ICO audit, Cafcass is reviewing its training programme across the organisation, including the timescales for completing the mandatory eLearning and the content of the eLearning, and incorporating data protection training into other core training for staff.



Summary of other protected personal data related incidents in 2019-20

Data breaches reported internally according to Cabinet Office guidance, 29 of which fell within the criteria for reporting to the Information Commissioner's Office.

Category	Nature of incident	Total
I	Loss of inadequately protected electronic equipment, devices or paper documents from outside secured Cafcass premises	9
II	Loss of inadequately protected electronic equipment, devices or paper documents from secured government premises	74
III	Insecure disposal of inadequately protected electronic equipment devices or paper documents	0
IV	Unauthorised disclosure	332
V	Other	0

Overall conclusions from the Accounting Officer

We consider that our governance framework is operating effectively and is proportionate to the risks and challenges facing us. We continue to prioritise our efforts and resources into supporting the frontline service. Our experience of the rise in new referrals, the complexity of the work and the growing levels of cases staying open longer creates the prospects of only greater challenges ahead. These challenges are not only how to maintain the quality of our work with children but also, equally importantly, how we can continue to sustain and ensure the resilience of the health and wellbeing of our staff. In this context, while the governance framework in place is working for now, we will continue to keep this under review.



Remuneration and staff report

Remuneration and staff report

The purpose of this section is to set out the pay and benefits received by Cafcass directors and Board members, our pay and pensions policies, details of staff numbers and costs, and our policies supporting staff including equality and diversity commitments.

Remuneration policy

The remuneration for Cafcass directors is recommended by a Remuneration Committee made up of three Cafcass Board members: the Chair, the Deputy Chair and the Chair of ARAC. The MoJ reviews its proposals and also approves annual pay reviews and performance-related payments for the Chief Executive. Cafcass salaries are established by considering factors such as relevant external comparator pay levels, internal relativities, affordability, recruitment and retention risks, and political sensitivity. There is no planned change to this policy for the 2019-20 financial year. The remuneration for Cafcass Board members is determined by the MoJ.

Service contracts

Cafcass' appointments of directors are made in accordance with the Cafcass Recruitment and Retention Policy. This policy recognises that in order to provide a high-quality service to the children and families that we serve, it is vital that we recruit and retain people through fair and open competition who share our aims and values and have the requisite skills and abilities to perform to a consistently high standard.

Unless otherwise stated, staff covered by this report hold appointments that are open-ended. Members of Cafcass' Corporate Management Team (CMT) are required to provide four or six months' notice to terminate their contract. Early termination by Cafcass, other than for gross misconduct, would result in the individual receiving compensation by way of payment in lieu of notice, as set out in the individual contract of employment. No such payments were made to senior executives during the year.

Cafcass Board members are appointed by the MoJ according to the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Membership, Committee and Procedure) Regulations 2005, which sets out all terms of appointment except remuneration, which is determined by the Secretary of State. Board members are statutory office holders and, as such, do not hold a contract of employment. Cafcass Board members are appointed on one, two or three-year terms.



Remuneration of Cafcass Board members and senior management

Remuneration includes gross salary, bonus payments (up to 10% performance-related pay applicable to some CMT members only), benefits-in-kind, and pension benefits (employer's pension contributions). More detail on these is set out below in the remuneration tables.

Single total figure of remuneration for Cafcass Board members¹⁰

Board members	Salary (£000)		Bonus payments (£000)		Benefits in kind (to nearest £100)		Pension benefits (£000)		Total (£000)	
	2019-20	2018-19	2019-20	2018-19	2019-20	2018-19	2019-20	2018-19	2019-20	2018-19
Francis Plowden (until 31 March 20)	10-15	10-15	-	-	-	-	-	-	10-15	10-15
Fay Selvan (until 31 March 20)	10-15	10-15	-	-	3000	2,600	-	-	10-15	10-15
Stuart Smith (until 31 March 20)	10-15	10-15	-	-	2,200	2,000	-	-	10-15	10-15
Caroline Corby	10-15	10-15	-	-	-	-	-	-	10-15	10-15
Paul Grant	10-15	10-15	-	-	300	1,100	-	-	10-15	10-15
Deep Sagar	10-15	10-15	-	-	300	1,100	-	-	10-15	10-15
Sir Mark Hedley	0-5	0-5	-	-	-	-	-	-	0-5	0-5
Joanna Nicolas	10-15	10-15	-	-	-	200	-	-	10-15	10-15
Simon Hackett (until 31 December 2018)	-	0-5 (0-5 annualised)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0-5 (0-5 annualised)
Sally Cheshire CBE	10-15	0-5 (10-15 annualised)	-	-	7,400	1,200	-	-	20-25	10-15 (10-15 annualised)
Catherine Doran	10-15	5-10 (10-15 annualised)	-	-	500	700	-	-	10-15	5-10 (10-15 annualised)
Sophie Humphreys OBE	10-15	0-5 (10-15 annualised)	-	-	-	-	-	-	10-15	0-5 (10-15 annualised)
Mandy Jones	10-15	5-10 (10-15 annualised)	-	-	800	400	-	-	10-15	5-10 (10-15 annualised)
Edward Timpson CBE (until 16 December 2019)	10-15 (20-25 annualised)	20-25 (20-25 annualised)	-	-	1,200	2,600	-	-	15-20 (20-25 annualised)	25-30 (25-30 annualised)

¹⁰ This information has been audited.



Single total figure of remuneration for directors¹¹

Directors	Salary (£000)		Bonus payments (£000)		Benefits in kind (to nearest £100)		Pension benefits (£000)		Total (£000)	
	2019-20	2018-19	2019-20	2018-19	2019-20	2018-19	2019-20	2018-19	2019-20	2018-19
Anthony Douglas, CBE Chief Executive (until 30 April 2019)	10-15 (Annualised 165-170)	165-170	10-15	10-15	-	100	-	-	25-30 (180-185 annualised)	175-180
Jacky Tiotto, Chief Executive (from 2 September 2019)	95-100 (165-170 annualised)	-	-	-	-	-	14	-	110-115 (180-185 annualised)	-
Julie Brown, Director of Resources & Deputy Chief Executive	135-140	130-135	10-15	5-10	100	100	49	40	195-200	175-180
Christine Banim, National Service Director	115-20	110-115	5-10	5-10	100	100	-	-	125-130	120-125
Teresa Williams, Director of Strategy	120-125	110-115	-	-	100	100	36	32	155-160	140-145
Anji Owens, Director of Operational Performance (from 1 January 2020)	25-30 (Annualised 115-120)	-	-	-	-	-	8	-	35-40 (Annualised 120-125)	-
Kevin Gibbs, Director of Operational Service Delivery (from 1 January 2020)	25-30 (Annualised 115-120)	-	-	-	-	-	8	-	35-40 (Annualised 120-125)	-

Salary

'Salary' includes: basic salary, London weighting, honorarium, overtime, market supplement (discretionary payment for some posts to aid retention and recruitment), buy-back of untaken annual leave, and Pay in lieu of Notice (PILON).

Bonus payments (performance related pay)

Performance related pay (PRP) is based on performance in the year. Targets are set annually and based on overall performance towards the achievements of the business plan objectives (stated below). Threshold performance would result in a PRP payment of no more than 10% of basic salary. Performance below threshold would result in no payment being paid.

PRP awards for Cafcass staff are determined by the Chief Executive and must be endorsed by the Remuneration Committee. PRP for the Chief Executive is determined by the Remuneration Committee and the MoJ. The strategic objectives that are relevant for PRP consideration are to:

- Show continuous improvement in our performance and in the quality of our work;
- Innovate and reform in public and private law, to use our resources to best effect;
- Develop an evidence base that analyses the diversity related needs of children and families and in turn briefs and trains our staff to respond to these changes;
- Continue delivering savings packages required by innovating throughout all front and back office functions and across organisational boundaries;
- Use our unique position and insight to generate high impact and timely research to inform our own practice and influence that across the family justice system.

¹¹ This information has been audited.



Benefits in kind

The monetary value of benefits in kind covers any non-cash benefits provided by Cafcass and treated by HM Revenue and Customs as a taxable emolument. Board members' travel costs to the Cafcass National Office are reimbursed to them, which acts as a benefit in kind.

Pension benefits

This sets out the value of pension benefits accrued during the year which were paid by Cafcass as employer's contributions. The contribution rate from April 2019 is 16.2%.

Pension entitlements for directors

Pension benefits are provided by the West Yorkshire Pension Fund (WYPF), to which Cafcass makes employer's contributions. Further information on the Cafcass pension schemes can be found on page 84, and in Note 1(f) and Note 22 of the Annual Accounts.

The accrued pension at retirement age is the pension earned that the member is entitled to receive when they reach pension age, or immediately on ceasing to be an active member of the scheme if they are already at or over pension age.

Cash equivalent transfer value (CETV) is the actuarially assessed capitalised value of the pension scheme benefits accrued by a member at a particular point in time. A CETV is a payment made by a pension scheme or arrangement to secure pension benefits in another pension scheme (or arrangement) when the member leaves a scheme and chooses to transfer the benefits accrued in their former scheme. CETVs are calculated within the guidelines and framework prescribed by the Institute and Faculty of Actuaries.

The pension figures shown relate to the benefits that individuals have accrued as a consequence of their total membership of the pension scheme, not just their service in a senior capacity to which disclosure applies. The CETV figure includes the value of any pension benefit in another scheme or arrangement which the individual has transferred to the pension provider and for which the pension provider has received a transfer payment commensurate to the additional pension liabilities being assumed. They also include any additional pension benefit accrued to the member as a result of their purchasing of additional years of pension service in the scheme at their own cost.

The real increase in CETV effectively funded by the employer excludes increases due to inflation and contributions paid by the Director (including the value of any benefits transferred from another pension scheme or arrangement). It uses common market valuation factors for the start and the end of the period.



	Real increase in pension and related lump sum at retirement age (£2,000 bands) (£000)	Total accrued pension at retirement age at 31 March 2020 and related lump sum (£5,000 bands) (£000)	CETV at 31 March 2019 (£000)	CETV at 31 March 2020 (£000)	Real increase in CETV after adjustment for inflation and changes in market investment factors (nearest £000)
Anthony Douglas, CBE, Chief Executive	-	-	-	-	-
Julie Brown, Director of Resources	2.5-5 plus 0-2.5	30-35 plus 0-5 lump sum	340	397	51
Christine Banim, National Service Director	-	-	-	-	-
Teresa Williams, Director of Strategy	2.5-5 plus 0-2.5 lump sum	5-10 plus 0-5 lump sum	30	63	32
Jacky Tiotto, Chief Executive (from 2 September 2019)	0-2.5 plus 0-2.5 lump sum	10-15 plus 0-5 lump sum	168	186	17
Anji Owens, Director of Operational Performance (from 1 January 2020)	0-2.5 plus 0-2.5 lump sum	35-40 plus 45-50 lump sum	559	565	4
Kevin Gibbs, Director of Operational Service Delivery (from 1 January 2020)	0-2.5 plus 0-2.5 lump sum	15-20 plus 0-5 lump sum	290	297	6

Compensation on early retirement or for loss of office

No senior managers received compensatory payments in 2019-20.

Fair pay disclosure¹²

This shows the relationship between the remuneration of the highest-paid director in the organisation and the median remuneration of the organisation's workforce. This is based on full-time equivalent salaries.

Top to median staff pay multiple ratio

	2019-20	2018-19
Highest earner's total banded remuneration (£000)	165-170	175-180
Median total remuneration	£42,669	£42,039
Ratio	1:3.91	1:4.22

In 2019-20, nil (2018-19, nil) employees received remuneration in excess of the highest-paid director. Remuneration ranged from £10,000 to £175,000 (2018-19, £10,000 to £180,000).

¹² This information has been audited.



Staff report

Number of Senior Civil Service equivalent staff

Cafcass has 17 staff who are the equivalent of Senior Civil Servants (SCS): 10 members of the Operational Management Team and seven senior managers in corporate teams (this excludes directors, whose remuneration has been set out on the previous page).

Salary band	Number of SCS equivalent within band as at 31 March 2020
£70,000-£80,000	3
£80,000-£90,000	4
£90,000-£100,000	10
Total	17

Staff numbers and costs¹³

Cafcass staff members are subject to levels of remuneration and terms and conditions of service (including superannuation) within the general pay structure approved by the MoJ.

An analysis of staff numbers and costs is set out below, distinguishing between staff with permanent contracts, and staff who are flexible, agency, and self-employed contractors. All staff numbers are presented on an actual basis as at the reporting date (31 March 2020) and reflect headcount; staff costs are presented on total cost during the reporting period (April 2019 – March 2020).

Staff numbers (as at 31 March 2020)

	Social worker	Other	Total
Cafcass Board member	-	11	11
Corporate staff	-	124	124
Operational staff	1,491	344	1,835
Flexible staff (bank/sessional)	51	2	53
Agency staff	33	18	51
Self-Employed contractors (active)	116	-	116

Staff composition

Staff	Female	Male	Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic	Disability
Chief Executive and directors	5	1	0	1
Senior Civil Service equivalent (excluding Directors)	10 (58.8%)	7 (41.2%)	1 (5.9%)	0 (0%)
Other Cafcass staff	1,675 (84.2%)	314 (15.8%)	286 (14.4%)	158 (7.9%)
Total staff	1,690 (84.0%)	322 (16.0%)	287 (14.3%)	159 (7.9%)

¹³ This information has been audited.



Staff costs¹⁴

	Cafcass Board Members	Corporate National Office staff	Regional Staff	Total
Salaries and wages	132,000	7,078,000	66,119,000	73,329,000
Apprentice levy	-	34,000	320,000	354,000
Social security costs	4,000	781,000	7,038,000	7,823,000
Current service cost	-	2,512,000	23,332,000	25,844,000
Other pension costs	-	16,000	-19,000	-3,000
Past pension service cost	-	290,000	2,713,000	3,003,000
Total payroll costs	136,000	10,711,000	99,503,000	110,350,000
Agency social worker costs	-	-	2,531,000	2,531,000
Other agency staff costs	-	-	449,000	532,000
Self-employed contractors	-	-	2,396,000	2,396,000
Inward secondees costs	-	-	-	-
Total staff costs	136,000	10,794,000	104,869,000	115,799,000

Sickness absence data

Average number of working days lost due to sickness (AWDL)

	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16
Social workers AWDL (excluding leavers)	9.6 (7.7)	9.9 (8.3)	8.7 (7.5)	10.6 (9.0)	7.6 (6.7)
Non-social workers AWDL (excluding leavers)	10.9 (9.1)	8.8 (8.0)	8.7 (8.1)	8.1 (7.1)	7.1 (6.4)
Overall AWDL (excluding leavers)	9.9 (8.0)	9.6 (8.2)	8.7 (7.7)	10.0 (8.6)	7.5 (6.6)

¹⁴ This information has been audited.



Expenditure on consultancy

Cafcass incurred no costs for consultancy across 2019-20.

Off-payroll engagements

Cafcass conforms to relevant regulations in respect of tax arrangements for all off-payroll appointments and this includes an assessment of employment status as required under IR35. Where engaged through an intermediary Cafcass notifies the assessment of employment status and where relevant instructs that required deductions for income tax and national insurance are made. Cafcass had liaised closely on these matters during 2017-18 with both the taxation team at the MoJ and with HM Revenue & Customs to ensure a compliant approach. There have been no known instances of non-tax compliant off-payroll engagements (brought to the attention of the organisation) as at 31 March 2020.

Exit packages¹⁵

A summary of exit packages for employed staff through compensation schemes is set out below.

Exit package cost band	Number of compulsory redundancies		Number of other departures agreed		Total number of exit packages by cost band	
	2019-20	2018-19	2019-20	2018-19	2019-20	2018-19
Less than £10,000	0	0	0	0	0	(0)
£10,000-£25,000	0	1	0	0	0	(1)
£25,000-£50,000	0	1	0	0	0	(1)
£50,000-£100,000	0	0	0	0	0	(0)
£100,000-£150,000	0	0	0	0	0	(0)
£150,000-£200,000	0	0	0	0	0	(0)
Total number of exit packages by type	0	(2)	0	0	0	(2)
Total resource cost (£000)	0	(62)	0	0	0	(62)

¹⁵ This information has been audited.



Pension costs

Cafcass participates in the West Yorkshire Pension Fund (WYPF) scheme and the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS). The WYPF scheme is a multi-employer defined benefit scheme in which Cafcass' share of the underlying assets and liabilities are identified.

The current contribution rate was previously determined by the independent fund actuaries at the time of the 2016 revaluation, being Aon Hewitt Limited. The contribution rate for 2019-20 is 16.2%. Aon Hewitt Limited is the currently appointed fund actuaries. The contribution rate is based on a combination of future service and the effects of past service deficits and ill health retirements. Employer's contributions to the scheme for the year to March 2020 amounted to £14.723m (costs relating to the voluntary early retirement programme were nil) with 2,093 employees participating in the scheme (2018-19: employer's contributions £14.054m, voluntary early retirement costs £0.021m, participating employees 2,009).

The last independent actuarial valuation of the WYPF scheme was on 31 March 2019 and revealed that the scheme was 87% funded in relation to past service. The valuation is based on assets and liabilities at 31 March 2019. Following the actuarial valuation, the revised employer contribution rates for Cafcass have been set as follows:

	Contribution rate %	Additional cash contribution
Year 2017-18	16.2%	£3.1268m
Year 2018-19	16.2%	£3.2284m
Year 2019-20	16.2%	£3.3333m

The PCSPS is an unfunded multi-employer defined benefit scheme for which Cafcass is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities. The scheme's actuary reviews employer contributions every four years following a full scheme valuation. A full actuarial valuation was carried out as at 31 March 2012 and revised contribution rates applied from 1 April 2015. Full details can be found at www.civilservice.gov.uk/pensions.

For 2019-20, employer's contributions of £0.038m (2018-19: £0.037m) were payable to the PCSPS at 27.1% to 27.9% of pensionable pay, based on salary bands. The contribution rates reflect benefits as they are accrued, not when the costs are actually incurred and reflect past experience of the scheme.

Trade union facility time

Number of employees who were relevant union officials during the relevant period	Full-time equivalent employee number
13	9.95
Percentage of time	Number of employees
0%	0
1 - 50%	13
51 - 99%	0
100%	0
Percentage of pay bill spent on facility time	Figures
Total cost of facility time	£117,654.40
Total pay bill	£96,244,270
% of pay bill spent on facility time	0.12%



Staff policies

Cafcass has several policies which support managers and staff effectively on a range of issues. All of our policies and procedures underpin our strategic plan¹⁶ and are in place to ensure the needs of our staff are properly supported.¹⁷

Equality, diversity and inclusion

Our strategic plan considers both the importance of the diverse background of the children and young people we work with, but also the diversity of our staff. Our current diversity and inclusion strategy can be viewed on our website.¹⁸ In 2019-20 we worked with our diversity networks and diversity champions to review our progress against the strategy which ends in 2020 and we are now in the process of identifying priorities for the next three years.

Our six virtual diversity networks continue to help shape our best practice and supporting policies, to promote awareness and to provide support to their members. We keep staff up to date by sharing good practice and promoting awareness of diversity topics. We use blogs and intranet articles to promote various diversity 'awareness dates' throughout the year, engaging all staff to champion equality, diversity and inclusion.

Cafcass policy on disabled staff

Cafcass does not operate a specific policy for staff with disabilities, however all of our policies are designed to ensure that issues related to or arising from disability are handled appropriately and do not place staff with underlying conditions at a disadvantage. Particular provisions are included within policies for employee relations, managing attendance and recruitment and retention including the requirement to make reasonable adjustments. In addition, the Cafcass IT policy makes specific provision for additional IT hardware, peripherals or software in cases where a particular need arises.

We are 'Disability Confident Employer' which is the highest accreditation given by the Department for Work and Pensions. This demonstrates our commitment to employ, train and develop the careers of people with disabilities.

Whistleblowing

Cafcass sees effective whistleblowing as a key component in our strategy to challenge inappropriate behaviour at all levels in the organisation. It is both an instrument in support of good governance and a manifestation of a more healthy and ethical organisational culture. Our whistleblowing policy and procedure is accessible to all staff on the front page of our intranet. It provides advice and guidance on the process for raising a complaint and advise on the protection afforded to whistle blowers who raise concerns. The policy explains how these concerns can be raised with relevant senior managers and this includes the ability to raise concerns directly with a nominated board member. Although there have been no instances of whistleblowing during the reporting period upon which to assess the effectiveness of our whistleblowing arrangements, the policy and procedure are kept under regular review.

¹⁶ More information about our strategic plan can be found in section 4

¹⁷ More information about working at Cafcass can be found in section 2

¹⁸ <https://www.cafcass.gov.uk/about-cafcass/reports-and-strategies/>



Parliamentary accountability and audit report

This information shows how we have spent the money provided to us by Parliament. It also shows that our annual accounts have been audited.

Our accounts

The Statement of Accounts of Cafcass for the year ending 31 March 2020 has been prepared in a form directed by the Secretary of State with consent of the Treasury, in accordance with the Accounts Direction dated 12 April 2002 given under Schedule 2, paragraph (13)2 of the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000.

The Accounts are audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General, who is appointed by statute. The audit fee is £73,500 for 2019-20 (£62,000 2018-19). There have been no non-audit services during 2019-20.

Treatment of pension liabilities

Employees of Cafcass are members of the West Yorkshire Pension Fund (WYPF), which is funded on a pay as-you-go basis.

A small number of Cafcass staff retained membership of the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS) by virtue of their earlier employment with one of Cafcass' predecessor organisations.

The amount charged to the staff costs for the PCSPS represents the contributions payable to the scheme in respect of current employees in the accounting period. Contributions are charged on a year-by-year basis in accordance with the requirements of the scheme administrators.

The assets of the WYPF, which is a defined benefit scheme, are held separately from those of Cafcass. The scheme assets are measured at realisable value. Scheme liabilities are measured using a projected unit method and discounted at the current rate of return on a high-quality corporate bond of equivalent term and currency to the liability.

The pension scheme surplus (to the extent that it is considered recoverable) or deficit is recognised in full on the face of the Statement of Financial Position. The movement in the scheme surplus/deficit is split between operating charges (within staff costs) and reserves in the case of actuarial gains and losses. Net interest receivable on pension scheme assets is shown in operating cash flows.

Long-term liabilities

There have been no significant changes in the organisation's long-term liabilities.

Long-term expenditure trends

There have been no significant changes in the organisation's long-term expenditure trends.

Remote contingent liabilities

There are no remote contingent liabilities.



Regularity of expenditure: losses and special payments

	2019-20 ¹⁹		2018-19	
	£000	Number of cases	£000	Number of cases
Losses statement				
Administrative write-offs	0	1	3	1
Fruitless payments	141	17	46	19
Total value of losses	141	18	49	20
Special payments				
Compensation payments	0	0	5	1
Total special payments	0	0	5	1
Total losses and special payments	141	18	54	21

There were £0.141m of losses and special payments charged to the Accounts as at 31 March 2020 (2018-19: £0.054m). The actual cash amount paid in the period was £0.146m (2018-19: £0.059m).

These payments were made in accordance with HM Treasury guidance.



Signed: Jacky Tiotto
Chief Executive and Accounting Officer
Date: 9 December 2020



Financial commentary

In 2019-20, Cafcass received grant funding of £121.902m from central Government, plus £0.372m for depreciation.

We also drew down from the sponsor separate additional funding of £1.866m for contact services (child contact intervention services).

A summary of how we spent our budget is shown below and further details are provided within our 2019-20 Annual Accounts in section 7.

	Total budget (£000)
Staff costs	110,882 (79.8%)
Self employed contractors	2,396 (1.7%)
Agency staff	2,521 (1.8%)
Other charges	20,262 (14.6%)
Depreciation and amortisation	372 (0.3%)
Partnerships costs	2,445 (1.8%)
Total spend reported	138,878

The Cafcass Statement of Financial Position as at 31 March 2020 shows net liabilities of £264.939m, including the pension liability of £262.411m. This reflects the inclusion of liabilities falling due in future years which, to the extent that they are not to be met from Cafcass' other sources of income, may only be met by future grants or grants-in-aid from Cafcass' sponsorship department. This is because, under the normal conventions applying to Parliamentary control over income and expenditure, such grants may not be issued in advance of need.

The pension deficit as at 31 March 2020 has increased compared with 31 March 2019 due principally to a net loss on the fair value of pension assets.

The total of trade payables as at 31 March 2020 is £0.562m (£0.226m as at 31 March 2019).

Interest and late payment charges of £nil has been paid or claimed by creditors under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts Act (£nil in 2018-2019).

Parliament has voted Grant-in-Aid to Cafcass for the 12 months following the Statement of Financial Position date. Therefore, despite the Statement of Financial Position of net liabilities, Cafcass operates as a going concern.



The Certificate and Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General to the Houses of Parliament

Opinion on financial statements

I certify that I have audited the financial statements of the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service ('Cafcass') for the year ended 31 March 2020 under the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000. The financial statements comprise: the Statements of Comprehensive Net Expenditure, Financial Position, Cash Flows, Changes in Taxpayers' Equity; and the related notes, including the significant accounting policies. These financial statements have been prepared under the accounting policies set out within them. I have also audited the information in the Accountability Report that is described in that report as having been audited.

In my opinion:

- the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of Cafcass's affairs as at 31 March 2020 and of net expenditure for the year then ended; and
- the financial statements have been properly prepared in accordance with the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 and Secretary of State directions issued thereunder.

Emphasis of matter

I draw attention to the disclosures made in Note 22 to the financial statements, which describe the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on the valuation of the Pension Fund investments. The outbreak of Covid-19 has resulted in additional uncertainty in the valuation of unquoted equity and pooled property funds. With regards to pooled property funds a material valuation uncertainty clause has been included in some valuation reports as a result of the impact of Covid-19. There is, therefore, less certainty and a higher degree of caution should be attached to the valuations of unquoted equity and pooled property funds than would normally be the case. My opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Opinion on regularity

In my opinion, in all material respects the income and expenditure recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

Basis of opinions

I conducted my audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (ISAs) (UK) and Practice Note 10 'Audit of Financial Statements of Public Sector Entities in the United Kingdom'. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of my certificate. Those standards require me and my staff to comply with the Financial Reporting Council's Revised Ethical Standard 2016. I am independent of Cafcass in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to my audit and the financial statements in the UK. My staff and I have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

I have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs (UK) require me to report to you where:

- Cafcass' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- Cafcass have not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about Cafcass' ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Responsibilities of the Board and the Accounting Officer for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Statement of Accounting Officer's Responsibilities, the Board and the Accounting Officer are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

My responsibility is to audit, certify and report on the financial statements in accordance with the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000.

An audit involves obtaining evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.



As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (UK), I exercise professional judgment and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of Cafcass's internal control.
- evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the consolidated financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.
- conclude on the appropriateness of Cafcass's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on Cafcass's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my report. However, future events or conditions may cause Cafcass to cease to continue as a going concern.

I communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit. In addition, I am required to obtain evidence sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the income and expenditure reported in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

Other Information

The Board and the Accounting Officer are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises information included in the annual report, but does not include the parts of the Accountability Report described in that report as having been audited, the financial statements and my auditor's report thereon. My opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. In connection with my audit of the financial statements, my responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or my knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, I am required to report that fact. I have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matters

In my opinion:

- the parts of the Accountability Report to be audited have been properly prepared in accordance with Secretary of State directions made under the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000;
- in the light of the knowledge and understanding of Cafcass and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, I have not identified any material misstatements in the Performance Report or the Accountability Report; and
- the information given in the Performance Report and Accountability Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.

Matters on which I report by exception

I have nothing to report in respect of the following matters which I report to you if, in my opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept or returns adequate for my audit have not been received from branches not visited by my staff; or
- the financial statements and the parts of the Accountability Report to be audited are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- I have not received all of the information and explanations I require for my audit; or
- the Governance Statement does not reflect compliance with HM Treasury's guidance.

Report

I have no observations to make on these financial statements.

Gareth Davies
Comptroller and Auditor General
14 December 2020

National Audit Office
157-197 Buckingham Palace Road
Victoria
London
SW1W 9SP



2019-20 Annual Accounts

- Financial statements
- Notes to the Accounts



Financial statements

Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2020.

	Note	2019-20		2018-19	
		£000	£000	£000	£000
Expenditure					
Staff costs		107,879		98,872	
Past pension service cost	4	3,003		21	
Total staff costs	4	110,882		98,893	
Self-Employed Contractors and agency staff	20	4,917		5,498	
Depreciation and amortisation	7/8	372		618	
Partnerships	21	2,445		2,478	
Other expenditure	5	14,962		25,245	
			133,578	132,732	
Income					
Income from activities	3/6	(54)		(75)	
			(54)	(75)	
Net expenditure			133,524	132,657	
Net interest cost	22		5,354	4,816	
Net expenditure after interest	3		138,878	137,473	
Other comprehensive expenditure					
Net gain on revaluation of property, plant and equipment	7		(40)	(3)	
Net gain on revaluation of intangible assets	8		(2)	(12)	
Loss on re-measurement of pension benefits	22		12,570	20,562	
Total comprehensive net expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2020			151,406	158,020	

The Notes on pages 96 to 115 form part of these Accounts.



Statement of Financial Position as at 31 March 2020.

	Note	31 March 2020		31 March 2019	
		£000	£000	£000	£000
Non-current assets					
Property, plant and equipment	7	1,248		1,340	
Intangible assets	8	74		312	
Total non-current assets	3		1,322		1,652
Current assets					
Trade and other receivables	11	2,545		4,010	
Other current assets					
Cash and cash equivalents	12	210		462	
Total current assets			2,755		4,472
Total assets			4,077		6,124
Current liabilities					
Trade and other payables	13	(4,163)		(5,156)	
Total current liabilities			(4,163)		(5,156)
Non-current assets less net current liabilities			(86)		968
Non-current liabilities					
Provisions	14	(2,442)		(7,888)	
Pension liabilities	22	(262,411)		(230,381)	
Total non-current liabilities			(264,853)		(238,269)
Assets less liabilities			(264,939)		(237,301)
Taxpayers' equity					
General reserve			(265,876)		(238,250)
Revaluation reserve			937		949
			(264,939)		(237,301)

The Financial Statements on pages 92 to 115 were approved by the Board on 1 July 2020 and signed on its behalf by:



Signed: Jacky Tiotto
Chief Executive and Accounting Officer
Date: 9 December 2020



Statement of Cash Flows for the year ended 31 March 2020.

		2019-20	2018-19
	Note	£000	£000
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net expenditure after interest	3	(138,878)	(137,473)
Depreciation and amortisation	7/8	372	618
Decrease/(increase) in trade and other receivables	11	1,465	(254)
Decrease in trade payables	13	(993)	(1,904)
In year additional pension cost	22	19,460	10,607
(Decrease)/increase in provisions	14	(5,446)	5,583
Net cash outflow from operating activities		(124,020)	(122,823)
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	7	0	0
Purchase of intangible assets	8	0	0
Net cash outflow from investing activities		0	0
Cash flows from financing activities			
Grant-in-Aid from parent department for resource expenditure		121,902	119,799
Grant-in-Aid from parent department for capital expenditure		0	697
Other grant funding received		1,866	1,792
Net cash inflow from financing activities		123,768	122,288
Total cash and cash equivalents			
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period	12	462	997
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period	12	210	462
Net decrease in cash and cash equivalents		(252)	(535)



Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity as at 31 March 2020.

		General reserve	Revaluation reserve	Total
	Note	£000	£000	£000
Balance at 1 April 2019		(238,250)	949	(237,301)
Changes in taxpayers' equity				
Net gain on revaluation of property, plant and equipment	7	0	40	40
Net gain on revaluation of intangible assets	8	0	2	2
Release of revaluation reserve to general reserve due to disposals		54	(54)	0
Net expenditure after interest	3	(138,878)	0	(138,878)
Pension fund actuarial loss	22	(12,570)	0	(12,570)
Total comprehensive expenditure		(151,394)	(12)	(151,406)
Grant-in-Aid from parent department for resource expenditure		121,902	0	121,902
Grant-in-Aid from parent department for capital expenditure		0	0	0
Other grant funding received		1,866	0	1,866
Balance at 31 March 2020		(265,876)	937	(264,939)

Balance at 1 April 2018		(202,699)	1,130	(201,569)
Changes in taxpayers' equity				
Net gain on revaluation of property, plant and equipment	7	0	3	3
Net gain on revaluation of intangible assets	8	0	12	12
Release of revaluation reserve to general reserve due to disposals		196	(196)	0
Net expenditure after interest	3	(137,473)	0	(137,473)
Pension fund actuarial gain	22	(20,562)	0	(20,562)
Total comprehensive expenditure		(157,839)	(181)	(158,020)
Grant-in-Aid from parent department for resource expenditure		119,799	0	119,799
Grant-in-Aid from parent department for capital expenditure		697	0	697
Other grant funding received		1,792	0	1,792
Balance at 31 March 2019		(238,250)	949	(237,301)



Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2020

I Accounting policies

These Financial Statements have been prepared in accordance with the 2019-20 Government Financial Reporting Manual (FRoM) issued by HM Treasury. The accounting policies contained in the FRoM apply International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) as adapted or interpreted for the public sector.

Where the FRoM permits a choice of accounting policy, the accounting policy which is judged to be most appropriate to the circumstances of Cafcass to give a true and fair view has been selected.

The policies adopted by Cafcass for 2019-20 are described below. They have been applied consistently in dealing with items that are considered material to the Accounts.

a) Accounting convention

The Accounts are prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to include assets at their value to the business by reference to current costs. Without limiting the information given, the Accounts meet the accounting and disclosure requirements of the Companies Act 2006 and accounting standards issued or adopted by the Accounting Standards Board insofar as those requirements are relevant. The Accounts are also fully consistent with IFRS.

b) Going concern

Parliament has voted Grant-in-Aid to Cafcass for 12 months following the Statement of Financial Position date. Cafcass has evaluated its financial position in relation to Covid-19 and is of the opinion that it is currently not materially affected. Therefore, despite the Statement of Financial Position of net liabilities, Cafcass operates as a going concern.

c) Property, plant and equipment

Freehold land and buildings were revalued in 2019-20 by reference to current cost indices, as specified by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA).

Freehold land and buildings were last physically revalued by the VOA as at 31 March 2018 in accordance with the RICS Appraisal and Valuation Manual published by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, insofar as this is consistent with current Treasury accounting guidance. Freehold properties are subject to physical revaluation by the VOA at least every three years and by indexation using current cost indices during intervening years. Leasehold land and buildings and associated improvements are not subject to revaluation or indexation.

Other property, plant and equipment, except for leasehold property, have been stated at their value to the business using appropriate indices published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

Revaluations above the depreciated historic cost of these assets are credited to a revaluation reserve. Any downward revaluation of property, plant and equipment below the asset's depreciated historic cost is recognised when it occurs through the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure.

Property, plant and equipment include those assets costing £2,500 or more. Assets valued at less than the threshold are capitalised if they constitute integral parts of a composite asset that is in total valued at more than the threshold. Furniture and fittings are not capitalised but fully expensed in the year of acquisition.



d) Intangible fixed assets

Intangible assets consist of software, software licenses and website and intranet costs. These have been stated at their value to the business using appropriate indices published by the ONS.

Revaluations above the amortised historic cost of these assets are credited to a revaluation reserve. Any downward revaluation of intangible assets below the asset's amortised historic cost is recognised when it occurs through the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure.

Intangible assets include those assets costing £2,500 or more. Assets valued at less than the threshold are capitalised if they constitute integral parts of a composite asset that is in total valued at more than the threshold.

Intangible assets are periodically reviewed to ensure that they have been accurately stated at their value to the business.

e) Depreciation and amortisation

Freehold land is not depreciated.

Depreciation is provided to write-off property, plant and equipment and amortisation to write-off intangible assets by instalments, on a straight-line basis, over their expected useful lives or for leased assets, over the life of the lease.

Expected useful lives are as follows:

Freehold buildings	Up to 60 years
Leasehold improvements	Lease term
Office equipment	Seven years
Information technology	Five years
Telecoms	Five years

f) Pensions

Employees of Cafcass are members of the West Yorkshire Pension Fund (WYPF) which is part of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). It is a funded defined benefit pension scheme. A small number of Cafcass staff retained membership of the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS) due to their earlier employment with one of Cafcass' predecessor organisations.

Contributions are charged on a year-by-year basis in accordance with the requirements of the scheme administrators.

The assets of the WYPF are held separately from those of Cafcass.

The scheme assets are measured at realisable value. Scheme liabilities are measured using a projected unit method and discounted at the current rate of return on a high-quality corporate bond of equivalent term and currency to the liability. The net pension liability is the present value of the defined benefit liabilities less the fair value of the assets. All estimates are performed by Aon Hewitt Ltd, the independent actuary for WYPF and in accordance with IAS 19 - International Accounting Standard 19 (Employee Benefits).



The pension scheme surplus (to the extent that it is considered recoverable) or deficit is recognised in full on the face of the Statement of Financial Position. The movement in the scheme surplus/deficit is split between operating charges (within staff costs) and reserves in the case of actuarial gains and losses.

Net interest receivable on pension scheme assets is shown in operating cash flows.

g) Funding

Grant-in-Aid, used to finance activities and expenditure that supports the statutory and other objectives of Cafcass, is treated as financing and credited to the general reserve, because it is regarded as contributions from a controlling party.

Other contact services funding is used for the delivery of child contact intervention services and is also treated as financing and credited to the general reserve.

h) Income from activities

Income from activities is generated from training, student placements and one-off receipts in the year. Income is recognised on the issuing of an invoice. All income is stated net of VAT.

i) Insurance

Except for comprehensive insurance on contract lease and hire vehicles, Cafcass does not insure but carries its own risks for fire, accidental damage and similar accidents and claims at common law.

j) Operating leases

Rentals under operating leases are charged to the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

k) Accounting for Value Added Tax

Cafcass is registered for VAT. It is unable to recover most of the VAT incurred on expenditure, although a small amount of VAT can be recovered where it is related to the costs recovered in court cases. Expenditure is therefore stated inclusive of any irrecoverable VAT.

l) Financial instruments

Cafcass does not hold any complex financial instruments. The only financial instruments included in the Accounts are receivables and payables (notes 11 and 13).

Financial assets comprise trade receivable and other receivables. Receivables are recognised at carrying value, reduced by appropriate allowances for estimated irrecoverable amounts.

Trade creditors are short term and are stated at carrying value in recognition that these liabilities fall due within one year.

m) Provisions

A provision is recognised in the Statement of Financial Position when Cafcass has a present legal or constructive obligation arising from past events, and it is probable that an outflow of economic benefits will be required to settle the obligation.



2 Change of accounting policy

New standards, amendments and interpretations issued but not effective for the financial year beginning 1 April 2019 and not early adopted.

IFRS 16 provides a single lessee accounting model, requiring lessees to recognise assets and liabilities for all leases unless the lease term is 12 months or less, or the underlying asset is of low value. The assets, to be described as “right of use” assets, will be presented under Property, Plant and Equipment. The standard is expected to have a material effect on the department’s financial statements. In November 2020 HM Treasury announced that the adoption of IFRS 16 will be deferred, and will now be adopted from 1 April 2022.

There were no other significant changes to the accounting policies, as described in Cafcass’ 2018-19 Annual Report and Accounts.

3 Analysis of net expenditure by segment

	Operational service areas	Other	Total
	£000	£000	£000
2019-20			
Gross expenditure	84,284	54,648	138,932
Income	0	(54)	(54)
Net expenditure	84,284	54,594	138,878
Non-current assets	903	419	1,322
2018-19			
Gross expenditure	81,393	56,155	137,548
Income	0	(75)	(75)
Net expenditure	81,393	56,080	137,473
Non-current assets	886	766	1,652

‘Operational service areas’ and ‘Other’ reflect the structure of the standard monthly management information provided to Cafcass’ chief operating decision makers.



4 Staff costs

		Cafcass Board members	Corporate National Office staff	Regional staff	Total
	Note	£000	£000	£000	£000
2019-20					
Salaries and wages		132	7,078	66,119	73,329
Apprentice levy		0	34	320	354
Social security costs		4	781	7,038	7,823
Current service cost	22	0	2,512	23,332	25,844
Other pension costs		0	16	(19)	(3)
Past pension service cost	22	0	290	2,713	3,003
Total payroll costs		136	10,711	99,503	110,350
Temporary staff costs		0	83	449	532
Total staff costs		136	10,794	99,952	110,882
2018-19					
Salaries and wages		125	6,986	63,285	70,396
Apprentice levy		0	34	304	338
Social security costs		4	746	6,731	7,481
Current service cost	22	0	4,863	15,033	19,896
Other pension costs		0	20	(60)	(40)
Past pension service cost	22	0	21	0	21
Total payroll costs		129	12,670	85,293	98,092
Temporary staff costs		0	124	677	801
Total staff costs		129	12,794	85,970	98,893



5 Other expenditure

		2019-20	2018-19
	Note	£000	£000
Outsourced finance and ITC services		6,691	5,861
Accommodation costs		5,241	4,973
Travel and subsistence		3,197	3,127
Telecommunications and postage		1,580	1,654
Office supplies, printing and stationery		897	1,215
Staff related costs		448	461
Interpreters and translators		384	370
Legal costs		292	357
Training costs		236	201
Fuel and utilities		225	200
Recruitment costs		146	134
Vehicle costs		115	122
External audit costs		73	62
Internal audit costs		62	59
Other		821	706
Total cash		20,408	19,502
Annual leave amount	14	622	(113)
Accommodation costs	14	91	127
Legal costs	14	147	55
McCloud judgment	14	0	5,967
Provisions no longer required	14	(6,306)	(293)
Total non-cash		(5,446)	5,743
		14,962	25,245

6 Income

	2019-20	2018-19
	£000	£000
Training	54	75
	54	75



7 Property, plant and equipment

	Land and buildings excluding dwellings	Leasehold improvements	Information technology and telecoms	Office equipment	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
2019-20					
Cost or valuation					
As at 01/04/19	1,050	350	2,016	22	3,438
Additions	0	0	0	0	0
Disposals	0	(22)	0	0	(22)
Revaluations	30	0	10	0	40
As at 31/03/20	1,080	328	2,026	22	3,456
Depreciation					
As at 01/04/19	163	350	1,563	22	2,098
Charged in year	13	0	119	0	132
Disposals	0	(22)	0	0	(22)
As at 31/03/20	176	328	1,682	22	2,208
NBV as at 31/03/20	904	0	344	0	1,248
NBV as at 31/03/19	887	0	453	0	1,340
Asset financing					
Owned	904	0	344	0	1,248
NBV as at 31/03/20	904	0	344	0	1,248
2018-19					
Cost or valuation					
As at 01/04/18	1,050	521	2,618	22	4,211
Additions	0	0	0	0	0
Disposals	0	(171)	(605)	0	(776)
Revaluations	0	0	3	0	3
As at 31/03/19	1,050	350	2,016	22	3,438
Depreciation					
As at 01/04/18	150	521	2,012	22	2,705
Charged in year	13	0	156	0	169
Disposals	0	(171)	(605)	0	(776)
As at 31/03/19	163	350	1,563	22	2,098
NBV as at 31/03/19	887	0	453	0	1,340
NBV as at 31/03/18	900	0	606	0	1,506
Asset financing					
Owned	887	0	453	0	1,340
NBV as at 31/03/19	887	0	453	0	1,340



Freehold land as at 31 March 2020 was valued at £0.345m (2018-19: £0.336m).

The property values have been provided on an Existing Use Value (EUV) basis, apportioned between the land and the buildings with an assessment of the remaining life of the latter (Practice Statement 4.3).

Property valuations do not include any notional directly attributable acquisition costs and have not been reduced for any expected selling costs, as they are not considered material to the valuations.

8 Intangible assets

	Information technology	Software licences	Websites that deliver services	Assets under construction	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
2019-20					
Cost or valuation					
As at 01/04/19	2,185	183	89	0	2,457
Additions	0	0	0	0	0
Disposals	(45)	(183)	0	0	(228)
Revaluations	2	0	0	0	2
As at 31/03/20	2,142	0	89	0	2,231
Amortisation					
As at 01/04/19	1,873	183	89	0	2,145
Charged in year	240	0	0	0	240
Disposals	(45)	(183)	0	0	(228)
As at 31/03/20	2,068	0	89	0	2,157
NBV as at 31/03/20	74	0	0	0	74
NBV as at 31/03/19	312	0	0	0	312
2018-19					
Cost or valuation					
As at 01/04/18	2,363	183	89	93	2,728
Additions	93	0	0	(93)	0
Disposals	(283)	0	0	0	(283)
Revaluations	12	0	0	0	12
As at 31/03/19	2,185	183	89	0	2,457
Amortisation					
As at 01/04/18	1,714	176	89	0	1,979
Charged in year	442	7	0	0	449
Disposals	(283)	0	0	0	(283)
As at 31/03/19	1,873	183	89	0	2,145
NBV as at 31/03/19	312	0	0	0	312
NBV as at 31/03/18	649	7	0	93	749



9 Financial instruments

As the cash requirements of Cafcass are met through the Estimates process, financial instruments play a more limited role in creating and managing risk than would apply to a non-public sector body.

Most of Cafcass' financial instruments are consistent with the expected purchase and usage requirements of a non-departmental public body and relate to contracts to buy non-financial items. As such, Cafcass is exposed to minimal credit, liquidity, and market risks.

10 Impairments

There were no impairments as at 31 March 2020 (2018-19: £nil).

11 Trade receivables and other current assets

	2019-20	2018-19
	£000	£000
Amounts falling due within one year		
Other receivables	1,042	1,631
Provision for bad debts	(10)	(10)
Prepayments	1,511	2,387
Travel advances	2	2
	2,545	4,010

12 Cash and cash equivalents

	Cash	Bank	Total
	£000	£000	£000
2019-20			
Balance at 1 April 2019	4	458	462
Net change in cash and cash equivalent balance	0	(252)	(252)
Balance at 31 March 2020	4	206	210
The following balances were held at:			
Government Banking Service and cash in hand	4	206	210
Balance at 31 March 2020	4	206	210
2018-19			
Balance at 1 April 2018	5	992	997
Net change in cash and cash equivalent balance	(1)	(534)	(535)
Balance at 31 March 2019	4	458	462
The following balances were held at:			
Government Banking Service and cash in hand	4	458	462
Balance at 31 March 2019	4	458	462



13 Trade payables and other current liabilities

	2019-20	2018-19
	£000	£000
Amounts falling due within one year		
Trade payables	562	226
Other payables	750	484
Accruals and deferred income	2,851	4,446
	4,163	5,156

14 Provisions for liabilities and charges

	Employment claims	Annual leave amount	McCloud judgment	Dilapidations	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
2019-20					
Balance at 1 April 2019	150	88	5,967	1,683	7,888
Provided in the year	147	622	0	91	860
Provision not required written back	(54)	(88)	(5,967)	(197)	(6,306)
Provision reclassified as accruals	0	0	0	0	0
Provision utilised in the year	0	0	0	0	0
Balance at 31 March 2020	243	622	0	1,577	2,442
Analysis of expected timing of discounted flows					
Not later than one year	243	0	0	1,427	1,670
Later than one year and not later than five years	0	622	0	135	757
Later than five years	0	0	0	15	15
	243	622	0	1,577	2,442
2018-19					
Balance at 1 April 2018	155	233	0	1,917	2,305
Provided in the year	55	0	5,967	127	6,149
Provision not required written back	(30)	(32)	0	(231)	(293)
Provision reclassified as accruals	0	(113)	0	0	(113)
Provision utilised in the year	(30)	0	0	(130)	(160)
Balance at 31 March 2019	150	88	5,967	1,683	7,888
Analysis of expected timing of discounted flows					
Not later than one year	150	0	0	1,564	1,714
Later than one year and not later than five years	0	88	5,967	119	6,174
Later than five years	0	0	0	0	0
	150	88	5,967	1,683	7,888



IAS 37 requires the recognition of a provision (a liability that is of uncertain timing or amount) when it exists at the Statement of Financial Position date. It must therefore fulfil the criteria of being a present obligation arising from a previous event, where it is probable there will be a transfer of economic benefits to settle the obligation and where a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation. Cafcass makes provisions for legal or constructive obligations (liabilities), which are of uncertain timing or amount at the Statement of Financial Position date, based on the best estimate of the expenditure required to settle the obligation.

Employment claims

Employment claims relate to employment tribunal cases that are likely to be brought against Cafcass, which may or may not result in court attendance.

Annual leave amount

The annual leave amount is the monetised value of holiday entitlement approved by management for carry over to the new financial year. It is the liability that Cafcass would have to settle, should it cease to exist as a going concern and accumulated staff leave be crystallised into actual payments.

McCloud judgment

The December 2018 McCloud judgment found that transitional protection arrangements put in place during the reform of firefighters and judges pension schemes was discriminatory on grounds of age.

The Government Actuary's Department (GAD), under instruction from the LGPS Scheme Advisory Board, were asked to calculate the worst-case scenario impact at Scheme level.

The provision created by Cafcass in its 2018-19 Annual Accounts has now been released, as the McCloud judgment is now being accounted for under IAS 19.

Dilapidations

Cafcass operates from a number of leasehold properties which include provision for the payment of dilapidations on exit from the premises.

Cafcass considers it appropriate to recognise these liabilities through the creation of a provision whilst premises are in active use, and to accrue for these liabilities once settlement has been agreed.

Provisions have been maintained for these using actual information and industry information on the most likely costs for dilapidations per square metre.

15 Capital commitments

There were no material contracted capital commitments as at 31 March 2020 (2018-19: £nil).



16 Commitments under leases

Operating leases commitments

Total future minimum lease payments under operating leases are given in the table below for each of the following periods.

	2019-20	2018-19
	£000	£000
Obligations under operating leases comprise:		
Buildings		
Not later than one year	2,647	2,669
Later than one year and not later than five years	1,810	2,042
Later than five years	438	260
	4,895	4,971
Other		
Not later than one year	46	72
Later than one year and not later than five years	17	38
Later than five years	0	0
	63	110

Finance leases

There were no finance leases as at 31 March 2020 (2018-19: £nil).

17 Other financial commitments

	2019-20	2018-19
	£000	£000
Not later than one year	2,724	2,668
Later than one year and not later than five years	166	3,113
Later than five years	0	0
	2,890	5,781

Cafcass signed a three-year contract with Littlefish, commencing May 2018, to provide an integrated information and communication technology service across the organisation. The contract includes the option of a one-year extension from May 2021.

18 Related party transactions

Cafcass is an executive non-departmental public body that is sponsored by the Department. The Department as such is regarded as a related party. During 2019-20, Cafcass had various material transactions with the Department, including the receipt of £123.768m grant and additional funding from the Department (2018-19: £122.288m).

Transactions with the Department not related to Grant-in-Aid or other funding are considered not to be material and totalled £0.061m (2018-19: £0.002m).

Cafcass does have occasional small transactions with other Central Government bodies and Local Authorities that are considered not to be material.



All payments made to senior managerial staff are disclosed in the Remuneration Report. A register of interest is held for all Board Members and there were no material related party transactions with Board Members or the Corporate Management Team during the year other than those associated with remuneration for normal duties.

19 Events after Statement of Financial Position date

In accordance with the requirements of IAS 10 'Events After the Reporting Period', post Statement of Financial Position events are considered up to the date on which the Accounts are authorised for issue. This is interpreted as the same date as the date of the Certificate and Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General.

20 Self-Employed Contractors

In 2019-20 we contracted the services of 134 self-employed contractors (2018-19: 147), to whom payments made amounted to £2.396m in the year (2018-19: £2.552m).

As Self-Employed Contractors, they are ordinarily responsible for meeting travel, office and all other expenses related to their work, as well as related tax and national insurance liabilities.

Further to this, agency staff costs amounted to £2.521m in the year (2018-19: £2.946m).

21 Partnership costs

Partnership costs of £2.445m (2018-19: £2.478m) represent the cost of services provided by Cafcass through third party organisations such as contact centres and mediation centres.

Expenditure on partnerships' Court ordered contact activities are shown net of expenditure claimed back and received from the Department.

In addition to Cafcass' baseline partnership budget, in 2019-20 Cafcass received additional funding of £1.866m from the Department (2018-19: £1.792m).

22 Pension liabilities

WYPF's actuary, Aon Hewitt Limited, carried out an IAS 19 valuation for Cafcass as at 31 March 2020.

The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of Cafcass and are invested in managed funds.

Cafcass accounts for scheme liabilities in accordance with IAS 19. The in-year current service cost has been reflected in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure.

In addition to the disclosures contained in the Financial Statements, the following disclosures are also in accordance with IAS 19.

Introduction

The disclosures below relate to the funded liabilities within the West Yorkshire Pension Fund (the "Fund") which is part of the Local Government Pension Scheme (the "LGPS").

The LGPS is a funded defined benefit plan with benefits earned up to 31 March 2014 being linked to final salary. Benefits after 31 March 2014 are based on a Career Average Revalued Earnings scheme. Details of the benefits earned over the period covered by this disclosure are set out in 'The LGPS Regulations 2013' (as amended) and 'The LGPS (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014' (as amended).



Funding/governance arrangements of the LGPS

The funded nature of the LGPS requires participating employers and their employees to pay contributions into the Fund, calculated at a level intended to balance the pension liabilities with investment assets. Information on the framework for calculating contributions to be paid is set out in 'The LGPS Regulations 2013' and the Fund's Funding Strategy Statement. The last actuarial valuation was at 31 March 2019 and the contributions to be paid until 31 March 2023 resulting from that valuation are set out in the Fund's Rates and Adjustment Certificate.

The Fund Administering Authority, City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council, is responsible for the governance of the Fund.

Assets

The assets allocated to the Employer in the Fund are notional and are assumed to be invested in line with the investments of the Fund for the purposes of calculating the return over the accounting period. The Fund holds a significant proportion of its assets in liquid investments. As a consequence there will be no significant restriction on realising assets if a large payment is required to be paid from the Fund in relation to an employer's liabilities. The assets are invested in a diversified spread of investments and the approximate split of assets for the Fund as a whole (based on data supplied by the Fund Administering Authority) is shown in the disclosures.

The Fund Administering Authority may invest a small proportion of the Fund's investments in the assets of some of the employers participating in the Fund if it forms part of their balanced investment strategy.

Risks associated with the Fund in relation to accounting

Asset volatility

The liabilities used for accounting purposes are calculated using a discount rate set with reference to corporate bond yields at the accounting date. If assets underperform this yield this will create a deficit in the accounts. The Fund holds a significant proportion of growth assets which, while expected to outperform corporate bonds in the long term, creates volatility and risk in the short term in relation to the accounting figures.

Changes in bond yield

A decrease in corporate bond yields will increase the value placed on the liabilities for accounting purposes although this will be marginally offset by the increase in the assets as a result (to the extent the Fund invests in corporate bonds).

Inflation risk

The majority of the pension liabilities are linked to either pay or price inflation. Higher inflation expectations will lead to a higher liability value. The assets are not perfectly correlated with inflation meaning that an increase in inflation will increase the deficit.

Life expectancy

The majority of the Fund's obligations are to provide benefits for the life of the member following retirement, so increases in life expectancy will result in an increase in the liabilities.

Exiting employers

Employers which leave the Fund (or their guarantor) may have to make an exit payment to meet any shortfall in assets against their pension liabilities. If the Employer (or guarantor) is not able to meet this exit payment the liability may in certain circumstances fall on other employers in the Fund. Further the assets at exit in respect of 'orphan liabilities' may, in retrospect, not be sufficient to meet the liabilities. This risk may fall on other employers. 'Orphan liabilities' are currently a small proportion of the overall liabilities in the Fund.



Impact of Covid-19

The outbreak of Covid-19, declared by the World Health Organisation as a “Global Pandemic” on the 11 March 2020, has materially impacted on the valuation of assets. Asset values are less certain as a result of increased volatility, changing consumption levels, and markets trending more favourably in the direction of digital, virtual and contactless business activities.

Covid-19 has resulted in a significant reduction in the number of transactions in the market up to 31 March 2020, and consequently the relevant observable data available upon which valuation judgements are based. With regards to pooled property funds, a material valuation uncertainty clause has been included in a number of valuation reports from fund managers, due to the possible impact of Covid-19.

As disclosed in the “Asset allocation” table on page 112, 12.7% of Cafcass’ share of pension fund assets at 31 March 2020 are held as unquoted equity and property assets, and these are therefore subject to greater material valuation uncertainty and a higher degree of caution than would otherwise be the case.



The amounts recognised in the Statement of Financial Position are as follows:

	2020	2019
	£000	£000
Present value of funded obligations	(762,931)	(767,980)
Fair value of plan assets	501,070	555,612
Fair value of plan assets - re-measurement of assets adjustment	(550)	(18,013)
Net liability	(262,411)	(230,381)

The amounts recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure are as follows:

	2020	2019
	£000	£000
Current service cost	25,844	19,896
Past service cost	3,003	21
Service cost	28,847	19,917
Interest on obligation	18,281	18,098
Interest income on plan assets	(12,927)	(13,282)
Net interest cost	5,354	4,816
Expense recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure	34,201	24,733

Changes in the present value of the defined benefit obligation are as follows:

	2020	2019
	£000	£000
Opening defined benefit obligation	767,980	702,812
Current service cost	25,844	19,896
Interest on obligation	18,281	18,098
Member contributions	4,927	4,699
Past service cost	3,003	21
Actuarial (gain)/loss due to changes in financial assumptions	(24,064)	36,424
Actuarial gain due to changes in demographic assumptions	(26,366)	0
Actuarial loss due to liability experience	11,219	4,571
Benefits/transfers paid	(17,893)	(18,541)
Closing defined benefit obligation	762,931	767,980



Changes in the fair value of plan assets are as follows:

	2020	2019
	£000	£000
Opening fair value of plan assets	537,599	503,600
Interest income on plan assets	12,927	13,282
Re-measurement (loss)/gain on assets	(51,231)	31,470
Re-measurement of assets adjustment - prior year reversal	0	6,976
Re-measurement of assets adjustment – current year	(550)	(18,013)
Contributions by employer	14,741	14,126
Member contributions	4,927	4,699
Benefits/transfers paid	(17,893)	(18,541)
	500,520	537,599

Asset allocation:

	Quoted value at 31 March 2020	Unquoted value at 31 March 2020	Total at 31 March 2020	Total at 31 March 2019
Equities	67.4%	10.1%	77.5%	74.0%
Property	1.9%	2.6%	4.5%	4.7%
Government bonds	9.6%	0.0%	9.6%	11.2%
Corporate bonds	5.1%	0.0%	5.1%	4.0%
Cash	0.0%	1.9%	1.9%	2.3%
Other	0.0%	1.4%	1.4%	3.8%
	84.0%	16.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Actual return on assets:

	2019-20	2018-19
	£000	£000
Interest income on plan assets	12,927	13,282
Re-measurement (loss)/gain on assets	(51,231)	31,470
Re-measurement of assets adjustment	(550)	(18,013)
	(38,854)	26,739

The major financial assumptions used in the valuation were:

	2019-20	2018-19
Pension accounts revaluation rate	2.00%	2.20%
Rate of increase in salaries	2.60%	3.30%
Rate of increase in pensions	2.00%	2.20%
Nominal discount rate	2.30%	2.40%



Estimated pension expense in future periods

Analysis of amount charged to the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure on the provision of services next year:		
	Year ending 31 March 2021	Year ending 31 March 2020
	£000	£000
Current service cost	24,444	22,144
Interest on net defined benefit liability	5,863	4,923
Interest on net defined benefit liability - re-measurement of assets adjustment	0	431
Total estimated pension expense	30,307	27,498
Allowance for administration expense included in current service cost	217	208
Estimated pensionable payroll over the period	72,248	69,358
Reconciliation of re-measurement of pension benefits in the Statement of Financial Position		
	2019-20	2018-19
	£000	£000
Pension liabilities as at 31 March current year	261,861	212,368
Less: Pension liabilities as at 31 March prior year	(230,381)	(199,212)
Less: Expense recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure	(34,201)	(24,733)
Plus: Contributions by employer	14,741	14,126
Plus: Re-measurement of assets adjustment	550	18,013
Loss on re-measurement of pension benefits	12,570	20,562
Reconciliation of in-year additional pension cost in the Statement of Cash Flows		
	2019-20	2018-19
	£000	£000
Expense recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure	34,201	24,733
Less: Contributions by employer	(14,741)	(14,126)
In-year additional pension cost	19,460	10,607



Sensitivity analysis

The approximate impact of changing the key assumptions on the present value of the funded defined benefit obligation as at 31 March 2020 and the projected service cost for the period ending 31 March 2020 is set out below.

Discount rate assumption:			
Adjustment to discount rate	+0.1% p.a.	Base figure	-0.1%p.a.
	£000	£000	£000
Present value of total obligation	748,435	762,931	777,427
% change in present value of total obligation	(1.9%)		1.9%
Projected service cost	23,564	24,444	25,348
Approximate % change in projected service cost	(3.6%)		3.7%

Rate of general increase in salaries:			
Adjustment to salary increase rate	+0.1% p.a.	Base figure	-0.1%p.a.
	£000	£000	£000
Present value of total obligation	764,457	762,931	761,405
% change in present value of total obligation	0.2%		(0.2%)
Projected service cost	24,444	24,444	24,444
Approximate % change in projected service cost	0.0%		0.0%

Rate of increase to pensions in payment, deferred pensions increase assumption and rate of revaluation of pension accounts assumption:			
Adjustment to pension increase rate	+0.1% p.a.	Base figure	-0.1%p.a.
	£000	£000	£000
Present value of total obligation	775,901	762,931	749,961
% change in present value of total obligation	1.7%		(1.7%)
Projected service cost	25,348	24,444	23,564
Approximate % change in projected service cost	3.7%		(3.6%)

Post retirement mortality assumption:			
*Adjustment to mortality age rating assumption	+0.1% p.a.	Base figure	-0.1%p.a.
	£000	£000	£000
Present value of total obligation	788,108	762,931	738,517
% change in present value of total obligation	3.3%		(3.2%)
Projected service cost	25,422	24,444	23,491
Approximate % change in projected service cost	4.0%		(3.9%)

*A rating of +1 year means that members are assumed to follow the mortality pattern of the base table for an individual that is 1 year older than them.



Mortality assumption:

The mortality assumptions at the accounting date are based on actual mortality experience of members within the Fund based on analysis carried out as part of the 2019 Actuarial Valuation, and allow for expected future mortality improvements. Sample life expectancies at age 65 in normal health resulting from these mortality assumptions are shown below.

	31 March 2020	31 March 2019
Males		
Pensioner member aged 65 at accounting date	21.8	22.2
Active member aged 45 at accounting date	22.5	23.2
Females		
Pensioner member aged 65 at accounting date	24.6	25.4
Active member aged 45 at accounting date	25.7	27.2

23 Contingent liabilities**Cost Management Process in Local Government Pension Schemes**

HM Treasury (HMT) and the Scheme Advisory Board (SAB) are legally required to undertake periodic reviews of the cost of Local Government Pension Schemes (LGPS), to ensure that such schemes remain sustainable and affordable. These reviews are referred to as the 'Cost Management Process'.

Following the McCloud judgment, both HMT and the SAB have paused their reviews, until such time as the impact of the McCloud judgment on the LGPS is known.

As at 31 March 2020 the Cost Management Process reviews remain paused, and it is therefore not possible to determine whether they will impact on the LGPS, nor to determine the materiality or costs of their impact on the LGPS. As such, these reviews remain paused, and as such an allowance cannot be made in the Accounts for any potential costs incurred under the Cost Management Process.

24 Contingent assets

There were no qualifying contingent assets as at 31 March 2020 (2018-19: £nil).

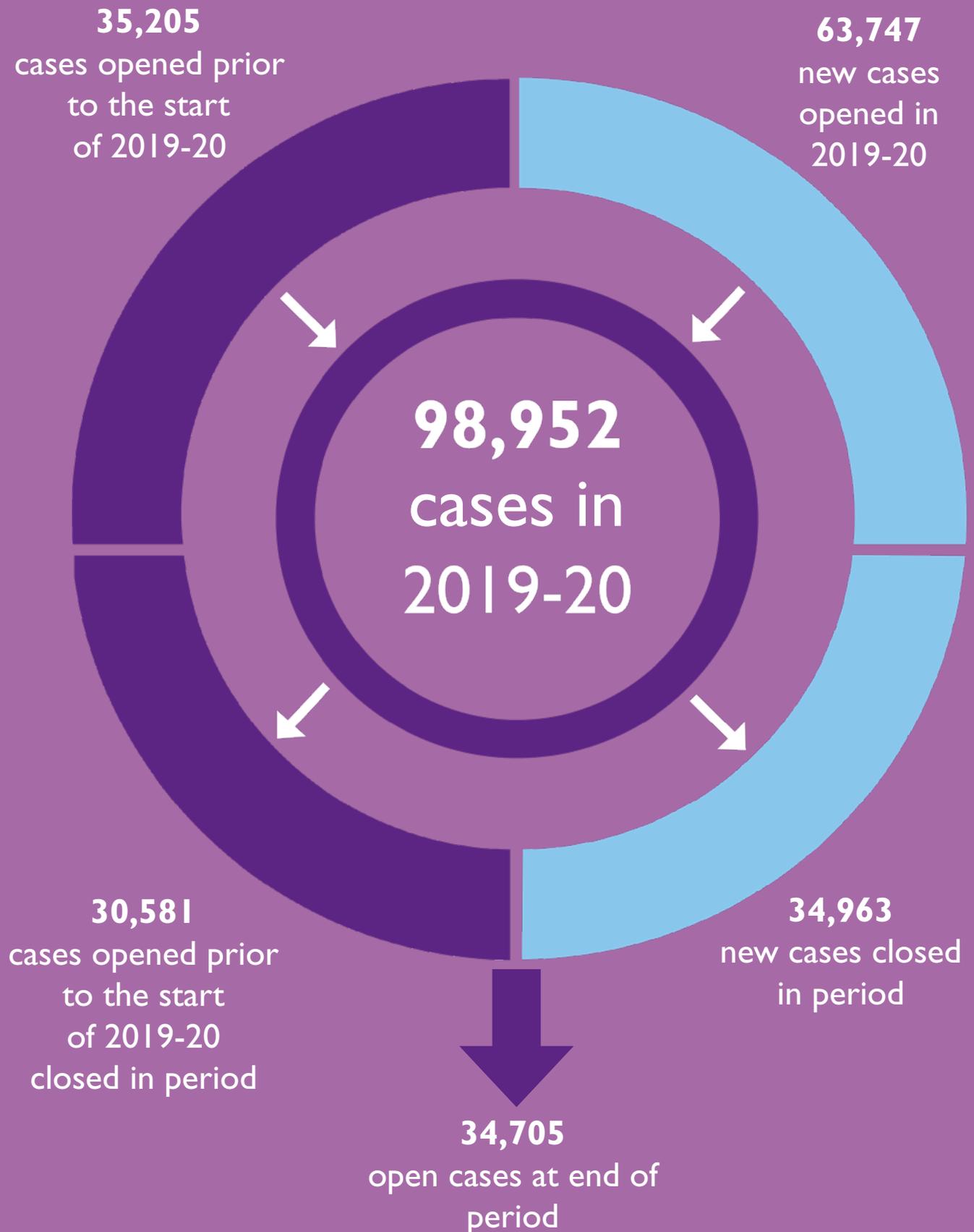


Appendix and glossary

- A closer look at our data
- How our Key Performance Indicators are calculated
- Glossary

A closer look at our data

This diagram shows a breakdown of the number of cases held by Cafcass at the end of 2019-20, this includes cases which were already open prior to the start of 2019-20 (existing cases), cases which have been opened and closed during the year, and cases which are still ongoing at the end of 2019-20.



The number of cases worked on by Cafcass during 2019-20 increased by 5.1% compared to the previous year, and the number of cases we closed rose by 10.9%.

How our Key Performance Indicators are calculated

Source: all data is taken from the Electronic Case Management System (ECMS) which is a live national database.

Changes: All Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) have been unchanged since 2012-13.

KPI 1:

Calculation method: snapshot of total allocated public law care cases divided by snapshot of total open public law care workload (open and ongoing cases not concluded). For monthly reporting the snapshot is taken once a month at month end. Annual figures are an average of the 12 months.

Assumptions: allocated includes cases allocated on substantive basis to a named practitioner.

KPI 2:

Calculation method: counts all care cases allocated in the year and the total working days taken from date the case was received to the date of the first substantive allocation is recorded (date case received counted as day 0). The total working days taken is then divided by the total number of cases to give an average working days figure.

Assumptions: allocated only includes cases allocated on substantive basis to a named practitioner.

KPI 3:

Calculation method: snapshot of total allocated private law cases divided by snapshot of total open private law workload (open and ongoing cases not concluded). For monthly reporting the snapshot is taken once a month at month end. Annual figures are an average of the 12 months.

Assumptions: allocated includes cases allocated on a duty or substantive basis to a named practitioner.

KPI 4:

Calculation method: the number of section 7 reports filed by the agreed date, divided by the total number of section 7 reports filed.



Glossary

Cafcass and the Family Justice Young People's Board (FJYPB) have together created a glossary of the more commonly used terms and words in family proceedings. We thank the FJYPB and other colleagues for co-ordinating this, enabling readers to understand some of the terminology used in our Annual Report.

Adjournment – A decision made by the family court to hold the court hearing at another time because things are not ready or people need more time to do something.

Adoption Order – A type of order made by the family court which transfers parental responsibility to new, adoptive parents and means that a child or young person is no longer legally the child of their birth parents. It allows them to start a new family.

Agency staff/workers – Social workers who do not normally work for Cafcass but will sometimes do work for Cafcass during busy periods.

Area Quality Review (AQR) – A way of measuring how well an area is working. People involved include the Assistant Director/heads of service in that area. The AQR findings help form the action and development plans for that area.

Application – This is how a person asks the family court to help them.

Barrister – A legally trained person who advises people going through the family court and speaks for them in court hearings.

Bank workers – Social workers who do not normally work for Cafcass but will sometimes do work for Cafcass during busy periods. These workers do not come through an agency.

CI 100 form – This is the form used to apply to the courts for a contact or child arrangements order.

Cafcass worker – Depending on what the family court has ordered Cafcass to do, the Cafcass worker (sometimes known as a practitioner or officer) can be known as a family court adviser or a children's guardian (for more detail, look for their descriptions).

Cafis – Children and Families Information System. In 2020 the system will be fully replacing the current Cafcass Electronic Case Management System which stores Cafcass' case-related information including feedback and complaints.

Care order – An order made by the family court when the local authority can prove that a child or young person living in their area is not being looked after properly.

Care and Supervision (section 31) application duration – Average duration of all Care and Supervision (section 31) applications completed in defined period. The duration is defined by the number of calendar weeks between the application being received and the application being completed. Where the application does not have a completion date on Cafcass' system, the closure date of the case is used.



Case file audits – Internal audits which are completed by Cafcass managers to ensure consistency and best practice.

Case Management Conference – This is a hearing where the major issues for a child or young person are talked about and the judge sets out how the family court case is going to proceed.

Child Contact Intervention (CCI) – CCIs are short-term interventions of supervised contact. They are designed to help adults and children establish safe and beneficial contact when this is difficult to do on their own.

Child contact centre – This is a safe place where children and young people can see a parent who they do not live with. Usually, this allows for direct contact, supervised contact or supported contact.

Child arrangements order – When people can't agree on where a child might live or who they should see, the family court might be asked to decide. The judge will look at what is best for the child or young person and make a decision setting out what people must do.

Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass) – This is an organisation which works with children and young people and their families, and then advises the family court on what it considers to be in the best interests of each child.

Children's guardian – Sometimes when the problems within a family are really difficult then the family court will ask for a children's guardian to help them. The children's guardian is an independent person who is there to keep the court focused on what is best for the child or young person. They will also appoint a solicitor to act for the young person in court.

Consent order – Made by the court where all parties in the case have agreed to what it says.

Direct contact – When a child or young person spends time with someone that they do not live with.

Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Programme (DAPP) – A structured course that aims to help people who have been abusive towards their partners or ex-partners to change their behaviour and develop respectful, non-abusive relationships.

Early intervention teams (EIT) – EIT operate in service areas, with Cafcass workers carrying out safeguarding checks to inform the safeguarding letter we provide at the First Hearing.

ECMS – Electronic Case Management System, which stores Cafcass' case-related information including feedback and complaints.

Family assistance order – An order which the family court can make to provide short term (usually six months) support to a family who agree to it. This can be from a Cafcass worker or a social worker from the local authority.

Family court – This is where important decisions are made about children, young people and their families. It is different to criminal courts where people go when they might have done something wrong. Decisions in the family court are made by judges or magistrates when people can't agree about what is best for a child or young person.



Family Court Adviser (FCA) – Sometimes the family court may ask an FCA to meet with a child or young people to talk about their wishes and feelings and to make sure the family court hears what they have to say. The FCA also gives their view to the court about what is best for the child. FCAs do not need to meet all children and young people because sometimes families can agree themselves on what is best.

Family Group Conference – All of the important people in a child's life get together to check that they are safe. It means that everyone knows what is happening and keeps them safe.

Final order – This is the last order made by the family court. The court expects all the people named in the order to keep to it and do as it says and can punish adults if they don't.

Foster carer – People who give a home to children and young people who need a safe place to live. They may have children of their own, or other foster children living with them, in which case you would all live in the same house together.

Guardian's report – The family court will ask the children's guardian to write a report to help it make decisions about a child or young person. The report will include information on their wishes and feelings and a recommendation from the children's guardian on what they think is best for the child. The report will also include information from the other people involved such as the parents and any other individuals such as experts.

Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) – IROs help to make sure the best decisions are made for children looked after by the local authority. Their main focus is to make sure that the care planning process for each child or young person is meeting their needs, and to ensure that his/her current wishes and feelings are given full consideration.

Indirect contact – A child or young person can use forms of contact such as letters, cards or gifts to communicate with a parent where the court considers it is safe and beneficial for them to do so.

Interim care order – This means that the local authority makes decisions about a child rather than their own parents for the short term, before the family court makes a final order. The child will get a social worker to make the decisions day to day.

Issues Resolution Hearing (IRH) – This is a special hearing where the family court decides which issues need to be sorted out and hears arguments about which is a true version of events.

Judge – Sometimes families have problems which they might find too hard to sort out by themselves. A judge works in a family court, listens to everybody and then decides what is best for the child or young person involved in the case. They have the final say and will make the decision about that child or young person's life.

Level 1 check – A Police Criminal Record Check which is completed by Cafcass' Police National Computer (PNC) team.

Legal Adviser – A legally qualified person who helps magistrates in the family court apply the law. They do not play any part in the decision-making process but are there to advise.



Litigants in person – A party in a case who is self-representing i.e. they don't have legal representation/lawyer.

Local authority (also known as children's social care or social services) – This organisation is responsible for making sure all children and young people in their local area are kept safe by the people who care for them.

Magistrate – This person is a member of the community who volunteers to make decisions that affect families, children and young people. They are similar to a judge but are not legally qualified. They are advised on the law by their legal adviser.

Mediation – When people can't agree, they go to another person to help them sort it out (a mediator). The mediator talks to everyone and tries to help them find an outcome that they are all happy with. This might mean that they don't have to go to the family court.

Non-molestation order – This is a type of order the family court uses to keep adults, children and young people safe from someone who has been abusive toward them.

Parental order – An order which transfers legal parenthood from a surrogate to the intended parents.

Parental responsibility – Parental responsibility means all the rights, duties, and responsibilities that a parent has to a child or young person. A person or the people with parental responsibility can make decisions about a child such as who they will live with and what school they will attend.

Placement order – An order which allows the local authority to place a child with suitable adopters following care proceedings (even if the parents do not agree).

Pre-proceedings – Work that is carried out by the local authority (sometimes involving Cafcass) before a decision on making a care application is made.

Private law – These cases are brought to the family court by private individuals, generally in connection with divorce or parents' separation. The family court may make a child arrangements order, prohibited steps order or a specific issues order or no order at all.

Prohibited steps order – A parent can be prevented by the family court from doing something the other parent does not want them to do. The most common type is where one parent is stopped from moving abroad with the child or young person.

Public law – Public law cases are brought to the family court by local authorities where they are worried that a child or young person is not being looked after safely. The family court may make a care order, a supervision order, or no order at all.

Relinquished babies and children – term used to describe where parents feel that adoption may be the best option for providing a permanent, safe future for their child (the child is 'relinquished').

Rule 16.4 cases – These are particularly difficult or complicated family court cases where the judge decides to make the child a party to the case under rule 16.4 of the Family Procedure Rules 2010. A Cafcass guardian will be appointed to represent the child in the case.



Safeguarding letter – This is a letter that a Cafcass worker will write and send to the family court. They will speak to the parties (usually the parents) and ask about the child or young person’s safety and any worries that they might have.

Section 37 report – The family court orders Cafcass to produce this report because they are worried about a child or young person and want to make sure that they are safe. It will involve a Cafcass worker usually visiting the child and ensuring everything is okay at home.

Section 7 report – This report is ordered by the family court and makes either Cafcass or the local authority investigate all the circumstances of the family, often including the wishes and feelings of a child or young person, and send a report to the court.

Section 16A risk assessment – a duty held by Cafcass officers to undertake a risk assessment whenever they have cause to suspect that the child concerned is at risk of harm.

Self-employed contractor – social work staff who are offered work on a case by case basis to assist in providing additional capacity and have a contract for services for each individual case.

Separated Parents Information Programme (SPIP) – A course which helps parents to understand how to put their child first while they are separating, even if they are in dispute with their former partner.

Sessional workers – former Cafcass staff who stay to complete case work which occurs after their departure from the organisation, for example by attending a final hearing and/or closing an existing case rather than having to reallocate that case to a new worker.

Social worker – These specially trained people help to make sure children and young people are safe and properly looked after. They will work with families to help make it possible for children to stay safely with them. If the family court decides that it is not possible, they will help to make sure there is somewhere else that is safe where a child can live.

Solicitor – A legally trained person who provides advice to people going through the family court and can speak for them in court.

Special guardianship order – This family court order allows another person to become a child’s ‘special guardian’. It is for children who cannot live with their birth parents and gives parental responsibility to the special guardian so that they can make decisions alone about the child’s life.

Specific issue order – This order is made by the family court when there is an important issue to be resolved but parents can’t agree on it. For example, which school a child should go to.

Supervised contact – This is a type of direct contact which requires a supervisor to make sure that the child is safe with the other person. This may be done in a contact centre.

Supervision order – A supervision order makes the local authority take responsibility for advising, assisting and befriending a young person, and ensuring that the child or young person is kept safe in the care of their parents.



Supported contact – This is direct contact whereby a child contact centre worker gives some support to the adults so that they can meet the needs of their child.

Webinar – Webinars are interactive seminars or other presentations taking place via Skype for Business to support staff learning and engagement. They are open to all Cafcass staff and focus on family justice and social work practice topics. They give staff a forum to have a two-way discussion about their ideas, experiences, challenges, best practice and innovation in a creative and informal environment.



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Further information on how to contact us electronically is available on our website: www.cafcass.gov.uk/contact-us/



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