



**Putting children and young people first**

# **Knowledge Learning & Development Strategy**

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:**

This strategy has been written after a wide-ranging consultation with internal and external stakeholders, carried out by three of our Board members: Erica De'Ath, Judith Timms and Jane Tunstill. The outcome of this consultation and their in-depth work has largely informed this strategy and their commitment to making Cafcass a learning organisation is the inspiration for it. For this we owe them our thanks.

They were supported in their work on this strategy by a group of Family Court Advisors, (FCA's) business support staff and managers in Cafcass and staff and colleagues within the wider family justice and social care network. We are grateful to them for so generously giving their time and expertise to help develop this strategy.

This broad spectrum of agencies, associations and individuals who took part in the consultation are listed at Appendix 1

## **SECTION 1**

### **1.1 Introduction**

The Chief Executive's consultation paper on the future culture and structure of CAFCASS, at the end of 2004, set out to establish a clear direction for CAFCASS. This was based on strong local teams, strong regional co-ordination and strong national leadership. The aspirations of that paper included putting service delivery at the heart of our work, becoming a world-class front line service for children and families, becoming more clearly recognised and valued in our role in representing children, delivering consistently high quality outcomes for children and ensuring our performance is of the best possible quality. The consultation for this strategy showed enormous consensus across CAFCASS in support of these aspirations, confirming that they are the right ones to drive the future agenda.

A further consultation paper *Every Day Matters*, has helped the whole organisation focus on the changes to our working practices that are necessary and deliverable. The paper raised wide debate across the family justice system at the same time as the findings of Review of the Child Care proceedings in England and Wales under the Children Act 1989 were made public. The two aims of the Child Care review of Proceedings were to improve the system for children and families subject to proceedings; and to ensure that all resources in the system are used in the most timely, effective way. *Every Day matters* seeks to address some of these findings, to keep up to date with modern family patterns; to find new ways of responding when the demand for our service is increasing; to improve those areas where we know we need to improve; and most of all to respond to a developing understanding that children and young people should not only be the recipient and focus of our work, but deserve to be active players in the process.

New national service standards have been launched, which update the 2003 Service Standards and Principles, and are intended to operate from 1 April 2007 after a period of consultation lasting until September 2006. The standards are safe national minimum standards, which all staff and contractors will be required to comply with. They will be supported by a six-month lead-in period for organisational development, including opportunities for learning and the development of practice tools.

Given the cumulative messages from 4 recent inspections, about the lack of improvement in front-line practice, there is an urgent need to address these concerns. The KLD strategy sets out the framework within which practice improvement can take place and plays an important part to support the implementation of the new national standards and the practice development program.

CAFCASS also developed a two-year business plan for 2005 to 2007, which set out two broad aims

**1. Transforming services and modernising practice:** our social work practice needs to be modernised to take account of contemporary research and practice models.

**2. Transforming the organisation:** we need to play our part in delivering the vision for a radically modernised family justice system

We need to ensure that CAFCASS is in the mainstream of new public and private law change and that services to children and families develop as set out in *Every Child Matters*, *The Children Act 2004*, the Green Paper on *Parental separation: children's needs and parents responsibilities*, the new *Framework for Private Law Cases* and the latest Joint Inspectors' report on arrangements to safeguard children.

This Knowledge Learning and Development (KLD) strategy sets out to support the achievement of all these aims. The challenge will be to turn aspirations into real achievements and for the changes to be effectively implemented, not only will hearts and minds have to be won but we will need to ensure that the new changes are supported by the skills they need to implement them.

## **1.2 Strategic Aims**

This strategy sets out four broad strategic aims, which we hope to achieve:

- to provide a world class, human rights convention compliant service for children and their families who are involved with the courts through the most effective use of limited resources;
- to lead the way in developing a new knowledge-based approach to representing children and young people and their interests before the court, resolving family disputes and ensuring better outcomes and greater safeguards for children;

- to ensure all members of staff can enhance their skills commitment and contribution to CAFCASS practice, policy and underlying knowledge base on an equitable basis;
- to contribute to the body of knowledge which informs law, practice and policy in relation to children and young people.

### 1.3 Key Principles

Continuing professional development (CPD) is now recognised as an essential part of workforce development to deliver appropriate service outcomes and priorities. It benefits service users and carers, the worker and the organisation. It helps to create a stable workforce, which improves the service users experience of services by providing a consistent approach. 'An employer who provides good opportunities for CPD and a positive learning environment to support learners will be more attractive than another.'<sup>1</sup>

Skills for Care, the Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC) and partners defines CPD as an ongoing, planned, learning and development process that

- Enables workers to expand and fulfil their potential
- Contributes to work based and personal development
- Can be applied or assessed against competences and organisational performance
- Includes any activity that increases knowledge, experience and understanding, improves performance and contributes to lifelong learning.
- Ensures continuing confidence and competence, particularly in ever changing environments

Competence means that people have the relevant skills, knowledge, understanding and attributes to do a particular job in a particular context to an agreed standard.

CPD includes any activity, which increases knowledge, experience, understanding, improves performance and contributes to lifelong learning. CPD for the social care workforce includes any development opportunity which contributes directly to improving the quality of service received by service users such as:

- Induction and statutory training
- Work-based learning through supervision and other opportunities supported and provided by employers such as in-house courses, job-shadowing, secondment, mentoring, coaching
- Qualifications required for registration or to meet national minimum standards
- Post registration training and learning (PRTL) as required by the General Social Care Council (GSSC) or other appropriate regulatory bodies
- Post qualifying training for social workers

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<sup>1</sup> Improving Front line services A Framework for supporting front line staff 2005 Social Work Services Policy Division, Scotland.

- Formal learning leading to recognised awards
- Knowledge and skills sets
- Informal learning and experiential learning which takes place through life and work experience
- Reflective thinking on planned and unplanned learning experiences
- Experiential learning

CPD can be used creatively to help people prepare for changes in existing roles, new roles or the next job and should demonstrate how learning is being applied throughout a career. It is a shared responsibility, as described in the GSCC's Codes of Practice for employers and workers. Employers must actively provide learning opportunities for the worker to strengthen and develop skills and knowledge and create an environment where learning can flourish. Individual workers have responsibility for maintaining and improving their knowledge and skills, which can be done through a range of learning and development activities.

Knowledge Learning and Development in CAFCASS will occur within this context and within the framework of the following key principles: CAFCASS is a learning organisation committed to:

- achieving better outcomes for children and families delivered by high quality staff and informed by clear best practice standards on a nationally consistent basis;
- promoting and respecting children's statutory and convention human rights as central tenets of all its service delivery;
- actively involving children in the decisions that affect their lives ;
- developing practice and service quality in a proactive manner in line with the new national regulatory, inspection and Post Qualification (PQ) framework;
- encouraging the delivery of a wide range of training models - single and multi-disciplinary, in house and external learning at national, regional and local level;
- ensuring that all staff are provided on an equitable basis, with the training and support necessary to enable them to carry out their statutory, professional and organisational duties in a timely, effective and cost effective manner;
- enabling all staff - professional, administrative, IT and financial - to contribute to better outcomes for children;
- recognising the responsibilities of managers for influencing the culture of learning within their work setting and of best practice through the standards set and expectations from themselves and their staff;
- allocating sufficient resources to ensure high standards of service delivery, recruit and retain staff and contribute to the growth of the next generation of the social care and family justice professionals by providing professional pathways for career progression which are equitable and transferable.

## 1.4 The CAFCASS Learning Model.

We need to make the transition from 'training' staff to becoming a 'learning' organisation. People learn in a variety of different ways including;

- One to one learning via supervision or mentoring.
- Peer support and case discussion groups to examine different aspects of professional policy and practice.
- Interdisciplinary seminars and discussion groups
- Formal courses both mono-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary.
- Participation in a PQ or other nationally validated course.
- Undertaking one's own research and evaluation work.
- Interactive learning via the Internet.
- Personal reading and reflective time.
- Library study whether via the Internet or through access to relevant hard copies.

We want to ensure that staff have access to a flexible range of different approaches to teaching and learning through this strategy.

The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) is a government-funded independent company established to develop and promote knowledge about good practice in social care. It works to increase understanding of ways to improve the use of research-based knowledge throughout the social care workforce, and, for example, produces and makes available free of charge a series of reviews and reports about how knowledge works in social care.<sup>2</sup>

Its work has been helpful in defining the nature of knowledge in social care. Types of knowledge of relevance to CAFCASS comprise the following: (adapted from SCIE 2004)<sup>3</sup>

- Organisational knowledge
- Practitioner knowledge
- User knowledge
- Research knowledge
- Policy community knowledge
- Legal knowledge

SCIE has also analysed the organisational models of thinking about and developing and using research in social care and evolved this typology:

- the research-based practitioner model;
- the embedded research model ;
- the organisational excellence model.

It identifies the most successful as the organisational excellence model:

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<sup>2</sup> [www.scie.org.uk](http://www.scie.org.uk); the electronic Library for Social Care can be found at: [www.elsc.org.uk](http://www.elsc.org.uk)

<sup>3</sup> Walter, W, Nutley, S, Percy-Smith, J, McNeish, D, & Frost, S. (2004) Improving the use of research in social care practice. SCIE/Policy Press

- the key to successful knowledge use lies with social care delivery organisations, their leadership, management and organisation
- knowledge use is supported by developing a knowledge-minded culture
- there is local adaptation of research findings, other knowledge and ongoing learning within organisations
- partnerships with local universities and intermediary organisations facilitate the creation and use of research/other types of knowledge.

This model meets the needs and aspirations of CAFCASS. As can be seen from these knowledge and organisational characteristics, the fit between knowledge, learning and workforce development is a seamless one and this is one of the aspirations of our KLD strategy.

### 1.5 Four Key KLD Objectives

We have identified four key objectives, which we will work on to realise our vision and strategic aims. These overarching objectives have been further broken down into several strands, which we will work on to ensure that we deliver our strategic vision. These are detailed in the next section. Our four objectives are:

1. **To acknowledge, consolidate, and expand the role of CAFCASS as a learning organisation, which can both *generate* and *apply* knowledge, including especially research based knowledge.**
2. **To identify and establish KLD opportunities for all groups of staff, leaders and managers, FCA's and business support staff and specialists.**
3. **To put in place a devolved KLD function with a strong strategic overview.**
4. **To aim by 2010, for CAFCASS to allocate resources to KLD activities at a level commensurate with KLD needs and at the same proportion as equivalent knowledge based organisations.**

## SECTION 2 WHERE ARE WE NOW – AN AUDIT

### 2.1 Why we need a KLD strategy – The internal context

CAFCASS is the biggest single employer of social workers in the country and carries out a complex function, requiring experience, knowledge, and practice, which is informed by evidence. Our vision to deliver a world class service to children and families in the court setting, means that our social workers need ongoing access to good quality training, to be able to access information and knowledge easily and to each have an individual programme of development which helps them to carry out their role to the highest standards. Equally, our



business support staff must be able to support the functions of the organisation efficiently and effectively so that the overall experience of our service users, who engage with us at one of the most difficult times in their lives, is a good one.

***Our FCA's:***

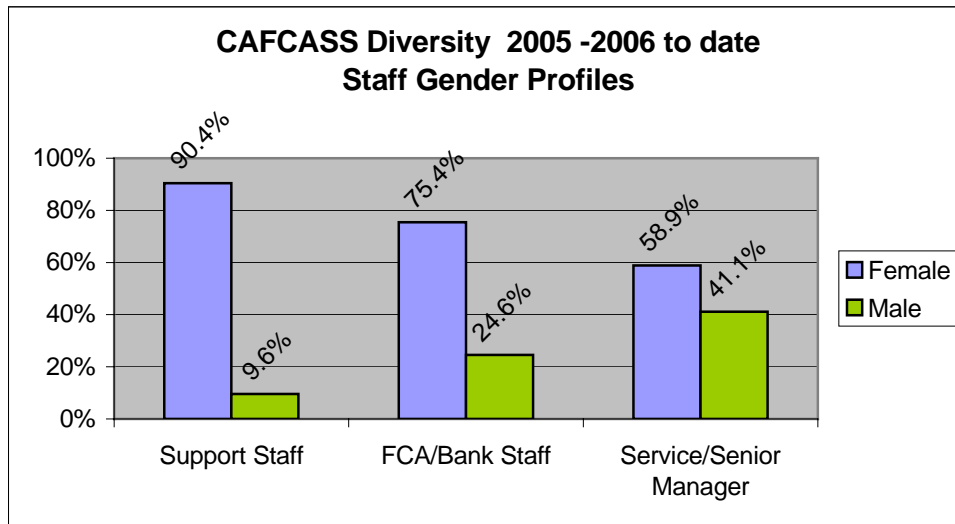
Structurally, CAFCASS has 110 offices in England and employs around 130 first line managers, around 1235 Family Court Advisors (FCA's) and around 470 self employed contractors.

Our social care workforce hold a social work qualification and are registered with the GSCC. Additionally they have a minimum of 3 years post qualifying experience. However, 60% of our employed staff are over the age of 50, and therefore averagely the experience is much more. An older workforce also brings with it issues of culture change, change in working practices and modernisation. For example, many of our older FCA's are not IT literate and this has proved difficult when trying to implement modernisation of our services.

The national average for our turnover is 4% which we recognise is low compared to local authorities. We do know from in house research we carried out with our FCA's that there is a high level of satisfaction with the job itself and FCA's tend to stay in the job because of this. However, approximately 250 FCA's will retire by 2010 and replenishing our levels of staff is one of our key concerns. Planning can be complicated by the new change in retirement age and many of our staff approaching retirement have indicated a positive desire to stay on as bank or sessional staff. For example in the NE 13 staff (around 14% ) of FCA's could retire by March 07. However we only have confirmation of 4 actual staff retiring.

It is important to recognise that our essential criteria of 3 years post qualifying experience in a child protection setting, means that we are competing for staff with local authorities and others in the statutory sector. This has been a shrinking market for some years and the success of government recruitment campaigns for teachers and nurses has not been as successful for social workers.

Cafcass' social care workforce is primarily a white, female workforce over the age of 50. Table 3 below shows the make up of our staff in 3 categories - over 75% of our social care staff are female. This has particular implications for us in our private law work with fathers. However, women generally, dominate the children's social care workforce and this is an issue for the government's recruitment campaign. Unfortunately, we currently do not have age and diversity data about our self employed contractors (SEC's)



The huge diversity of service users in many parts of the country such as in London, Birmingham and Manchester contributes to the complexity of our work. We need to routinely work through interpreters and working successfully with them is a skill we are still acquiring. We also need to think about recruiting first language FCA's in some of the main languages we encounter. A recent inspection on how well we are meeting our duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 highlighted that our front line practice in relation to our black and ethnic minority service users continues to have gaps in the quality and this is a key area for the development of our staff.

During the 5 years that Cafcass has been operating, training and development for staff has been patchy. A good modular programme was rolled out to ensure staff from different backgrounds of public and private law, were trained so that they could work flexibly between the two specialisms. Other professional development opportunities are currently provided for practitioners through commissioning external and internal trainers to deliver courses identified. However a standstill budget in 2005-06 forced us to cut back considerably on KLD activities.

In 2005/06 we allocated 0.05% of the staff budget to KLD in each region and the National Office teams. In addition a centrally held KLD budget of around £250K brought the total amount spent on KLD across Cafcass in 05/06 to £646K, amounting to around 1% of the total staffing budget.

This year however, despite another standstill budget year, we have made substantial investment in the KLD function, because we fully appreciate the imperatives to do so. Our total budget for 2006/07 is around £1.22 million (region and national) and this constitutes 1.6% of the total staffing budget. This does not include the time spent by the KLD leads in their role, which is in addition to the £1.22 m

Table 4 below shows our current levels of post qualification awards amongst employed Cafcass staff. This amounts to 11% of the FCA and first line managers. Given that Cafcass staff are providing expert advice to courts and

critiquing local authority care plans, this has serious consequences for us as an employer and we may well fail to attract staff if we cannot offer the same PQ framework as local authorities. Our staff as experts could well become discredited as they fall behind in terms of PQ awards

Awards	FCA's	First Line Managers
PQ1	76 (26 with PQ1 only)	
Child Care Award (CCA)	44	
PQ Award in Social Work (PQSW)	31	
Advanced Award in Social Work (AASW)	35	1
Practice Teacher Award (PTA)	55	3
Total with PQ awards (by headcount)	150	4

### ***Our Business Support Staff:***

As an increasingly complex organisation, there is a need for us both financially and administratively, to pay particular attention to the KLD needs of our business support staff. Business support covers a range of skills including risk management, financial and IT systems and management, relationship management, project management, information management, communications, public relations and business skills and the more effective use of technology.

We now employ around 500 business support staff who carry out a wide range of business support functions all of whom are critical in running the systems, which underpin the efficient and cost effective delivery of CAFCASS's services. A review of their roles is currently being finalised and new competences have been written to support this. The review has also identified their KLD needs such as management development for those with managerial responsibilities and the need for an induction programme for all new administrative staff, which covers the statutory roles and duties of CAFCASS and its financial, IT and risk management systems. They may also of course, potentially proceed to social care, social work or family justice training. Below is a breakdown of our business support staff by job role.

Job Group	Staffing	
	Headcount	FTE
Administration Manager	52	49.99
Admin & Senior Admin	328	276.1
Business Manager	10	10
Other Business Support	95	89.73
<b>Total</b>	<b>485</b>	<b>425.82</b>

NB: 12% of our Business support staff are from BME communities whilst just under 6% have said they are disabled.

## **Our Managers**

Service managers are pivotal in addressing and managing the changes required of CAFCASS. *'The delivery of a successful social work service for children who are the subject of family proceedings is highly dependent on the quality of frontline practitioners in CAFCASS and the effectiveness of their Service Managers, that is, first line management.'*<sup>4</sup>

The demands of the service manager's role are overwhelming and they are required to possess management and supervision skills as well as a detailed knowledge of an extensive range of the law and practice relating to children and young people across both public and private law matters. Work is under way jointly with unions to look at a revision of their roles, creating some Heads of Service and Practice manager roles to make the task more effective. The recent inspection on 'First Line Management' is timely in contributing to this major review. A specific national induction programme is now provided for all new managers.

CAFCASS has also provided some management training but there is no overall externally accredited programme. Inputs so far have included

- Management of change training for c.50 managers
- Supervision training for 4 managers who will go on to undertake "Training the trainer" courses in November 06.<sup>5</sup>
- Briefings on specific subjects such as contract management, recruitment and selection.
- Sponsorship to some managers to undertake formal qualifications (c.10%).

We now need to put a comprehensive management development programme in place.

Managers are working under great pressure to achieve the correct balance between meeting the service delivery demands of children and courts and their responsibility to meet both the continuing training requirements of GSCC registration and the KLD needs of all staff within the organisation. Operational pressures sometimes make it difficult to enable personnel to be released to attend training events that are sometimes poorly attended as a result.

Our supervision policy and appraisal framework provides an opportunity through individual personal development plans to construct qualifications and skills audit and KLD needs analysis to help inform our workforce development strategy.

We have a number of assets, which we need to protect and develop:

- the expertise and commitment of all our staff who are in a pole position to help *build*, as well as *apply*, relevant knowledge for underpinning a world class service;

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<sup>4</sup> An inspection of 'First Line Management' HMICA August 2005

<sup>5</sup> CAFCASS is using the model of supervision in social care developed by Tony Morrison endorsed by the "Managing effective supervision" unit developed by HZ Management and Training Consultancy for Skills For Care in August 2005, revised in 2006.

- CAFCASS have a unique contribution to make to the development of childcare policy and practice generally as their work gives them a 'birds eye view' of local authority practice nationally and its impact on children and families;
- the Legal advice helpline - the need for prompt updates and access to legal advice, briefings on new legislation and recent relevant case law was emphasised by many of those who were consulted;
- the work of the Research Co-ordinator, whose role entails providing a research and information service to ensure CAFCASS work with families is informed by research and other relevant information; that existing and new services are effectively evaluated and that policy development and practice guidance is grounded in evidence. This work includes the production of the excellent and much valued Research Digest.

We also have an existing partnership with Research in Practice (£12,500pa) which has produced several helpful outputs, but the impact of these are inevitably weakened by the centrally delivered framework of RIP and the limitations of depending on a cascade effect for national events.

By 2007-08 the CAFCASS Practice Learning Project is seeking to provide 130 annual practice-learning placements across CAFCASS nationally. Workload relief and backfill costs have been addressed.

## 2.2 The policy & practice context

There have been a number of recent developments in social care and health which impact on CAFCASS work with vulnerable children and families. It is essential that CAFCASS is able to maintain a constant and critical review of all impending or new legislation in addition to new guidance and regulations and contribute to the consultation process in order that we can identify the implications for CAFCASS. We must ensure all staff are appropriately informed, trained and prepared for any such changes. It is equally critical that we can monitor the impact of the new provisions and learn from our practice to inform the future development of services to children and their families involved in a range of proceedings across the family jurisdiction.

We need to note the impact on our work of *The Children's Act 2004* and which provides the legal underpinning for *Every Child Matters: Change for Children*, the programme aimed at transforming children's services. It is also important to recognise the *National Service Framework (NSF) for Children, Young People and Maternity Services*, (September 2004, DoH), which applies to all those working with children, young people and families in both health and social services.

Each child death enquiry, including the 2001 *The Victoria Climbié Inquiry* has elicited responses and statements, which point out the significant under-investment in knowledge, skills and management over several years and across many sectors, but particularly within social care. This under-investment

has been often compounded by the tension between meeting the service delivery demands of the agency and of the children, young people and families who might be the subjects of proceedings and the responsibility to meet the KLD needs of all staff in an agency.

The *Adoption and Children Act* is the first major review of adoption legislation for thirty years. Both this and The Children (Contact) and Adoption Bill published in February 2005 and currently before Parliament have considerable workload implications for CAFCASS.

The joint departmental (DCA, DfES ) Green Paper on *Parental Separation: Children's Needs and Parental Responsibilities*, has significant implications for the way in which CAFCASS will develop over the next five years, with a new and important emphasis on family support and early in-court conciliation schemes. In July 2004, the President of the Family Division announced the implementation of a new *Framework for Private Law* cases aimed at providing earlier intervention and support to children and their families, which could divert them away from court proceedings. CAFCASS is central to the implementation of this programme.

Significant new areas of practice include representing children involved in private law proceedings (FPR 9.5 and s122 Adoption and Children Act 2002), developing CAFCASS in court conciliation schemes and family resolutions pilots, increasing support to families under the expanded provisions of s16 Children Act 1989 as well as monitoring and facilitating contact arrangements under the Children (Contact) and Adoption Bill. This represents a substantive new body of work in addition to the traditional core roles of reporting to the court (s7 CA 1989) and representing the interests of the child before the court (s41 CA 1989) (specified proceedings).

The policy context continues to change with a *Review of the Family Justice System in the area of child care proceedings*, being taken forward to improve the cross-Government delivery of the core welfare, minimum intervention and minimum delay principles set out in the Children Act 1989.

A new report on safeguarding children by CSCI and seven other independent government inspectorates, *Safeguarding Children: Joint Inspectorate report*, July 2005, contained a specific recommendation to HMCS and CAFCASS to increase the participation of children in family court proceedings. An earlier report from HMICA *Safeguarding Children in Family Proceedings*, April 2005, had already highlighted a range of concerns from a lack of clarity over the term 'safeguarding', reliance on ACPCs for training, not addressing diversity issues in front-line practice and untenable fundamental differences in the practice of involving children.

Finally, all CAFCASS's services to children and young people must be convention compliant taking fully into account and respecting the human rights of children and young people as required by the Human Rights Act

1998 and The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

### **2.3 CAFCASS's role in safeguarding children.**

The CAFCASS KLD strategy must be constructed to reflect and be informed by CAFCASS's core business of safeguarding children and young people involved in a range of family proceedings. CAFCASS protects children and young people involved in those proceedings primarily through independent investigation and representation of their interests before the court. It is this independent representation of their views, and in particular their independence from the other parties to the respective proceedings, be they public or private law, which is itself the safeguard for the child. Indeed, the child's safety increases proportionately as a function of the quality of the investigation, critical analysis of all the available facts and clarity of the recommendation made to the court. The CAFCASS practitioner is committed to respect and promote the statutory and convention rights of children and young people and is an integral part of the process through which the courts achieve the correct balance between rights and welfare, necessary to secure the best possible outcome for this particular child.

Within this framework, the amplification of the child's voice in the proceedings becomes an active dynamic which may act, in public law matters, as a catalyst for change, reflection and review of previous interpretations of 'best interest', and in private law matters, as a agent of dispute resolution.

CAFCASS practitioners operate within the family courts and they need to be confident and competent in that arena. Particular skills necessary to equip them for this were identified by the judiciary as follows:

- Courtroom skills including confidence in addressing the court and commanding credibility as an expert witness in general child care matters.
- Case management skills as set out in s41 (10) CA1989; including proactive management of the timetable of the case in order to avoid delay.
- An in depth knowledge of the framework of law, statutory regulations and guidance which regulate local authority practice in relation to children and young people.
- The ability to provide a succinct and critical independent analysis of the evidence before the court followed by a clear and reasoned recommendation.

### **2.4 The social work context**

Government has made clear that consolidation and expansion of the child care workforce is the key process which underpins almost all of its current aspirations for children and families. There is now a new GSCC regulatory framework that is designed to expand the amount and range of post qualifying (PQ) awards for the social care workforce. This is therefore the time to be proactive and to take advantage of a major strategic opportunity of benefit to

everyone in growing the CAFcASS workforce for the future and increasing the childcare workforce across the board.

CAFcASS has a seat on the Board of The Children's Workforce Development Council, (CWDC) which aims to improve the lives of children and young people by ensuring that the people working with children have the best possible training, qualifications, support and advice. It will also help children and young people's organisations and services to work together so that the child is at the centre of all services. CWDC is one of five bodies forming the UK Skills For Care and Development Sector Skills Council and coordinates the Children's Workforce Network. It acts as a partner and critical friend of the government carrying forward the results from the paper *Every Child Matters*

Our seat on the CWDC Board has given us a crucial voice in the current developments in the new training and CPD structures introduced by the *Every Child Matters* agenda. It is vital we continue to make strategic alliances and strengthen our links so as to ensure that our specialist role is understood and taken account of in current national developments. We also need to be able to capitalise on the various financial and non-financial resources currently potentially available.

CAFcASS recruits its professional workforce on the basis of a requirement to have three years post qualifying experience, but we need to take account of the new three-year degree requirements in our role as a supplier of practice placements (an experience widely acknowledged to influence subsequent career choices by course candidates). The Practice Learning Taskforce was established to work with statutory, voluntary and independent employers to increase the amount, range and quality of practice learning opportunities.<sup>6</sup>

We also need to investigate the accreditation of prior learning possibilities for CAFcASS practitioners, as many will have qualifications and/or experience to credit against the new Post Qualifications (PQ) framework. The overall objective of the revised framework is to ensure that post-qualifying education and training improves the standard of social work practice. There are three levels in the structure, of which the first is at graduate level and aimed at the consolidation of competence in a specialist area of work (from the perspective of CAFcASS, this would be work with children, young people and families). The higher levels, *Higher Specialist* and the *Advanced Award programmes*, lead to post-qualifying awards in higher specialist social work.

All programmes are to be linked to university awards. The Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) that are to deliver the awards must be accredited by GSCC to do so. In addition there is a requirement to work within Regional Planning networks, which will involve employers, service users, and carers at a regional, sub-regional and local level, to '*provide an active on-going dialogue between employers as commissioners and universities as providers of education*' (GSCC 2005, p9).

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<sup>6</sup> see: <http://www.practicelearning.org.uk> including a National Project Plan for Learning Resource Centre Networks. 2004



Given the core business of CAFCASS, careful thought needs to be given to how we develop our staff given their experience, roles and job function and this will be set out in detail in our PQ strategy. The proposal for a 'Family Justice Professional' has already been the subject of extensive consultation and has received<sup>7</sup> widespread support. Most importantly it has the backing of the Family Justice Council. It is equally important that we work with HEI's, GSCC, CWDC and other key partners to ensure that the content of the new PQ framework meets the development needs of our FCA's.

## **2.5 The social work regulatory framework**

The Social Care Register came into force in 2005 to regulate the wider social care workforce. It means that everyone who works in social care in England will join the register and must abide by the Code of Practice for Social Care Workers. In order to re-register with the GSCC after the initial three-year period, registered Social Workers are required to complete either 90 hours or 15 days of study, training, courses, seminars, reading, teaching or other activities which could *'reasonably be expected to advance the social worker's professional development or contribute to the development of the profession as a whole'*. They are required to keep a record of such training and learning.

GSCC regulations specify training and related activities undertaken to continue on the register should include benefiting the candidate's current employment as well as his/her career progression. Specific examples, in addition to using evidence of study towards a post-qualifying award, include:

- arranging to shadow the work of a colleague in a related team/profession;
- negotiating protected time to research latest policy and good practice developments in candidate's field of practice;
- undertaking a piece of research related to practice.

The Code of Practice for Employers of Social Care Workers states that employers are expected to support registered workers to meet the requirements and supervision sessions are cited by GSCC as appropriate for identifying training, learning and development needs. Self-employed social workers are also subject to these requirements.

## **SECTION 3**

### **HOW WE WILL MEET OUR FOUR KEY OBJECTIVES**

#### **3.1 Objective 1: To acknowledge, consolidate, and expand the role of CAFCASS as a learning organisation, which can both generate and apply knowledge, including especially research-based knowledge.**

CAFCASS is a unique agency, the only one of its kind in the country, which carries out its specialist function. This puts us in a position of being not only

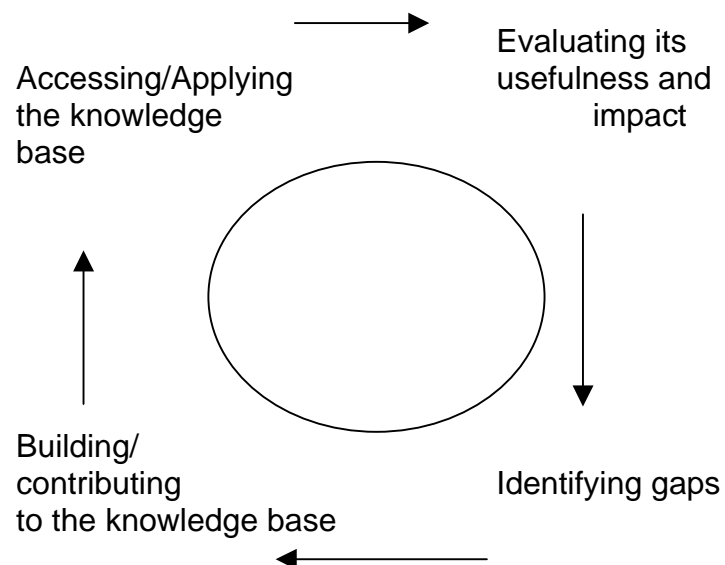
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<sup>7</sup> *An inclusive curriculum for Continuing Professional Development for family justice professionals*; <http://www.family-justice-council.org.uk/htms/pubs/etsubcom.htm>

experts in what we do but also being able to lead the debate on practice issues in the family court setting. Social workers in the field see the FCA role as a career aspiration. We must use our privileged position to both generate and apply knowledge to improve the lives of children and families we work with.

We are a 'data-rich' organisation and there is considerable interest amongst academics and practitioners to carry out research, which will inform practice in the family courts. We will encourage this interest, and seek out interest and funding for where we feel there are gaps. For example the CWDC will plan and resource an annual programme of practitioner and children led research and we will encourage and support CAFCASS staff and children we work with to do this. We have developed our Research Governance Framework, which will approve all future research projects, which require our support. We will ensure that messages from such research are properly debated and disseminated throughout CAFCASS.

We will adopt a "bottom-up" process for identifying the knowledge needs of CAFCASS staff, and for engaging CAFCASS staff and service users in actually setting the research agenda. The model below illustrates a 'virtuous circle', which builds on CAFCASS existing strengths and strives to remedy identified gaps.



(source : Jane Tunstall 2006)

We will ensure that our staff have up to date knowledge through the latest books and research findings so that they feel equipped to do the job. We will do this by continuing to publish and disseminate the much-acclaimed research digest, published quarterly by our Research Coordinator. In addition we have commissioned a library and information service from Barnados and this will become available to all our staff during 2006. We hope this arrangement will have other spin offs, which will enhance practice and service delivery by learning from best practice in Barnados

The partnership with Barnados is an example of how we will collaborate with other agencies for mutual benefit. We have also joined SCIE's practice partners forum where we both contribute to and learn from best practice nationally.

We will be proactive in influencing the national policy debates on children and families with DfES and other key agencies, by ensuring that we have a seat at the table. We were influential in shaping the private law developments and have a seat on the Board of the Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC). We will continue to seek out opportunities to inform future policy debates.

We will keep the voice of the children and families we work with at the centre of our learning and development, because it is ultimately their experience of our service that matters. For this we need to be honest and open in the way we work, actively seek feedback on our work and not only listen to it but also use it to improve our services. We will do this by embedding our quality assurance framework, systematically learn from feedback we receive through this and our Compliments, Comments and Complaints system and through Viewpoint, and begin to actively engage our service users and stakeholders in an ongoing dialogue.

There are many local initiatives that are working well with regions and teams. These need 'knitting together' into a recognisable pattern at national, regional and local level to provide a flexible KLD matrix of learning. Learning can be achieved via many routes and may be both direct and indirect. There are also constructive opportunities for cost-effective joint or partnership training events and initiatives with key stakeholders and other NGOs and organisations active in the field and we will explore delivery of courses at national, regional and local level with them. In this context all CAFCASS training courses and programmes will be registered for Law Society's Continuing Professional Development (CPD) points.

We will create opportunities for all staff to learn continuously through promoting and supporting a culture of learning from each other, from best practice and from experts in the field. To enable this we will encourage short placements and secondments, mentoring, coaching, and observation of practice. We will develop guidelines for these as they create learning benefits for both parties. In addition they can be used to demonstrate learning to meet the requirements of re-registration for GSCC.

We will also continue to use forums such as national and regional conferences, practice seminars, team discussions, legal Advice helpline and road shows and policy and law updates via email and the intranet in order keep staff up to date with the latest practice and research developments. It is important that these forums are not limited to FCA's but include relevant input for business support and other specialist staff and we will ensure that these are built in.

Some examples are offered below of innovative and creative ways to promote a learning culture:

- The establishment of 42 inter-disciplinary seminar groups, geographically based around Family Justice Councils and local CAFCASS teams. Members could include local children panel solicitors, district judges and members of local Safeguarding Boards'. HEIs could also be involved, in order to facilitate strategic links with PQ sponsorship.
- Regional one day training events to cover the most common areas of deficit identified by annual appraisals.
- The encouragement of joint inter-disciplinary training events.
- Establishment of 'mini-pupilages' and court monitoring schemes
- A 'reading' course or group to recharge, update and count towards GSCC requirements.
- 'Virtual practice development groups' of specialist subject areas of expertise within CAFCASS staff accessible via the intranet and supported by the new library service.
- Good practice 'briefings on 'tricky 'situations.
- Peer mentoring- private/public law 'pairing' for both new and experienced staff.

Regular and ongoing evaluation of our work is critical in our work, particular in the context of the changes being proposed to practice. We will use relevant evaluation tools to ensure that we can evaluate all new ways of working such as dispute resolution so that our service remains relevant to the needs of our service users and we can demonstrate what works. For this we must put time and thought into setting up the evaluation at the start of any new innovation.

We recognise that we have to be proactive in growing our future workforce. This brings learning opportunities for not only the students but also our FCA's as practice teachers and in some cases for the team as a whole. Following the success of the 2004-05 practice-learning programme in the northern regions, we will extend this to provide opportunities for social work students to gain practice experience throughout CAFCASS. We will appoint Practice Learning Coordinators in all regions to develop our capacity to do this want all teams to be in a position to contribute by the end of 2007-08.

An up to date list of resources and contacts, which can offer KLD related activities, knowledge and learning opportunities is a must for any service and we will develop and maintain this on our KLD section on the intranet. This will support staff to make links appropriately and access learning opportunities within a national network of agencies and resources. We have recently published the first of a regular KLD newsletter to keep our staff informed about a range of issues and we will continue to do this.

**Actions:**

- Encourage relevant research, seek funding sources where possible, and properly disseminate research messages to staff.
- Continue to publish the quarterly research digest.
- Make available the library and information service commissioned from Barnados.
- Explore best practice sharing opportunities with Barnados, SCIE and other agencies.
- Proactively influence national policy debates with key agencies such as DfES, CWDC, GSCC etc.
- Be honest and open in the way we work, actively seek feedback on our work through an ongoing dialogue with service users and stakeholders and use it to improve our services.
- Register all appropriate training courses both internal and external for the Law Society's Continuing Professional Development points.
- Develop guidelines for and encourage short placements and secondments, mentoring, coaching, and observation of practice to create a culture of learning.
- Continue to use forums such as national and regional conferences, practice seminars, team discussions, legal helpline and road shows and policy and law updates in order keep all staff up to date with the latest practice and research developments.
- Use relevant evaluation tools to evaluate all new ways of working such as dispute resolution so that we can demonstrate what works.
- Appoint Practice Learning Coordinators in all regions to develop our capacity to provide opportunities for social work students to gain practice experience throughout CAF/CASS.
- Develop and maintain a list of resources and contacts on our KLD section on the intranet.
- Publish a regular KLD newsletter to keep our staff informed about a range of issues.

### **3.2 Objective 2: To identify and establish Knowledge Learning and Development opportunities for all groups of staff, leaders and managers, FCA's and business support staff and specialists,**

The Performance Management Framework, which includes the supervision and one to one policy and appraisal and personal development plans is the key mechanism by which we can ensure our practice, competences and national standards are supported by a KLD programme of activities, which are properly planned. A good induction lays the foundation for any new member of staff to be prepared for the job ahead and we will ensure all new staff are properly introduced to their role and function. We will provide supervision for our FCA's at a minimum standard of not less than six weekly intervals have regular one to one meetings with all other staff by arrangement, appraise all staff and ensure they have a personal development plan which identifies learning opportunities that contribute to Continuing Professional Development

(CPD). This will inform local and regional training needs analyses and our priorities for training and other related activities. National priorities are informed through our change programme, the impact of new legislation and developments and inspection and audit recommendations.

We will set out our detailed and costed priorities each year through our KLD Action Plan. However there are some key priorities, which we will deliver over the next 2-3 years:

- Domestic Violence training,
- a programme of activities for the development of our service managers and for our business support staff,
- two national conferences on Diversity and Research findings,
- a major national IT training programme to up skill our staff,
- foundation training for all new FCA's , which will include legal input from a CAFCASS lawyer or children's panel solicitor.
- training in early assessment and report writing to help implement the new national standards and
- a programme of activities to improve practice with a focus on domestic violence, safeguarding and diversity .

In addition we will strengthen our sponsorship programme, which has in the past two years supported over 50 individuals to undertake career development opportunities. Some of these were PQ courses for FCA's but we also supported many business support, HR and specialist staff to complete courses such as MA and CIPD in Personnel Development, NVQ Administration, CIMA - Management Accounting, HND Computing business and information technology and Diploma in Management

We will ensure that access to knowledge, learning and development opportunities is fair and that no group or individual will be disadvantaged or discriminated against. We will in line with our duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, monitor the impact of training on BME staff groups.

Unlike any other social care agency, CAFCASS is a socio-legal service whose officers have a direct line of accountability to the court and who operate at the heart of the family justice system. We have achieved considerable progress in setting out a detailed and costed PQ strategy, which aims to develop highly skilled and competent practitioners capable of providing a top quality service to vulnerable children and families referred by the family courts. The strategy has two strategic goals:

- to develop a PQ curriculum in the context of the revised PQ framework that meets CAFCASS' needs as an organisation with a specific professional strategy, operating in both social care and the more specialist Family Justice fields
- to establish an organisational system that enables practitioners to access the required PQ programmes.

We will finalise this strategy, consult on it, actively implement it and work with our funding body, the DfES to ensure it is properly resourced.

It is essential that changes in CAFCASS activities and statutory responsibilities are fully supported by recognising the equivalent needs for continuing professional development for staff providing administrative and business support, information technology, human resources and financial reporting. Business support staff provide the infrastructure within which practitioners can deliver effective services to children and families. They also require agreed occupational standards, developmental objectives, and opportunities for accredited training. With the leadership of the Head of Business Development, we will develop a business academy approach to support both our business support staff as well as our other specialist functions such as HR and IT and finance roles.

Our electronic Case recording System (CRS) which is being rolled out to all or regions will require all our business support staff, FCA's and managers to change. We will ensure that they are trained to be able to use CRS purposefully, both as information and as a management tool.

In order to modernise our working practices we will ensure that our staff have access to modern working tools and learning methods such as online training and are properly trained to use them. Our ICT strategy builds on this and comprehensively sets out the training required to ensure that all our staff are IT literate and can access their emails, the intranet and the internet, as we rely on this to communicate effectively with our nationally dispersed staff. The successful use of the new library service also depends on staff being able to access their emails and log on to the library website.

We recognise that the expertise and knowledge of staff within the agency and across all grades is considerable, and that accessing this through training events is of benefit to CAFCASS and can be a developmental opportunity for the trainer. We will ensure that trainers appointed and used reflect the broad backgrounds and needs of staff and the wider community. Some regular training events such as foundation training are particularly suitable for delivery by internal trainers and that this gives both an opportunity to staff and recognises the skills and talent, which exist within CAFCASS. To this end we have a protocol in place, which includes back fill costs for regions releasing staff and we will monitor its success in the delivery of internal training.

Our first line managers are a key function in the organisation and we have made some good links with key agencies such as CWDC and Skills for Care to seek funding for and provide a comprehensive management development programme over 3 years for first line managers. This seeks to fulfil recommendation 9 of the Skills For Care Leadership and Management Strategy<sup>8</sup>

*“All first line managers who do not have a relevant management qualification and are not covered by the Registered Manager Awards should be registered for the agreed management qualifications”*

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<sup>8</sup> Leadership and Management Strategy Employer's Guide, Recommendation 9, Skills For Care, October 2005.

The programme will consist of an accredited management qualification within the Post Qualifying (PQ) framework approved by the General Social care Council<sup>9</sup>, continuous professional development (CPD). A whole systems approach is proposed with 3 key elements

- Leadership and management formal training
- Coaching and mentoring
- Organisation specific developmental inputs

We recognise that any such programme should be employer led and CAFCASS is fully committed to such a key development.

We have a small number of BME managers in CAFCASS and we acknowledge industry research, which demonstrates the disadvantage they face in career and employment opportunities. We will support their development in particular within our management and leadership development programme.

Equally, our Chief Executive, Corporate Directors, Regional Directors and Heads of Service provide critical leadership to the organisation and we will similarly work with SCIE and other key agencies to develop an appropriate programme for them.

#### **Actions**

- Provide all new staff with a proper and timely induction and ensure all staff receive an annual appraisal and have a personal development plan in place.
- Ensure our practice, competences and national standards are supported by a KLD programme of activities which are properly planned through appraisal and training needs analysis.
- Set out and deliver our detailed and costed priority training and related activities each year through our KLD Action Plan.
- Strengthen our sponsorship programme
- Ensure fair access to KLD activities and monitor impact on BME staff.
- Set out in detail a strategy which when implemented should take CAFCASS from networking with key players involved with the Post Qualifications Framework, influencing HEI's PQ curricula for our benefit, to moving FCAs and service managers through the appropriate levels of the new PQ framework.
- Develop a business academy approach to support both our business support staff as well as our other specialist functions such as HR and IT and finance roles.
- Ensure all staff are trained to use CRS appropriately
- Ensure that our staff have access to modern working tools and are properly trained to use them

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<sup>9</sup> Specialist standards and requirements for post-qualifying social work education and training, Leadership and Management, GSCC, November 2005



- Develop a pool of internal trainers in line with the agreed internal protocol.
- Work with key agencies such as CWDC and Skills for Care to seek funding for and provide a comprehensive management development programme over 3 years for first line managers.
- Support the development of our BME managers
- Work with SCIE and other key agencies to put in place a leadership development programme for our senior managers.

### **3.3 Objective 3 : To put in place a devolved knowledge learning and development function with a strong strategic overview.**

It is vital the CAFCASS places itself as a key agency within the context of the national social care workforce developments and both informs itself and is able to contribute to the debate which will inform current developments. For this it needs local and national leadership and a strong structure.

A number of functions were devolved to regions in 2005 following the broad consensus around the Chief Executives consultation on the future structure and culture in CAFCASS. This devolution took place within strong national frameworks and corporate leadership. The Corporate Director for Strategy & Performance has the strategic lead for KLD and chairs a National KLD steering group, which will have responsibility for setting national priorities and monitoring the implementation of this strategy. In addition, a Regional Director (NW) provides a bridge between strategic and operational issues and supports the KLD function.

At regional level, each region now has a lead KLD manager, reporting to the Regional Director with links to the national KLD Network Manager. Regions also have some dedicated administrative support. Not all these regional posts are full time, but it is critical that we begin to lay the foundations and infrastructure to deliver this longer-term strategy for KLD for all staff and we will build on this, reviewing the hours allocated in line with the size of the region and the workload. The duties and responsibilities of these posts will ultimately include:-

- Liaising with HEIs to develop appropriate PQ opportunities within the nationally agreed strategy.
- Proactive membership of the new learning resource network centres to underpin the links with HEIs.
- Maximising local training opportunities with local authorities, Local Safeguarding Children's Boards (LSCB), Family Justice Councils (FJC), HEIs, voluntary organisations and stakeholder organisations;
- Providing consultancy and support to FCAs involved in PQ training or other professional development;
- Monitoring and ensuring that re-registration requirements for GSCC are met;
- Contributing to the budget requirements of KLD including the direct delivery of training;

- Ensuring the fair distribution of training opportunities and funds throughout the region;
- Identifying and facilitating KLD needs within teams and also to identifying KLD resources within teams.

The KLD Network Manager facilitates the co-ordination of the Regional KLD leads through the KLD Network, which will be responsible for implementing the KLD strategy, and coordinating regional training events and initiatives.

This structure is relatively new but in the short time it has been in place it has begun to offer a more local response to the local understanding of KLD needs. We need to continue to monitor the structure and ensure that it allows us to create a good balance between the national priorities and local needs.

The results of the extensive consultation in formulating this strategy reflect the fact that while some service managers are eminently well qualified in both public and private law matters others are not and this requires a flexible approach to practice teaching, support and supervision. The national change programme proposes a new structure consisting of a mixture of posts of Heads of Service, Service Managers and Practice Managers and all regions will ensure that they have the appropriate balance of posts to ensure that practice is of a good standard and is informed by research and new developments.

The KLD function is supported by the Research Co-ordinator who:

- provides regular and timely briefings on key government (and other) consultation papers, legislation, regulation and inspection reports and others, including research, as relevant to the work of CAFCASS
- analyses the implications of such papers/legislation for practice and for better outcomes for children young people and their families; and
- disseminates the information to all CAFCASS staff.

The Research Co-ordinator also supports the work of the Research Governance Committee, set up to ensure that research and related activities involving CAFCASS staff, service users or data are conducted ethically and to the highest standard; and that their findings contribute in a cost-effective, timely and relevant way to the ability of the organisation to offer the best possible service to the children and families with whom we work. She also chairs the Steering Group for Evidence Informed Practice (SGEIP) which was set up to champion and provide a lead in relation to an evidence-informed approach to practice and whose work is monitored by the KLD steering group. We will ensure that the role of the Research Co-ordinator and related span of activities is properly linked within the KLD matrix.

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|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Actions:</b></li> <li>• Embed the new devolved KLD structures, with strong corporate leadership, ensuring there is a good balance between national priorities and local needs.</li> </ul> |
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- Regions to ensure they have the appropriate balance of management posts to ensure that practice is of a good standard and is informed by research and new developments.
- Monitor the role of the KLD leads, reviewing the hours allocated in line with the size of the region and the workload.
- Continue to strengthen the role of the Research Co-ordinator and its function within the KLD matrix.

### **3.4 Objective 4: To aim by 2010, for CAFCASS to allocate resources to KLD activities at a level commensurate with KLD needs and at the same proportion as equivalent knowledge based organisations.**

In 2000, the Training Organisation for Personal Social Services (TOPSS - now Skills for Care) published the first national strategy for *Modernising the Social Care Workforce*. This referred to the responsibility of 'all employers to allocate an increased proportion of their staffing budget to meet direct training costs - 3% of budget on training linked to qualifications.' In addition, 'all employees to contribute personal study time/bursary or loan resources to achieve 15% of the total cost of their own qualifications by 2005'

The implementation of this strategy has very considerable resource implications. We cannot ignore the pressures of managing a service within a context of growing demand but neither can we stand still. A phased implementation of the strategy is proposed, with an incremental approach to increasing the percentage of budget allocation to KLD. In addition, we must make the best possible use of all available resources and deploy them as part of this strategy in order to be both effective and cost effective.

CAFCASS' has made a commitment in its two year business plan to incrementally allocate by 2010, 3% of its staffing budget to training activities in line with these recommended national guidelines. Employees too will need to contribute personal study time and other resources to achieve a percentage of the total cost of their own qualifications. This is not an easy course for either party within a standstill budget.

It is critical therefore that each region determines its KLD activities through an annual KLD plan and spends its devolved budgets within the broad priorities and frameworks set out within this strategy. There should be a clear understanding of how each piece of expenditure fits within the CAFCASS KLD matrix at national, regional and local level.

The treasury funding for the development of social workers through post qualifying courses was been devolved to local authorities, which leaves other employers of social workers such as CAFCASS with no access to this type of funding. We risk erosion of our credibility as an agency, which reviews the work of local authorities and a widening development gap if we do not develop our FCA's to PQ levels. In order to ensure that our PQ strategy is properly resourced, we will make our business case to our sponsorship department,

the DfES and ensure that this is a shared risk with them. We will ensure that this is properly lodged in time for the Government's next Comprehensive Spending Review in Autumn 2006, which will allocate funding for 2008-11.

We will also continue to establish and make links with other key players to ensure we have best opportunities available to us and we are linked in to available pots of funding. We have been successful in obtaining CWDC funding for developing our leadership programme for first line managers and this will allow us to pull together an application to bid for funding the programme from Skills for Care. We have also been successful in obtaining a contribution to the development of our PQ programme from the CWDC. We need to continue to make alliances and to ensure CAF/CASS gets its fair share of available funding from agencies with a remit to fund opportunities.

Equally, we must streamline and ensure efficient use of existing KLD resources in order to avoid duplication and ensure efficient use of all available resources. There may be opportunities to pool some resources with key stakeholders, NGOs, HEIs, the 42 local Family Justice Councils and Local Safeguarding Children Boards for a cost-effective approach to KLD. The potential may exist for constructive and cost effective training partnership initiatives and we will need to exploit these.

**Actions :**

- Allocate by 2010, 3% of staffing budget to training activities in line with recommended national guidelines
- Each region to determine its KLD activities through an annual KLD plan and to spend its devolved budgets within the broad priorities and frameworks set out within this strategy.
- A business case for PQ funding lodged with DfES in time for the Comprehensive Spending Review in Autumn 2006.
- Strengthen external alliance to ensure CAF/CASS can access its fair share of available funding
- Avoid duplication and ensure efficient use of all available resources, including cost effective training partnership initiatives with key stakeholders

## **SECTION 4**

### **4.1 Implementation, monitoring & review**

Monitoring and evaluating our performance against our objectives is critical to our understanding of whether we have delivered or not. It also helps to ensure that our objectives remain relevant and challenging.

Progress against this strategy will be monitored through quarterly performance review meetings at regional level, the KLD Network meetings and through the KLD Steering group. In addition progress will be reported to Board and to CDG and published in the annual report.

Priorities and targets will be reviewed and developed against consultation responses to this strategy and over time.

#### 4.2 Having your say

It is important that all CAFCASS staff feel ownership of our KLD Strategy. This strategy is neither a static document nor an end in itself, but has been developed to reflect our approach to continuous learning, flexible enough to respond to our own changing internal environment. Although many staff and stakeholders were consulted in drawing this strategy up, there will be others who will not have had that opportunity and we want to hear from you and for you to input to and help shape this strategy. You can do this either individually, or as a team or region by:

- Directly emailing either [Sherry.Malik@CAFCASS.gov.uk](mailto:Sherry.Malik@CAFCASS.gov.uk) or [Sheena.Adam@CAFCASS.gov.uk](mailto:Sheena.Adam@CAFCASS.gov.uk)
- Contacting Claudia Crawley, KLD Network Manager or your regional representative on the KLD Network meeting (Please see list of names below).

First name	Last Name	Job Title	Region
Barbara	Keen	SM	WM
Peter	Coupe	Head of Service	London
Lynne	Marsden	SM	EM
Sarah	Tate	SM	SW
Colin	Anderson	SM	NE
Andy	Hyde	SM	Eastern
Carol	Lewis	SM	NW
Stan	Angel	SM	Y&H
Rosemary	Horbury	SM	S
Naintara	Khosla	SM	SE
William	Simmonds	Lawyer	Legal

Comments will be received until September 15<sup>th</sup> 2006.

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1

An invitation was sent out to all CAFCASS staff via the intra-net and we were delighted to receive many very detailed, constructive and supportive comments and ideas by email.

#### List of consultees with whom we have talked:

##### CAFCASS staff

North West Regional Office: Sheena Adam; Jean Simmonds; Carol Lewis  
National Office staff, Sherry Malik and Denise Wynter  
FCA's – Kate Thomas-Peter, Hoonie Feltham  
Research Co-ordinator - Harriet Bretherton  
Children's Rights Director- Christine Smart  
CAFCASS Steering Group on Evidence Informed Practice  
CAFCASS Learning and Development Steering Group  
CAFCASS Personal Assistants Group  
CAFCASS Regional Service Managers with responsibility for training, via video conferencing.

##### External Consultees.

DJs – Lynn Roberts, Nick Crichton  
FBLA – Martha Cover, Charles Hale  
GSCC – Steve Trevillion  
ALC and Institute of Education, London University Dr Julia Brophy,  
MCSI- Arran Poyser  
NAGALRO- Alison Paddle; Michael Griffiths-Jones, Maria Ruegger  
NAPO – Liz Moxon, Sian Griffiths  
Resolution – Katherine Gieve, Yvonne Brown (Chair. Children's committee)  
Royal Holloway, London University - Anna Gupta; James Blewett,  
UNISON - Owen Davies  
UEA. Professor June Thoburn  
Family Justice Council. HHJ Matthew Thorpe  
Post Qualifying Child Care Award Co-ordinators Group

### APPENDIX 2

#### Monitoring Strategy Actions

Obj.1	To acknowledge, consolidate, and expand the role of CAFCASS as a learning organisation, which can both generate and apply knowledge, including especially research-based knowledge.	Lead Person	Supported By	Timescales
1.1	Encourage relevant research, seek funding sources where possible, and properly disseminate research messages to staff.			
1.2	Continue to publish the quarterly research digest.			
1.3	Make available the library and information service commissioned from Barnados			

1.4	Explore best practice sharing opportunities with Barnados, SCIE and other agencies.			
1.5	Proactively influence national policy debates with key agencies such as DfES, CWDC, GSCC etc.			
1.6	Be honest and open in the way we work, actively seek feedback on our work through an ongoing dialogue with service users and stakeholders and use it to improve our services.			
1.7	Register all appropriate training courses both internal and external for the Law Society's Continuing Professional Development points.			
1.8	Develop guidelines for and encourage short placements and secondments, mentoring, coaching, and observation of practice to create a culture of learning.			
1.9	Continue to use forums such as national and regional conferences, practice seminars, team discussions, legal helpline and road shows and policy and law updates in order keep all staff up to date with the latest practice and research developments.			
1.11	Use relevant evaluation tools to evaluate all new ways of working such as dispute resolution so that we can demonstrate what works.			
1.12	Appoint Practice Learning Coordinators in all regions to develop our capacity to provide opportunities for social work students to gain practice experience throughout CAFCASS.			
1.13	Develop and maintain a list of resources and contacts on our KLD section on the intranet.			
1.14	Publish a regular KLD newsletter to keep our staff informed about a range of issues.			
<b>Obj.2</b>	<b>To identify and establish KLD opportunities for all groups of staff, leaders and managers, FCA's and business support staff and specialists.</b>	<b>Lead Person</b>	<b>Supported By</b>	<b>Timescales-</b>
2.1	Provide all new staff with a proper and timely induction and ensure all staff receive an annual appraisal and have a personal development plan in place.			
2.2	Ensure our practice, competences and national standards are supported by a KLD programme of activities which are properly planned through appraisal and training needs analysis.			
2.3	Set out and deliver our detailed and costed priority training and related activities each year through our KLD Action Plan.			
2.4	Strengthen our sponsorship programme.			
2.5	Ensure fair access to KLD activities and monitor impact on BME staff.			

2.6	Set out in detail a strategy which when implemented should take CAFCASS from networking with key players involved with the Post Qualifications Framework, influencing HEI's PQ curricula for our benefit, to moving FCAs and service managers through the appropriate levels of the new PQ framework.			
2.7	Develop a business academy approach to support both our business support staff as well as our other specialist functions such as HR and IT and finance roles.			
2.8	Ensure all staff are trained to use CRS appropriately.			
2.9	Ensure that our staff have access to modern working tools and are properly trained to use them.			
2.10	Develop a pool of internal trainers in line with the agreed internal protocol.			
2.11	Work with key agencies such as CWDC and Skills for Care to seek funding for and provide a comprehensive management development programme over 3 years for first line managers.			
2.12	Support the development of our BME managers			
2.13	Work with SCIE and other key agencies to put in place a leadership development programme for our senior managers.			
<b>Obj.3</b>	<b>To put in place a devolved KLD function with a strong strategic overview.</b>	<b>Lead Person</b>	<b>Supported By</b>	<b>Timescales</b>
3.1	Embed the new devolved KLD structures, with strong corporate leadership, ensuring there is a good balance between national priorities and local needs.			
3.2	Regions to ensure they have the appropriate balance of management posts to ensure that practice is of a good standard and is informed by research and new developments.			
3.3	Monitor the role of the KLD leads, reviewing the hours allocated in line with the size of the region and the workload.			
3.4	Continue to strengthen the role of the Research Co-ordinator and its function within the KLD matrix.			
<b>Obj.4</b>	<b>To aim by 2010, for CAFCASS to allocate resources to KLD activities at a level commensurate with KLD needs and at the same proportion as equivalent knowledge based organisations.</b>	<b>Lead Person</b>	<b>Supported By</b>	<b>Timescales</b>
4.1	Allocate by 2010, 3% of staffing budget to training activities in line with recommended national guidelines.			



4.2	Each region to determine its KLD activities through an annual KLD plan and to spend its devolved budgets within the broad priorities and frameworks set out within this strategy.			
4.3	A business case for PQ funding lodged with DfES in time for the Comprehensive Spending Review in Autumn 2006.			
4.4	Strengthen external alliance to ensure CFAFCASS can access its fair share of available funding.			
4.5	Avoid duplication and ensure efficient use of all available resources, including cost effective training partnership initiatives with key stakeholders.			