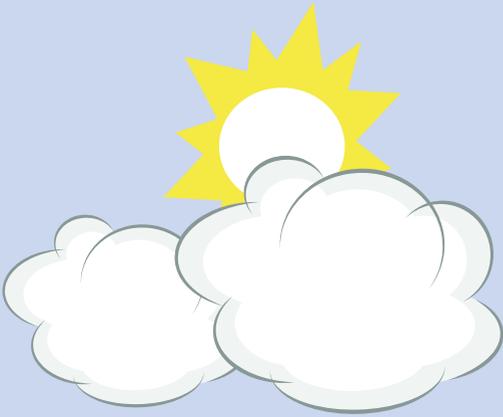


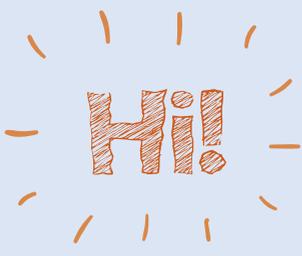


Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

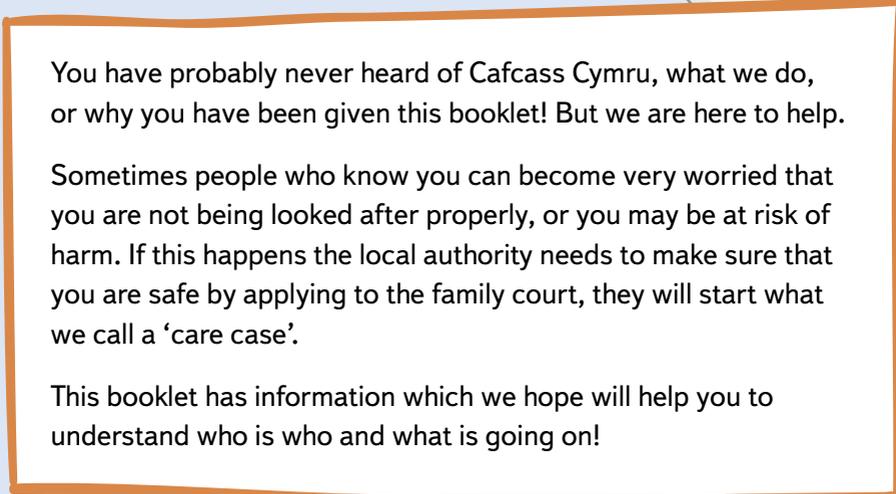


Information booklet





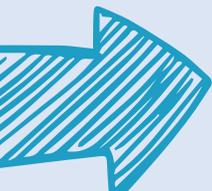
Hi!



You have probably never heard of Cafcass Cymru, what we do, or why you have been given this booklet! But we are here to help.

Sometimes people who know you can become very worried that you are not being looked after properly, or you may be at risk of harm. If this happens the local authority needs to make sure that you are safe by applying to the family court, they will start what we call a ‘care case’.

This booklet has information which we hope will help you to understand who is who and what is going on!



**If you see a word you don't understand
you can look at the Jargon Buster at the
back of the booklet for what it means.
If you can't find the word please ask us.**

What is Cafcass Cymru?



Cafcass Cymru is an organisation which helps and supports children and their families when they are in the family court.

Our main job is to give advice about children and young people to the family court when they ask us to.

Sometimes people who know you can become very worried that you are not being looked after properly, or you may be at risk of harm. If this happens the local authority will ask the family court to become involved.

The family court will ask us to listen to you and make sure that the judge or magistrate hears how you feel and what you would like to happen. We will also let the judge know what we think is best for you.

The UNCRC and children's rights

All children, no matter who they are, where they are from, what they believe in or where they live, have rights.

These rights are the things that children need to be safe, healthy and happy.

The United Nations has a list of all the rights that children have. This list is called the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, or UNCRC for short.

Rights are things you are given by law as soon as you are born – for example, the right to an education or the right to life.

- The UNCRC is a list of 54 rights that every child or young person under the age of 18 has.
- Every right in this list is described as an article.
- Articles 1-42 set out how children should be treated.
- Articles 43-54 are about how adults and governments should work together to make sure all children are entitled to their rights.

If you think that you're not getting access to all of your rights, you can get in touch with the **Children's Commissioner for Wales** by **phoning for free** on **0808 801 1000** or **texting 80800** and start your message with **COM**.

All these rights and much more can be found at www.childrensrights.wales

Can you find these words?



ARTICLES

CHILDREN

FORTYTWO

GOVERNMENT

HAPPY

HEALTHY

PROTECTED RIGHTS

SAFE

UNCRC

A
FOTBKOS
TBEGHUIPLMB
ZWSGDNKWSSDTI
UXDJOWFNOARYYPO
NPYLVYEOFQKBRLW
CSFWERGEEDJOLKT
RSHNRSELCITRANY
ECJTPNCQEWVYBTU
DEIOIMEGQCHHKMXRI
FHUCWEMRTETBFGSOK
GBAOJNCEDLZYCPRFO
NPEPOTDFALRIGHTSL
TYUPVMENOISTIMP
CRIPYHOPIGHYNOP
RTUSSLEGYXCUG
FRUKLOPBV
FEV

Family Court



Family court is where important decisions are made about children and their families. They are very different to criminal courts where people go when they may have done something wrong.

Although they look like any other court they are less formal and barristers and solicitors do not wear wigs and gowns like you see on television.

The judge in the family court listens to what everyone has to say and makes important decisions about you and your family to make sure you are kept safe. The court will normally call this a 'public law case'.

Sometimes the 'parties' (the people involved in the case, like you, your parents or the local authority) will have special legal help; this can be a solicitor or a barrister. These people know about children and family law and they will speak to the judge or magistrate to explain the wishes and feelings of the people they represent.

The judge or magistrate will ask questions and listen to everybody's views before making a decision and may ask experts, such as social workers and family court advisors, to help them in their decision-making.



Our staff



Children’s Guardian, or Guardian for short, is a professionally trained person who works for Cafcass Cymru.



You may also hear them called Family Court Advisors or FCA for short.

They give information and advice to the family court to help judges and magistrates make the best decision about you and your family.

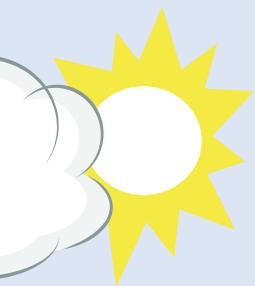
Part of the Guardian’s job is to meet with you and listen carefully to what you think and how you feel and help you to understand what’s happening.

They will advise the judge or magistrate on what your needs, wishes and feelings are and share their opinion on what they think is best for you.

They will **NOT** ask you to decide what happens next or ask you to make a decision about your family.

What Happens

We will advise the courts what we think will be best for you, usually by writing a report to explain what you think and how you feel.



So that our advice to the court is right, we will usually speak to other people in your lives. These discussions may also be included in the report.

Anything you talk about with us may go into the report and your family will see the report. If you are worried about this, make sure you tell us so we can help.

The judge or magistrate will read the report and think about our advice. They will listen to what everyone has to say before making a decision on what they think is best for you.

Sometimes this is not the same as what you wanted, but the court will always do what it thinks is best for you.



What next?

When the court has made their decision they will tell everyone involved with the case what to do next.



If the court decides you are not safe at home, they will ask the local authority to make safe arrangements for you so that you are properly looked after and safe.

If the court decides you should live somewhere else so you can be safe, your social worker will try to see if you can stay with someone you already know, like your grandparents or some friends of your family.

You won't be able to see your parents if the court thinks that it is not safe, but the court may also decide that it is ok for you to see your parents from time to time.

As we are only involved when the court asks us to assist them, this means that our involvement will normally stop at this point.



Whatever the outcome there will be help and support for you. The next section explains some of this help and where to find it.



Links



If you are looking for more help or information here are some people that may be able to help you.



www.cafcass.gov.wales/children_and_young_people



Champions children and young people and aims to get their rights respected and their voices heard.

www.childcomwales.org.uk



Get info and advice about a wide range of issues, talk to a counsellor online, send Childline an email or post on the message boards. www.childline.org.uk



Wales' leading advocacy provider, supporting the most vulnerable children and young people in Wales.

www.trosgynnal.org.uk



Information, advice and advocacy helpline for children and young people. 080880 23456

www.meiccymru.org



Nyas Cymru provide confidential advocacy representation to vulnerable children and young people across Wales on behalf of local authorities.

www.nyas.net/nyas-cymru



From before they are born until they are into their twenties, we help disadvantaged children across the UK.

www.actionforchildren.org.uk

How do I feedback or complain?



If you want tell us about something we did well or something we could have done better you can do this in a number of ways:

You can use the feedback forms found in the feedback area of our website:

 [Cafcass.gov.Wales](https://cafass.gov.wales) or;

 @MyVoiceCafcassCymru@Gov.Wales or;

You can phone us between
9:00am – 4:30pm Monday to Friday on
0800 49 60 650

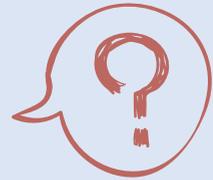


Or you can contact us by post, the address is:



Cafcass Cymru Quality Assurance Team
Welsh Government Buildings
Sarn Mynach
Llandudno Junction
Conwy
LL31 9RZ

What happens when I contact Cafcass Cymru to raise a complaint?



We will contact you to talk about the concern you have told us about.

We will look into your concerns and will let you know within 3 weeks what we have found out and what can be done about your complaint.

If you want to, we can meet again to talk about any questions you may have.

It's your right to have someone to help you make your complaint. This person is called an Advocate and can speak for you and help you say what you want. We can arrange for you to have an Advocate who works for you and not Cafcass Cymru.

Jargon buster

Barrister is someone who has been trained in Family Law. They are able to provide advice and speak in court on behalf of people going through the family courts.

Cafcass Cymru is an organisation which helps and supports children and their families when they are in the family court.

Children's Guardian is the name of a trained professional person who works for Cafcass Cymru and helps children and families in care cases.

Confidential means that it is very private and will not be shared with anyone else unless it is very important to do so.

Family Court is where important decisions are made about children and their families. They are very different to criminal courts where people go when they might have done something wrong.

Family Court Advisor (FCA) is the name of a trained professional person who works for Cafcass Cymru and helps children and families in private law cases.

Judge is a legally trained person who makes decisions in a family court. The judge listens to what everybody who is involved has to say, reads reports, applies the law and decides what is best for the child.





Magistrate is a trained member of the community who volunteers to work in the family court. They are advised by a Legal Advisor. They listen to what everybody who is involved has to say, read reports, apply the law and decides what is best for the child.

Public Law or care cases are usually brought to the family court when the local authority believes that a child is not being looked after properly.

Report is written information that includes your wishes and feelings and what your Family Court Advisor/Children's Guardian thinks is best for you. It will be given to the court to help them make a decision about what is best for you.

Rights of the Child or UNCRC is a list of rights all children and young people, everywhere in the world have, no matter who they are, where they live or what they believe in.

Social Worker is trained to help make sure children are safe and properly looked after.

Solicitor is someone who has been trained in Family Law. They are able to provide advice and speak for people going through the family courts.

