

Section 7 report

A Section 7 Report is a welfare report written by a social worker to advise the Court about the child's situation, their wishes and feelings, and what arrangements the report writer considers to be in the best interests of the child. A Section 7 report may be done by Cafcass or by Children's Services.

What goes into a Section 7 report?

The report writer will decide what information they need for the report based on what the court has asked them to look into. This *may* include talking to children (depending on their age and understanding) about their wishes and feelings and what they would like to happen.

The Cafcass worker will:

- usually talk to your children alone – this may be at a neutral venue such as at their school
- spend time with you and the other party and listen to any concerns you might have.

They may also speak to other people such as family members, teachers and health workers.

The Cafcass worker will not ask your children to make a decision or to choose between you and the other party.

The report writer will then advise the court on what they think should happen. In most cases you will be able to see the Section 7 report before the court hearing.

If you are not happy with the Section 7 report

If you are unhappy about the report, it is important that you let the court know about your concerns.

What happens next?

The court will make the final decision about what should happen to your children after reading the report and listening to what you and other people in the case have said.

The court will:

- pay particular attention to your children's wishes and feelings – but may not always do what your children want
- make its decision based on *what it thinks is best for your children*.
- set its decision out in a 'court order' which you must stick to.

Help and support

If you have any questions about the report process, you can contact the report writer who is dealing with your case. If you feel you need legal advice, you can come to a NCLS Free Legal Advice session on a Tuesday morning, where you can have a 15 minute appointment with a family solicitor – please phone 01603 496623 for details.

More information is available on the Cafcass website:

www.cafcass.gov.uk

Local contact details:

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Rosebery Court
St. Andrews Business Park
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