



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT

Title: Report of the inspection of CAFCASS CYMRU

Date: 23 November 2010

By: Gwenda Thomas, Deputy Minister for Social Services

Today, the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) has published its first inspection report of CAFCASS CYMRU.

The inspection assessed CAFCASS CYMRU as *Satisfactory* in relation to Overall Effectiveness and *Inadequate* in relation to Capacity for Improvement.

The inspection findings and report have been shared with CAFCASS CYMRU. The new Chief Executive has welcomed the report as it provides an independent assessment and baseline on which to take the organisation forward and build on the strengths identified.

The inspection was comprehensive with inspectors meeting with a wide range of stakeholders and organisations, parents, carers, children, young people and staff, and examining reports, case files and observing practice. To provide continuity and comparability CSSIW adapted the inspection framework used to inspect CAFCASS in England.

I am pleased to note that CAFCASS CYMRU has been judged as satisfactory in terms of its “overall effectiveness” in particular in a number of crucial areas such as - service responsiveness, safeguarding, assessment, intervention and direct work with children, workforce development, reporting and recommendations and equality and diversity. I welcome the comments about the quality of practice that inspectors noted and would like to put on record my thanks and recognition of the work that CAFCASS CYMRU staff do to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, which at times takes place in

very complex situations. However, there is no room for complacency and the report also identifies important areas of work where CAFCASS CYMRU needs to improve its performance and service. Under the leadership of the new Chief Executive, work has already begun to address these issues.

The inspection report has also evidenced that progress has been made in relation to a number of recommendations of the Health, Well-Being and Local Government Committee report into CAFCASS CYMRU that was published in July 2009 particularly around its approach to children's rights and work with children and young people in individual casework.

I have asked the new Chief Executive of CAFCASS CYMRU, who took up post on 1st November 2010, to review the structure of the organisation, develop an action plan and work programmes in order to clearly set out how necessary service improvements will be driven. She will report back to me by February 2011. CSSIW will also monitor the progress of improvement through an annual review process.

I am determined that CAFCASS CYMRU will ensure that it implements the recommendations of the report, which will help to improve outcomes for children across Wales.