

Tips for Meetings with CAFCASS

DO

Speak calmly and clearly;

Tell the truth;

Explain to the CAFCASS Officer why you believe shared parenting is in the children's best interests, and give the Officer information about your past involvement in the children's care;

Clearly explain your childcare plans, showing you have considered such things as who will look after the children when you are ill etc;

State that you want only what is right for your child;

Ensure you cover all the points in the meeting that you feel are necessary. For your own benefit, write these down, prior to the meeting, and read them before the meeting (but do not take in an 'agenda!');

Ask the CAFCASS Officer when their report will be provided to both parents (if the court has asked for one). If it is less than 5 days before the court hearing to consider the report, remind the Officer that the Family Proceedings Rules say you should have the report at least 5 days beforehand.

DON'T

Criticise your ex-partner as a person. If there are things they do which concern you in terms of their parenting, and those concerns are serious, explain the actions and behaviours which worry you;

Say you wish to stop your ex-partner from seeing your child;

Make false allegations;

Exaggerate;

Lose your cool, become angry, or appear unreasonably emotional.

Argue or be sarcastic with the CAFCASS Officer.