



FACT SHEET

Child Inclusive Mediation

KEY CONTACT



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Child inclusive mediation (also known as direct child consultation) is a way for your child's voice to be heard when issues relating to them are being considered.

This can be particularly helpful when each parent has a different view on what their child may be feeling or saying.

Often when parents are separating, children can feel guilt and assume that they have to take sides or say certain things to appease each parent. This can lead to a child sending out different messages to each parent.

By meeting with our mediator, Zen Thompson, your child has the opportunity to talk about their situation to a neutral person.

Child inclusive mediation can be useful in many different situations:

- » Where we are acting as mediator in your matter;
- » Where you are in mediation elsewhere, but your mediator does not offer this service;
- » Where there are no court proceedings but you feel that your child should be heard (e.g. in negotiation between solicitors or in a collaborative case);
- » Where you are in court proceedings but would like some indication of your child's wishes and feelings without the involvement of the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS).

We are able to offer your child confidentiality (subject to any disclosure of harm) and they can talk to our mediator in confidence. Anything they say in these meetings will not be shared with you, as their parents, unless your child gives permission to do so. This often means that your child is able to feel open and honest - usually once they have said what they want to say, they are happy for Zen

to share this with you.

Zen is specially trained to meet with children and has had an enhanced DBS check. Whilst you would not be in the room when he meets with your child, another member of staff will always be present. All arrangements for the meeting are made through you and he does not have contact with your child outside the meeting.

The suitability of meeting your child is discussed with both parents in advance, it is then up to your child if they decide to meet him. Zen would not share any information with your child without your permission.

Once the meeting is over, Zen meets with both parents to share what the child has authorised him to share. It is then for you to decide how to use what has been shared. The final decision-making will still remain with you.

This fact sheet has been provided for information purposes only and should not be construed as legal advice. Whilst every effort has been made to ensure that the information in this fact sheet is correct (as at October 2020), it is intended as a guide only and should not be relied upon. Specialist legal advice should be sought so that all the factors specific to your circumstances can be taken into account.