

Location & Date

Date: 29th May 2019

Time: 09:00 - 13:10

Location:

Law Society of Scotland

Atria One

144 Morrison Street

Edinburgh

EH3 8EX

CPD Hours: 3hours 30minutes

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3.5 hours verifiable CPD

As a result of the implementation of the Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011, an increasing number of solicitors have been present at children's hearings. While this has had its advantages, there have been difficulties for solicitors in becoming attuned to the unique environment of the children's hearings system.

This seminar will provide a primer to the issues that solicitors need to know in order to ensure their participation is as meaningful as possible, giving a thorough introduction to matters of child development and how the process will impact them, as well as advice on facilitating child participation and managing the difficulties that might arise when representing another party in a children's hearing.

*Are you a solicitor specialising in this area of law? We offer specialist accreditation in a number of areas, including Child Law and Family Law. Find out if you qualify see **Specialist Accreditation**.*

Learning outcomes

At this seminar you will:

- Review the role of the solicitor in a children's hearing: what is working well and what needs to be improved?
- Develop your understanding of child development issues and communication
- Discuss the role and function of the children's hearing and the panel members
- Learn about common problems in the appeals process and issues regarding deadlines and time-barring

Confirmed speakers

- **Morag Driscoll**, Convenor of the Family Law committee, Law Society of Scotland, Chair
- **Alan W Robertson**, Senior Associate, MBS Solicitors
- **Gary Kainth**, Research Associate, University of Glasgow
- **Dr Robert Porter**, Research Associate, Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children, University of Strathclyde
- **Julia Donaldson**, Clinical Psychologist and Clinical Director, NSPCC Glasgow Infant and Family Team
- **David Stakes**, Team Leader, Children and Families, Permanence Team, Glasgow City Health and Social Care Partnership

Programme Details

09:00 - 09:20 Registration and refreshments

09:20 - 09:30 Welcome and introduction

Speaker

Morag Driscoll, Convenor, Family Law committee, Law Society of Scotland



Morag is the convenor of the Law Society of Scotland's Family Law Committee. She is a former reporter to the children's hearing and is the retired director of the Scottish Child Law Centre. She is one of the annotators to the Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011, and is the author of a number of articles for publications such as Green's Family Law Bulletin. She is currently co-authoring the second edition of Child Abuse, Child Protection and the Law.

09:30 - 10:10

Children's hearings and the role of the solicitor

- The function and ethos of the children's hearing
- The advantages and challenges of solicitor involvement
- The Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011
- The role of the solicitor when representing parties other than the child

Speaker

Dr Robert Porter, Research Associate, Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children, University of Strathclyde

10:10 - 10:50

The wellbeing of the child

- The impact of care and protection decisions upon the child
- Overview of child development
- Attachment and the effects of family contact

Speaker

Julia Donaldson, Clinical Psychologist and Clinical Director, NSPCC Glasgow Infant and Family Team

Julia is the Clinical Director with the Glasgow Infant and Family Team (GIFT), NSPCC. GIFT is an infant mental health team which was established in 2012. GIFT provides relationship focussed assessment and intervention to young children who have recently been placed in foster care, and their birth families. GIFT then makes recommendations to Social Work and Children's Hearings about whether the child can return safely to their parents' care or whether adoption is indicated.

Julia is a Consultant Clinical Psychologist and Paediatric Neuropsychologist. Julia previously worked for 9 years with children and young people who were Looked After and Accommodated in a specialist CAMHS Service in NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde. Prior to that, Julia worked in an Early Intervention Service for children and families in East Glasgow and in the Neurosciences Unit at the Royal Hospital for Sick Children, Glasgow. She has a longstanding interest in developing and providing effective early intervention for children and families who have experienced early adversity.

10:50 - 11:05

Refreshments and networking

11:05 - 11:45

Facilitating family participation

- Hearing the voice of the child
- Achieving constructive (carer) involvement
- Positive participation means good outcomes?

Speaker

David Stakes, Team Leader, Children and Families, Permanence Team, Glasgow City Health and Social Care Partnership

11:45 - 12:25

Working with other panel members

- Understanding the role of social workers, parents, reporters and other panel members
- Strategies for effective engagement

Speaker

Gary Kainth, Research Associate, University of Glasgow

12:25 - 13:05

Conducting panel appeals

- Considering when to conduct a panel appeal and how it will impact the children's hearing process
- Trends in recent case law
- Address misunderstandings and misinterpretations
- Managing deadlines and time-barring

Speaker

Alan Robertson, Senior Associate, MBS Solicitors

Alan has been a Senior Associate with MBS Solicitors since the firm's establishment in August 2010. He has practised as a solicitor since qualifying in 2006. His primary areas of practise are family & child law, criminal law, reparation law. He has a particular interest in the area of Children's Referrals. He is regularly appointed to act mostly for juveniles and parents for hearings at the Children's Panels to Children's Referral Proofs at the Sheriff Court. He has also written articles for the Journal of the Law Society of Scotland. Alan is also regularly instructed in respect of Panel Appeals at Edinburgh Sheriff Court and to the Sheriff Appeal Court. He regularly instructs and works closely with Counsel. In addition, he is regularly instructed in Permanence and Adoption actions in the Sheriff Court and in the Court of Session. Alan has also acted in cases ranging from Special Reasons/Exceptional Hardship Proofs in the Justice of the Peace Court, to Summary Trials in the Sheriff Court, right through to more complex Sheriff and Jury trials – all in his own right.

13:05 - 13:10

Closing remarks

13:10 - 13:40

Lunch and networking

Prices

prices exclude VAT

Member:	£143.75
New member:	£131.25
Accredited Paralegal:	£131.25
Trainee:	£131.25

Unemployed member:

£120.84

Non-member:

£158.34