

Involved local authorities:

Dudley
Sandwell
Shropshire
Telford & Wrekin
Walsall
Wolverhampton



Wolverhampton

DFJ Trailblazer Pilot Area

Key intervention themes:

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|---|
| System governance | ✓ | Pre-proceedings practice | ✓ |
| Improving data | ✓ | Experience of children and families | ✓ |
| Multi-agency collaboration | ✓ | | |

Baseline information:



48 weeks
Average Section 31 case duration

National average:
44 weeks



10
Section 31 care applications per 10,000 children

National average:
9.2

Based on Cafcass statistics for 2023-24

Local challenges and the rationale for change:

- A lack of confidence in social work assessments and their place in court
- Family members and connected carers presenting late in proceedings
- Parents don't receive the information and guidance they need early enough in the process
- An increase in the use of expert assessments and a limited availability of suitably qualified experts

Implemented solutions:

Improving the experience of children and families	Local authorities will be supported to engage with experts by experience to improve the experience of children and families in care proceedings.
An improved regional data collection	The resulting tool from the data collection will enable data analysis at a more granular level and a better understanding of complex cases.
Multi-agency workforce development plan	A focus of the plan will be on effective pre-proceedings, developing court skills in the staffing group and unlocking family networks.
Expand pool of ParentAssess-trained practitioners	The ParentAssess methodology further helps parents with additional needs navigate and understand the process.

