



Angela Clarke
Programme Director

Angela qualified as a Social Worker over 35 years ago; starting her career in London, before relocating to the South-West for her first senior management role. She has been a Practice Leader in 3 Local Authorities and has expertise in leading across the full range of services for children and families. She has led strategic safeguarding partnership arrangements; has extensive experience of developing quality assurance systems; participated in sector-led improvement and peer reviews; and has contributed to positive outcomes from inspection. She is an alumni of the Systemic Practice Leadership Development Programme.

Angela is an enthusiast for innovation and improvement, who has led several transformation programmes and inspired others to deliver excellence. She is a champion of collective and partnership working and is committed to delivering high quality, accountable, and ethical public services. A passionate advocate for promoting the upbringing of children by their families, upholding people's rights, strengths-based practice, and providing real support to families to overcome adversity. She has supported the values and aims of the Family Safeguarding model since its inception. Follow Angela on BlueSky at:

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Edwina Grant OBE
Independent Consultant

Edwina Grant OBE is a consultant to The Centre for Family Safeguarding, alongside other work she does with the Chartered Institute of Public Sector accountants (CIPFA), Whole Education, Newton, and several local authorities.

She was Director of Children's Services (DCS) in four councils, the London Borough of Redbridge, Nottingham City Council, Central Bedfordshire Council, and Lancashire County Council.

Redbridge was one of two councils that trailed the concept of the DCS post back in 2003, before the Children Act 2004, so she has a good sense of social care developments and emergent issues that affect DCS's and councils at executive level since then.

She worked for four years with the Local Government Association (LGA) as their senior children's services adviser and sat on the Ofsted reference group for many years. For four years she was a Trustee on a large hospital acute trust, which deepened her understanding of the health and NHS agendas.

A qualified teacher, with a background in Special Educational Needs, she was awarded the OBE for services to children's social care in 2015. She sits on the Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS) council of reference as chair of the ADCS associates.

She has chaired improvement boards in the London Borough of Croydon and Manchester Council and is a qualified executive coach.



Louise Brakes
Senior Practice Lead

Louise is a qualified Social Worker with over 15 years' experience in children's safeguarding as a practitioner and senior leader. Louise has managed MASH, Assessment and Safeguarding teams and has extensive experience of care planning both as a practitioner and senior leader. Louise is trained in PAMS and Parent Assess models of assessment; supporting parents with learning needs.

Louise has experience of change management and has worked in several authorities that have undergone restructuring and implemented new models of delivery within children's services. Louise has extensive experience of developing and working with internal colleagues and external partners to design, implement and deliver improvements to services. Louise has successfully supported the implementation of Family Safeguarding within other local authorities and supported internal and external evaluations of the model. Louise's role within the team includes supporting the other practice leads with delivery across the FS adopting authorities and to drive forward innovation within FS practice. The practice lead team offers expert advice and guidance to Local Authorities on adopting and implementing the Family Safeguarding model.



Rani Naidoo
Practice Lead

Rani is a qualified Social Worker with over 36 years of experience as a Social Worker, Manager and Senior Manager. She is an MBA graduate and a Fellow of the Chartered Management Institute having completed a Senior Leader level 7 Master's Degree. Rani's initial years of practice were in South Africa where her work largely involved empowering children, families and communities through partnership and collaborative working. A larger part of her career has been working in Children's Service at Hertfordshire County Council and she has extensive experience in Children's Safeguarding and Children Looked After Services. Rani is experienced in leading and working alongside partners, to design and shape services provided to children and families. Having completed her MBA research on improving reunification for children who come into care, Rani has played an influential role to enable change in the culture of practice towards strengthening family engagement and return home of children from care.

Rani joined the Centre for Family Safeguarding Practice as a Practice Lead and has worked closely with Local Authorities to implement the Family Safeguarding model and lead on a Family Safeguarding approach for Children in Care and Care Leavers. Rani is passionate about strength-based practice, advocates for best outcomes for children and families, is innovative and is committed to delivering a high standard of practice.



Siobhan Patton
Practice Lead

Siobhan is a qualified Social Worker with 25 years of experience. Most of her expertise was honed during her 18 years at Birmingham Children's Trust, the country's largest Local Authority, where she worked as a Child Protection Chair and an Independent Reviewing Officer. She then moved to Walsall Local Authority, where she played a key role in the successful implementation of the Family Safeguarding Model, helping Walsall achieve an Ofsted rating of 'Good' in late 2021.

Siobhan is known for her high motivation and supportive, relational approach, empowering others to build on their strengths, leading to positive change and better outcomes. She recently completed a course in Motivational Interviewing (MI) at Buckinghamshire New University, which has significantly influenced her approach with everyone she meets. Siobhan integrates MI techniques in all her interactions, helping individuals find their own motivations for change and fostering a collaborative environment.

In addition to her role as a Practice Lead at the Centre for Family Safeguarding Practice, Siobhan is excited to be using her skills and knowledge as a Magistrate within the family courts. This role complements her current work, allowing her to further improve the experiences of families within the court system. She remains passionate about and dedicated to striving to keep families together safely and helping them thrive.



Steph Atalla
Practice Lead

Steph has been a qualified Social Worker for over 15 years, with 8 years' experience as a senior manager leading front door, assessment services, and safeguarding teams in children's services. Steph has led strategic partnership arrangements alongside improvement in service delivery supporting Local Authorities to achieve Ofsted 'Good' ratings. Steph is passionate about keeping families together and leading teams to embed a strong culture of support where staff and families feel valued and family engagement is strengthened.

She led a prominent South-East unitary authority through their Family Safeguarding journey from 2017-2022 and their achievements were commended by Ofsted. Inspectors found that there had been a significant reduction in the number of children subject to a child protection plan, children entering care, repeat domestic abuse call outs and mental health crises. Steph was also the project lead for introducing a Pre-Proceedings Protocol working with the judiciary and local solicitors to achieve commitment to exiting pre proceedings and using pre proceedings as an opportunity to change as opposed to gathering evidence.

In 2022 Steph completed her Master's in Advanced Child Protection with distinction whereby her dissertation focused on creating the right culture in social work to achieve permanent committed Social Workers who feel valued and respected, that in turn can create change 'with' families to enable children to remain at home. She firmly believes that Family Safeguarding practice and principles enhance practitioner's ability to create positive change.

Steph has been working collaboratively with BASW to promote their 80:20 campaign promoting relationship based practice in social work.



Jill Digby
Finance Lead

Jill has extensive senior management experience in Local Government and expertise in finance, business improvement and change management. She was Hertfordshire County Council's Finance and Integration lead on the successful implementation of the SAP Finance, HR and Procurement system and subsequently led a team delivering the associated business change and benefits across the organisation.

Jill also has experience of procuring and managing third party contracts to deliver savings whilst meeting agreed performance targets. This includes the development of business cases and agreeing and monitoring KPIs post-implementation. She brings to the Family Safeguarding team her expertise in finance, change management and use of data to measure performance and benefit realisation.

Jill has worked with Professor Lisa Holmes on updating national unit costs for children in need and in care, and on costings for the NSPCC used to evaluate the benefits of reunification.



Lisa Burton
Programme Manager

With over 30 years of management experience, Lisa is an Agile APM and PRINCE2 Qualified Programme Manager. She specializes in HR, transformation, strategic workforce planning, learning and organizational development, and change management. Lisa has successfully led numerous high-impact corporate programs, including senior leadership and management redesign, accommodation reviews, and the formal closure of Bedfordshire County Council.

Lisa excels both strategically and operationally, demonstrating exceptional consultancy, communication, delivery, and engagement skills at all levels—internally, externally, with partners, and political leaders.

In her previous role as Programme Manager for the Centre for Family Safeguarding Practice, Lisa headed the Children's Services Learning and Development Service. There, she led the workforce workstream for the development and implementation of Hertfordshire Family Safeguarding in 2015.

Lisa is a CIPD Chartered Fellow, CMgr MCMI, and an ILM qualified workplace coach. She is a Fellow of the Chartered Management Institute, having completed a Master's in Business and Organisational Strategy with a research study into flexible working in Children's Social Care.



Lariena Carroll
Deputy Programme Manager
and HR Lead

Lariena is a Human Resources and Project Management Specialist. She is a Master's graduate with Chartered CIPD membership and PRiNCE 2 Practitioner qualified. A strategic thinker, strong relationship builder, enthusiastic doer and curious collaborator with a proven successful track record of achievement in the development and execution of talent acquisition and people strategies. Lariena has extensive experience in change management and transformation projects, managing people, inspiring teams and working within complex stakeholder environments. Lariena is a strategic resourcing lead with extensive experience in the creation, delivery and management of business focussed resourcing plans. Highly skilled in workforce planning & data analysis, job evaluation, interviewing, marketing and advertising working closely with stakeholders to engage the best talent in the market.

She is highly effective at partnership working, strategic engagement, communication and stakeholder management at all levels, offering advice, guidance and coaching on effective HR and programme solutions. She is proud to work in organisations such as the Centre for Family Safeguarding Practice that match with her personal values and is committed to positive change and transformation that improves outcomes and delivers meaningful impact.



Kerrie Spark
Project Officer

Kerrie's employment background over the last 25 years has been within local and central Government, most recently in Housing services. Kerrie joined Hertfordshire County Council in September 2020 as a Project Officer for Public Health, working in the PPE Cell Team. She joined the Centre for Family Safeguarding Practice in April 2021.

Kerrie has always worked with local communities, providing support and guidance for numerous projects. She has worked closely with other professional partners such as the Police, Community Mental Health Teams, & Money Advice and Guidance Teams. Kerrie was one of the leading officers assisting people who were affected by the change of Welfare Benefits where Legacy Benefits were replaced with Universal Credit. In 2018, Kerrie was nominated for Housing Officer of the Year at The National Housing Awards for her continuous commitment and dedication to the families she worked with.



Carla Evans
Project Officer

In December 2022 I started a secondment with Property, as a Portfolio Officer with the Design and Capital delivery team. I supported the delivery of the Refurbishment and Adaptation programme. This is the process that schools use to bid for new roofs, boilers, windows etc. I would follow the programme through the various stages, working with project managers to record updates and flag risks, right up to completion of the works, and closure of the project.

I started work with the Centre in March 2024, and have enjoyed the role from the first day. It's so interesting working with other local authorities and supporting the team to deliver the Family Safeguarding message. I am thoroughly enjoying being part of delivering the Family Safeguarding message and being involved in positive changes for Local Authorities all over the Country.

Find out more...



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FSProjectteam@hertfordshire.gov.uk

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