LINDA ASHCROFT



ABOUT ME

I have worked within the social care sector for over 35 years, supporting both adults and children across a variety of care settings. For approximately 25 years, I have worked with adults with learning disabilities, alongside developing extensive experience within children's residential care.

Within children's services, I have worked in senior leadership positions, including as a Registered Manager and Responsible Individual. Throughout my career, I have remained passionate about supporting children and young people to achieve the best possible outcomes. I particularly enjoy seeing young people develop their confidence, recognise their strengths and make progress towards their individual goals and aspirations.

I believe that every young person deserves to feel safe, valued, listened to and supported, and I have always tried to ensure that these principles remain at the heart of my practice.

Outside of work, I have a real passion for travel and experiencing different countries and cultures. I have been fortunate to travel extensively, including throughout Southeast Asia, Malaysia, the Maldives and many parts of Europe.

I am also a qualified scuba diver and love being in and around the water. Given the choice, you will usually find me somewhere warm and sunny!

Closer to home, I enjoy spending time in my garden and, most importantly, spending quality time with my family. Maintaining that balance between a career I remain passionate about and the people and experiences that are important to me is something I really value.

KEY SKILLS

- Regulation 44 Independent Visits and Reports
- Supporting and Developing Registered Managers
- Coaching and Mentoring
- Developing Staff Teams
- Ofsted Readiness and Regulatory Compliance
- Developing Practical Paperwork and Quality Assurance Systems
- Supporting Homes Caring for Children with Complex Needs and Risks
- Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement

Ultimately, all of these skills have the same purpose: to improve the quality of care children receive and help children's homes provide safe, nurturing environments where young people can make progress and achieve positive outcomes.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

One of the highlights of my career was my previous four-year position, where I had the opportunity to play a significant role in the development and growth of children's residential services. During this time, I successfully opened three children's homes and progressed to providing oversight as the Responsible Individual for four homes.

I was incredibly proud of what we achieved. My focus was always on ensuring that the homes didn't simply meet regulatory requirements, but genuinely provided children with safe, nurturing and supportive environments where their individual needs were understood and met. I worked closely with Registered Managers and staff teams to ensure that the Children's Homes Quality Standards were embedded into everyday practice and, most importantly, translated into positive experiences and outcomes for the children in our care.

After leaving the company, I decided to use the knowledge and experience I had gained throughout my career in a different way and began working more independently as a social care consultant, supporting a number of different children's residential care providers.

This has allowed me to become involved in many different aspects of service development, from supporting the set-up and registration of new children's homes to developing policies, procedures, quality assurance systems and my own practical paperwork and monitoring tools for services.

One of the parts of my consultancy work that I particularly enjoy is mentoring and supporting new and developing Registered Managers. Having spent many years managing services myself, I understand both the rewards and the pressures that come with the role. I enjoy being able to share the knowledge I have built up over my career, provide practical guidance and help managers develop their own confidence and leadership style.

I don't believe that good leadership is about simply telling people what to do. For me, it is about supporting, challenging, mentoring and sharing knowledge, while encouraging managers to reflect on their own practice and recognise their strengths and areas for development.

After more than 35 years in social care, I am still learning and developing.

What continues to motivate me is seeing services improve, watching managers and staff grow in confidence and, ultimately, knowing that this work is contributing

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