

Curriculum Vitae Diane Clark

Qualifications

Diploma in Social Work/CQSW awarded in 1992 from Sunderland University.

Advanced Diploma in Child Protection Studies gained in 1999 from the University of Leicester.

Practice Teachers' Award gained in 2000 from the University of Northampton.

Experience and Expertise

My work as a Family Court Advisor with Cafcass involves both private and public law work, including many complex care and adoption cases. I have worked with children and young people from 0-17yrs and enjoy excellent multi agency working relationships, working closely with solicitors, psychiatrists and psychologists.

From 2014 to 2016 I had the opportunity of being part of the Family Drug and Alcohol Court (FDAC), working with the multi –disciplinary support team which was set up in Milton Keynes. This involves working closely with the designated Judge and the FDAC team and has contributed further to my knowledge and expertise in relation to drug and alcohol users and the processes they undergo through FDAC

All of my sixteen years experience in Local Authority Social Work was with children and families, initially in County Durham and then in Northamptonshire. I was involved in family support work, care proceedings, child protection and long term fostering and adoption work. I have also undertaken assessments of risky adults, where mental health issues and substance abuse have been of significant concern. My experience as a witness in Magistrates' and County courts, and the High Court is substantial.

I gained expertise in working with victims of domestic violence, having formed and co-worked a group in 1994 for a period of 5 years. This group remains in existence today and has expanded to other areas in the county. Through this work I gained membership of the local and county Domestic Violence Forum, providing extensive training for a range of professionals over a period of 10 years. I became a trustee of the group Temper in 1995, which focussed on working with the perpetrators of domestic violence. This gave me a more holistic view of the issues surrounding domestic abuse.

I also have knowledge and experience in understanding and assessing attachment having been trained by experts such as David Howe and June Thoburn. The expertise and knowledge that I have gained over the years in attachment has assisted me in respect of child and family assessments, sibling assessments and all aspects of contact and matters relating to adoption.

My work as a Relate Counsellor offered me the opportunity to further my knowledge through the extensive training that is necessary over a three year period. This assisted my understanding of issues of attachment, loss and separation and the impact of these on adult relationships. It has also assisted my understanding of family/couple dynamics and I am able to assist parents in understanding the implications that conflict, divorce, separation and step parenting has on children. This knowledge and experience have fed into my practice as both a Family Court Reporter and Children's Guardian.

Within ChildPlus Consultancy, I am able to undertake a full range of family and child assessments in complex cases to determine the nature and degree of risk posed to a child; the needs of a child and the level of parenting capacity. Such complexities include cases where mental health, learning disabilities and substance misuse issues are to the fore. I am able to undertake kinship/ Special Guardian assessments, sibling assessments in relation to contact, placement issues, adoption and long term fostering and Form F assessments. I am able to do direct work with children, for example preparation work for adoption, protective behaviour work and work with victims of sexual abuse. I am also able to offer couple counselling on a short or longer term basis.

In addition, I have a track record in multi--agency training, with an ability, whether working for a local authority or with academic and practice colleagues in supervising trainee or newly qualified staff, of meeting learning objectives in a confident, competent and lively style.

Employment

2016 to date	Self Employed Contractor with Cafcass
2012 to date	Form F Assessor with various Fostering Agencies
2006- to date	Director, ChildPlus Consultancy
2004- Jan 2016	Family Court Advisor/Children's Guardian working for Cafcass. This included a period of being an Enhanced Practitioner with Cafcass for 3 years.
2005- 2006	Part Time Tutor at the University of Northampton for students on the MA in Social Work
2004-2005	Form F Assessor for Northamptonshire County Council
2000-to date	Practice Teacher/Assessor for various agencies
2001-2004	Principal Social Worker Supervisor for Northamptonshire County Council responsible for the supervision of a group of social workers working in child protection.

1999-2001	Principal Social Worker for Northamptonshire County Council concentrating on complex child protection/child welfare cases.
1996 – to date	Multi-agency trainer
1996-1999	Part time counsellor working for Relate in Milton Keynes.
1993-1999	Social Worker for Northamptonshire County Council concentrating on children and family work.
1992-1993	Social Worker in a Child Care Team for Durham County Council
1988-1992	Social Work Assistant in a Child Care Team for Durham County Council.

I am HCPC registered and have a clear DSB check.