

The Family Help Partnership Support Team

Together making a difference



Aims and objectives:

The Partnership Support Team is unique in that we cover the whole of Westmorland and Furness supporting all schools and settings working directly with children aged from 0-19 years. We sit firmly within the Family Help Service working alongside our partners in the community to identify and support children and young people who require more than universal services and support to meet their potential.

We promote early intervention and prevention work with children and young people using Your Family Assessments (YAF) and solution focused Your Family plans. We are also part of the Multi Agency Children's Hub team who complete assessments for children and families who do not require a Social Worker but do require family help.

We have built on the previous work of Cumbria Early Help Officers with a growing team of Partnership Support Officers (PSO) in order to deliver our vision for Family Help in W&F to be inclusive, solution focused, timely and effective.



How we can support

Consultation

PSOs are available to discuss when and how to open a Your Family Assessment and offer support with the process. This includes; parental consent; identifying a Lead Professional, Your Family Review membership; voice of the child work; Your Family plans and reviews.

MACH (Multi-Agency Children's Hub)

We have a Family Help Team Manager and Officers who are part of WAF MACH. They carry out assessments and offer guidance for children and families who may require additional and targeted Family Help supports. The FHTM also manages Family Help via daily Multi Agency Triage meetings which are led by our Police colleagues.

TAS (Team Around the Settings) and TAF (Team Around the Family) work

We have named PSOs linked into all of our WAF schools. As part of our offer to settings, PSOs convene TAS meetings in collaboration with schools and settings to review and support all children with open Your Family plans. This plan, do, review approach mirrors the Your Family Review meeting purpose and format. PSOs can attend and support Your Family Review meetings where Lead Professional and/or parents feel the plans are stuck or not making progress as planned.

Family Help Training for Settings

We offer training both in person or online. The training is available to any partner agency working with 0-19 year old children in WAF. We currently offer - An Introduction to Your Family Assessments (YFA), and; A Comprehensive guide to YFA. We have developed bitesize modules in ; Identifying Neglect; Voice of The Child work, and; in collaboration with the Domestic Abuse Team and Police – DA & Operation Encompass Awareness training for schools.

Family Help Panels

In WAF we have two Family Help Panels supported by PSOs and chaired by Family Help Team Managers. The panels are a collaborative way of working, made up of multi-agency membership who meet once each month in Furness and once each month for Eden and South Lakes. The panels are for those children who have an open Your Family Assessment but their plan has become 'stuck' or it requires a more targeted approach and/or a new Lead Professional. Panel dates and referral forms for FH panels are available via the WFSCP Website via the link through WAF Family Help.

DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) Supervision

We offer reflective supervision to all practitioners working directly with children and young people and this includes our DSL colleagues. The supervision can be accessed 1:1 or in a group with DDSL colleagues. We aim to support the well being and practice of our DSLs whilst focusing on achieving positive outcomes for every child. The supervision is accessible via the Partnership Support Team Manager

Contact details

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0300 373 2723

Family Help | Cumbria Safeguarding Children Partnership



Meet the Team

Family Help Partnership Support Team Manager - Sam Taylor

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As a Partnership Support Team Manager I manage a team of 6 area Partnership Support Officers as well as offering DSL Supervision to schools and settings. We are a community team working in partnership with our schools and settings, providing consultation, training, advice and guidance for children aged 0-19 and families who need more support than Universal Services.

I am a born and bred Cumbrian, who loves working in the community that raised me. I began working for previously Cumbria in 2015, where I have spent the years since supporting children and families in a variety of roles. I firmly believe in relationship based and child centred working being the cornerstone and foundation of supporting children, families and our partners. I am proud to say this too is at the very core of the Partnership Support Team and the officers way of working which essentially empowers the children and families within our communities.



Area Partnership Support Officer - Nicola Baines

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I have worked as a Partnership Support Officer, previously Early Help Officer since January 2021. My role is to support practitioners working with children and young people to navigate the Family Help process and initiate Your Family Assessments. I have worked on and off in Childrens Services since 2009, firstly in Extended Services which was a programme supporting schools and then in Workforce Development, Focus Family and more recently in the Refugee Resettlement Team. I have also worked with volunteers in the Fire Service and was a Community Support Worker in Trading Standards.

I work in a fast paced and evolving team and enjoy working with like minded colleagues who are also passionate about getting it right for children and families first time. I pride myself in my knowledge of the area that I work in and the relationships I have built with practitioners over the years. I enjoy development opportunities and applying learning to my practice.



Area Partnership Support Officer - Kerry Major

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Prior to joining the Partnership Support Team I spent 18 years working within education. I've had the opportunity to work with age groups from 5-19 in different roles, as a teacher, mentor and in pastoral and safeguarding roles. A lot of my work centred around understanding the barriers and difficulties children and young people faced in thriving and supporting them in finding success.

In my current role as a Partnership Support Officer, I work with families directly and with schools and other settings in a holistic way. I have been able to utilise my previous experience in schools and colleges in this role and enjoy working as a linked in Officer with our education partners. I believe that having earlier interventions and the right support at the right time can empower families and lead to successful outcomes for children. I work collaboratively with settings in a solution focussed way, using the Family Help processes building stronger teams around families. I work with settings collaboratively for consultation and in joint work with their families, which is both a positive and rewarding approach.



Area Partnership Support Officer - Chrissie Chambers

Christina.chambers@cumbria.gov.uk

I became a Partnership Support Officer for Westmorland and Furness Council in February 2024. This role enables me to support and signpost schools and other settings regarding. Your family assessments, Family Help Panels and as part of this, I work in a consultancy role for anyone wishing to discuss emerging need. I am also able to attend Your family review meetings and encourage the Team around the Setting model, as part of the Family Help Team.

I have worked within Children, Families and Adult teams for the last 20 years. My roles have been varied and have given me an insight into the support families need and how we need to work alongside them to ensure their voices are heard.

My current role grants me the privilege to work as part of such a strength-based team and to have the ability to collaborate with the NHS, third sector and all other agencies supporting children and Families.



Area Partnership Support Officer - Dawn Lockwood

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I have been part of the Family Help Team since March 2024 as a Partnership Support Officer. Prior to starting this role I worked for over 18 years in various family support roles starting with working in an Early Years setting and then within the 0-19 services provided through the Children's Centres in the South Lakes this being with Barnardo's and then Action for children.

This role has allowed me to support many children, Young People and their families across Westmorland and Furness in individual trauma informed support or with group family or parenting courses. This experience has also led me to working in partnership with many support services to help ensure that the right support has been identified for the family as early as possible. Becoming a Partnership Support Officer is allowing me to work alongside and support our partners in education and healthcare to identify and access the support for our families at the earliest opportunity.



Area Partnership Support Officer- Bryony Parkinson

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I joined the Family Help Team in August 2024 as a Partnership Support Officer for the South Lakeland footprint. Prior to this, I spent three years working for Lancashire and South Cumbria Foundation Trust as an Assistant Psychologist for specialist Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), after completing a master's degree in psychology.

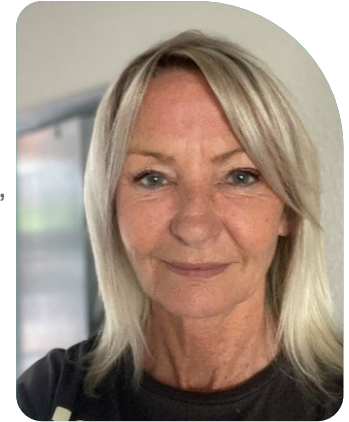
I have also worked in safeguarding and pastoral roles across school and university settings and completed voluntary work as a mental health advocate for adult's organisations, supporting individuals struggling with their mental health to understand their rights and make informed decisions about their care. As part of my early career, I undertook an undergraduate degree in Criminology. During which, I worked across forensic settings, including secure and community services to support young adults to reconnect with support and access meaningful occupation. My experience of working with individuals across the tiers of service involvement is what inspired me to join the Family Help Team. I am passionate about supporting families to access support at the earliest opportunity, and I'm keen to work and learn alongside our education and healthcare providers within Westmorland and Furness towards that shared goal.



Partnership Support Officer, Kendal & South Lakes - Maria Day

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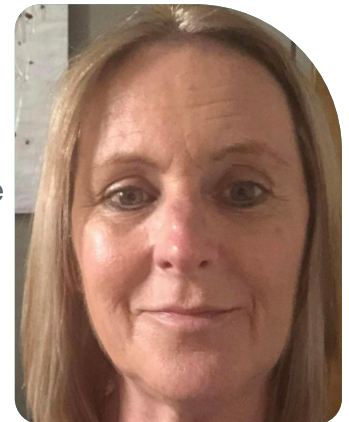
I joined the Family Help Team in August 2025 as an Area Early Help Officer for the South Lakeland footprint. I have supported children, young people and families for over 25 years in various roles. My passion has always been early intervention as I believe timely support can prevent problems from escalating, improve children's wellbeing, and strengthen families, ultimately leading to better long-term outcomes



Family Help Team Manager MACH - Amanda Casey

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I have worked as a qualified social worker and Team Manager in Children and Families Teams in Cumbria for 24 years. My current role is based in the Westmorland and Furness Multi Agency Children's Hub and I line manage and oversee the work completed by the two Family Help Officers who are also based in the Hub. I also offer supervision to DSL's based in Westmorland and Furness schools. I am passionate about early intervention and wish for every child and their family to receive the right support at the earliest opportunity.



Family Help Officer MACH - Steve Kemp

Steve.kemp@cumbria.gov.uk

I have been part of the Family Help Team for over ten years based in the safeguarding hub. I complete MACH assessments screened as Family Help by a Hub manager. I support families and professionals with their understanding of Early Help/Family Help to ensure good quality Assessments so that children & families have good lives. I work closely with the safeguarding hub Multi-Agency Team and my colleagues in the Partnership Team to get the right help & support for families first time.

My work in social care started in children's homes. I developed an interest in children living within their families when safe so have since developed my career to support people in working together with family and professional expertise. I believe that a plan owned by those who are making changes for the better will have the best opportunity to succeed and be maintained. My solution focused approach along with many other training courses fits naturally with the principles of Family & Early Help.



Family Help Officer MACH - Diane Ackley

Diane.ackley@cumbria.gov.uk

Diane has 17 years experience with children and families working in children's centres and in social care. Diane has worked with Universal services, Early help, Child protection and Children on the edge of care throughout her employment with sure start / Barnardo's and Cumbria county council before becoming the Registered manager of four private children's homes. She has recently returned to Early help in the safeguarding hub and is also a volunteer for NYAS as an independent visitor.

Diane is passionate that children and families are supported so that they have choices, this way they can reach their best potential. Diane has studied and worked with ACES and in a trauma informed way and likes to think creatively about how we work to engage children and parents who may be struggling, she works in a solution focused way with positivity and hope.



Family Help Officer MACH - Catherine Eccles

Catherine.eccles2@cumbria.gov.uk

I joined the Family help Team in the Multi-Agency Children's Hub in July 2026. Prior to this I have worked as a midwife and more recently as an advocate for victims and survivors of domestic abuse.

Throughout my career I have supported families with diverse backgrounds and experiences, supporting them to make informed choices and improve outcomes. I am passionate about working effectively with families and multi-agency partners to co-ordinate support and ensure the experiences of children and their families are at the centre of what we do.



Family Help Officer MACH - Marie Hackett

Marie.Hackett@cumbria.gov.uk

I have worked for the last 26 years supporting children and families, working in children's centres from the very beginning of the Sure Start trail blazers, and the charity sector with Action for Children and Family Action. I have experience in supporting families working within Universal, Early Help, Child in need and Child Protection.

I am passionate about working alongside families to empower them to be in charge of their own lives, whilst receiving support at the right level at the right time to meet their individual needs.

I always try to be child centred and focused on the lived experience of families to support them in making informed choices for their family to help them be more positive and able to cope with daily life.

I enjoy working alongside my colleagues in the Multi-Agency Children's Hub and the partnership support officers in working together with our schools and health colleagues, to support all families who may need a little extra help, across Westmorland and Furness.



The PROCESS Diagram

At a high level the process can be described in these simple steps:



*settings refers to school, early years providers and further education settings

Translation Services

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