

## Medway Council Appoints Donna Marriott as new Assistant Director of Children's Social Care

Thursday 19 August, 2021

A key appointment has been made as part of Medway Council's Children's Services' ongoing commitment to strengthening its leadership team.

Donna Marriott will take over the role of Assistant Director of Children's Social Care and will be joining the council on 23rd August.

### A wealth of experience

Donna brings with her a wealth of experience, having worked in leadership roles across local authority children's social care services. Her particular expertise sits within service improvement, child protection, performance and quality assurance. Most recently, Donna has been with Ofsted, where she has worked since 2014 as national lead for social care practice, learning and development.

Reflecting on her time with Ofsted, Donna said, "It has been a privilege to work alongside such capable and experienced colleagues in Ofsted and also with many leaders in children's services. I have learnt so much from the opportunity it's given me to look at practice right across the country and to influence the work of the inspectorate. It's been a great experience for me but I have missed working with colleagues to shape and develop the quality of practice and being close to decision making for children, which is where my heart lies."

Donna's appointment is particularly notable as she is rejoining Medway after beginning her social work career here.

"I am very much looking forward to joining Medway and becoming part of their improvement journey. In many ways it feels like coming home, back to where my social work journey began when I did my social work training in Medway at the start of my career."

### Continuing our journey of improvement

The appointment represents another step in Medway's journey of improvement, the success of which has been recognised in a recent letter from Ofsted following a focussed visit to the council's Children's Services.

In its letter, Ofsted identified the strong progress made by Medway in a number of areas. Acknowledgement was given to senior leadership's role in responding in a dynamic way to the challenges of the pandemic, while ensuring that the needs of the most vulnerable children continued to be met. The strengthened relationships with partnership agencies and community services were also highlighted as well as the timely and appropriate completion of child protection inquiries.

Importantly, the report observed the success of the improvements Medway Children's Services has made in supporting its social work teams, enabling them to better meet the needs of the children and families in their care through increased staffing levels, the reduction in case loads, implementation of the Signs of Safety assessment and planning approach, enhanced communication opportunities with senior management and a clear career progression scheme.

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