CHERIE JOHNSON

INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY

# Safeguarding. Governance. Lasting impact.



Independent expertise for children’s services, public bodies and international partners.

UK · IRELAND · CARIBBEAN · USA

cheriejohnson.co.uk

# A stronger standard of safeguarding

Independent scrutiny, practical leadership and the confidence to act.

Children and young people depend on the quality of the systems around them. My work strengthens those systems through safeguarding expertise, governance assurance, leadership development and specialist service design.

I combine more than two decades of practice with the experience of founding a pioneering 24-hour intervention service for girls affected by gangs, serious violence and exploitation, and leading a regulated children's services provider.

## How I work

I bring an independent perspective, clear recommendations and an understanding of the operational realities faced by leaders, commissioners and frontline teams. Each engagement is tailored to the legal framework and context in which the service operates.

> "Relationship before rules. No child is a placement."

# Pioneering practice. Strategic leadership.

Cherie Johnson is an international safeguarding and governance specialist whose career spans frontline intervention, specialist programme development, professional training and leadership of children's services.



In 2012, she founded Shared Intense Support (SIS), which she identifies as the UK's first 24-hour intensive support service specifically for girls and young women exiting gang lifestyles, serious violence and exploitation.

The service model responded to needs that extended beyond conventional office hours, combining practical support, safeguarding and sustained engagement.

She subsequently established Sanctuary 16 and leads it as Managing Director. Her advisory work now supports service providers, leaders and public-sector partners seeking effective, accountable and child-centred practice.

Founder, Shared Intense Support (2012) | Children's services leadership | Specialist safeguarding and governance advisory

# A documented history of impact

A selection of independently published records and professional recognition.

### 2013 — BBC Newsnight

National reporting documented Cherie’s specialist work helping girls leave gang environments.

### 2014 — CAADA national conference

Shared Intense Support was listed as delivering a specialist workshop for practitioners supporting young women affected by gang relationships.

### 2016 — BBC Inside Out, Northamptonshire

Documented specialist work in Wellingborough; a police representative acknowledged Cherie’s contribution to understanding female gang involvement.

### 2017 — Southwark civic recognition

Southwark Council publicly recognised Cherie for running a 24-hour service helping young women leave gangs.

### 2019 — Governor-General’s Diaspora Achievement Award

Jamaican government recognition of her contribution through SIS, including mentoring, advocacy and professional training.

WHO I WORK WITH

# Supporting decision-makers at every level

01

## Providers and owners

Establishing, registering and strengthening children’s homes and supported accommodation.

02

## Registered Managers and Responsible Individuals

Governance, quality assurance, workforce capability and inspection preparation.

03

## Local authorities and commissioners

Independent review, specialist programme advice and safeguarding assurance.

04

## Government and international partners

Tailored technical advisory, training and safeguarding system development.

“She is a very good mentor, not just to staff but to young people too. Cherie has a natural way of meeting them at their level and breaking down barriers where others have failed.”

ANGELLA BILLY · LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

APPROACH

# Clear findings. Practical action. Sustained support.

01 **Consult**

Establish priorities, service context, children’s needs and the applicable regulatory position.

02 **Assess**

Review practice and systems through proportionate on-site or remote scrutiny.

03 **Plan**

Provide written findings and prioritised recommendations for accountable leaders.

04 **Support**

Build confidence through training, mentoring, implementation advice and follow-up.

## The principle

Safeguarding is not a paper exercise. Effective systems must translate into safer decisions, stronger relationships and better experiences for children and young people.

# Inspection readiness & independent review

## Mock inspections

Structured assessment against the relevant regulatory framework, with graded findings and an actionable improvement plan.

## Readiness reviews

Targeted pre-opening or pre-inspection assurance to identify gaps and strengthen evidence.

## Strategic service reviews

Independent analysis of governance, quality assurance, leadership and service sustainability.

**ASSURANCE FOR LEADERSHIP**

Findings are presented clearly so that leaders can make decisions, allocate responsibility and demonstrate progress.

# Governance, registration & quality

### Policy and governance audit

Review of the policy framework, Statement of Purpose, oversight arrangements and quality assurance processes, with prioritised recommendations.

### Registration and establishment support

Advice on key registration documentation, location risk assessment, policies and preparation for regulatory interviews and scrutiny.

### Registered Manager consultation

Confidential, focused advisory on leadership, staffing, safeguarding, inspection readiness or an operational challenge.

## The outcome

Clearer accountability, defensible decision-making and governance systems that operate in practice—not simply on paper.

# Training, mentoring & specialist speaking

## Bespoke workforce training

Safeguarding, recording, inspection readiness, exploitation, serious violence and gender-responsive support.

## Leadership mentoring

Reflective and practical support for Registered Managers, Responsible Individuals and senior leaders.

## Keynotes and specialist workshops

Conference contributions and professional learning on safeguarding governance, girls affected by gangs and designing responsive services.

## Programme development advice

Support to design, strengthen or review specialist intervention programmes and cross-agency practice.

# Children’s residential services in Ireland

Advisory support for providers and leaders operating within Ireland’s regulatory and safeguarding context, including the National Standards for Children’s Residential Centres (2018) and relevant Tusla requirements.

### Independent inspection-readiness review

Assessment of governance, safeguarding and evidence of practice against the applicable standards.

### Policy and governance audit

Review of policies, accountability and quality assurance arrangements.

### Registration and service establishment advice

Practical support for developing documentation and preparing leaders for regulatory engagement.

### Training and leadership mentoring

Bespoke professional learning and structured advisory support, remotely or in person.

# Specialist expertise across borders

Safeguarding systems must reflect local law, culture, institutions and community needs. My international work draws on specialist UK experience without assuming that a single model fits every jurisdiction.

01

### Safeguarding systems

Policy review, referral pathways, accountability and multi-agency collaboration.

02

### Residential care governance

Independent quality assurance and leadership development for providers and oversight bodies.

03

### Violence prevention

Gender-responsive approaches to gangs, exploitation and serious violence.

04

### Knowledge exchange

Professional training, facilitated workshops and specialist policy engagement.

# Supporting stronger systems for children

With longstanding personal and professional connections to Jamaica, Cherie brings specialist experience in child protection, governance and violence prevention to engagements across the Caribbean.

01 **Residential care oversight**

Registration, inspection readiness and governance assurance.

02 **Safeguarding policy**

Independent review of systems, responsibilities and multi-agency practice.

03 **Exploitation and serious violence**

Training and advisory support focused on girls and young people at risk.

04 **Workforce development**

Professional training for residential teams, leaders, social workers and partner agencies.

05 **Independent programme review**

Evidence-led findings for ministries, charities, agencies and funders.

# Country-specific, not one-size-fits-all

Potential engagements are developed around each jurisdiction’s actual legal framework, safeguarding arrangements and priorities. The following are areas of expertise offered—not claims of current government contracts or local regulatory accreditation.

### Jamaica and the wider Caribbean

Child protection, residential care governance, violence prevention and leadership development.

### Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, Guyana and Belize

Safeguarding reviews, children’s home standards and tailored workforce training.

### Caribbean overseas territories

Independent assurance, service development and quality improvement aligned to local requirements.

### Eastern Caribbean states

Cross-agency safeguarding, child-centred services and specialist programme design.

Engagements are scoped in consultation with the commissioning organisation, with jurisdiction-specific legal and regulatory input where required.

UNITED STATES

# Safeguarding without criminalising young people

My work has long addressed the challenge of protecting young people affected by gangs, exploitation and serious violence while recognising their needs as children first.

### Gender-responsive safeguarding

Approaches to supporting girls and young women affected by coercion, violence and exploitation.

### Law-enforcement and community engagement

Specialist training and consultation informed by frontline work and documented policing engagement in England.

### Youth and residential service governance

Quality assurance, leadership support and programme review, tailored to the applicable state and local context.

### Flexible engagement

Remote advisory, in-country workshops, conference speaking and scoped programme support.

# Independent recognition & professional contribution

### Public Policy Exchange — 2020 and 2021

Listed as a key speaker and “Expert on Girls in Gangs” for events addressing knife crime, serious youth violence and acid attacks.

### Northamptonshire Police — BBC Inside Out, 2016

A police representative publicly acknowledged Cherie’s contribution to the force’s understanding of girls’ roles in gangs.

### BBC Newsnight and Victoria Derbyshire

National broadcasts documented Cherie’s specialist work and Shared Intense Support.

### Jamaica — Governor-General’s Diaspora Achievement Award, 2019

Government recognition of her community and professional contribution through SIS.

> “Cherie Johnson has always put the safety needs of the children first.”
>
> **ANGELLA BILLY · LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM**

CONTACT

# Start a conversation.

Discuss your organisation’s safeguarding, governance or service-development priorities in an initial consultation.

Bespoke proposals are developed following an initial discussion of scope, outcomes and context.



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