



statement of purpose

Fosterplus Scotland

Introduction

Fosterplus was founded in 1996, giving us over 25 years' continuous experience as an independent fostering agency. We train and support foster carers across Scotland, in order to provide safe and loving homes for vulnerable children and young people.

We are an independent 'Not for Profit' fostering agency registered with the Care Inspectorate, providing a range of services for care experienced children and young people. The Agency is run in accordance with all current legislation, including the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 – Looked After Children (Scotland) Regulations 2009 – Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

Fosterplus Scotland has 3 operational offices located in Prestwick, Rosyth and Glasgow and have registered foster carers throughout Scotland. Each office has an assigned Service Manager, Supervising Social Workers and Administrative support. There is also a Head of Operations, Support Services Manager, Senior Supervising Social Worker, Senior Recruitment Officer, Referrals Officer, Panel Coordinator and a Training Assistant.

Fosterplus Scotland is supported by a central staff group, including Learning and Development, Finance, Human Resources, Compliance and Checks, Recruitment and Marketing.

Our registered address for Fosterplus Scotland is:



Fosterplus Glasgow
Unit 7, The Arc
25 Colquhoun Avenue
Hillington Park
Glasgow
G52 4BN
0141-4577127

Sub Offices:

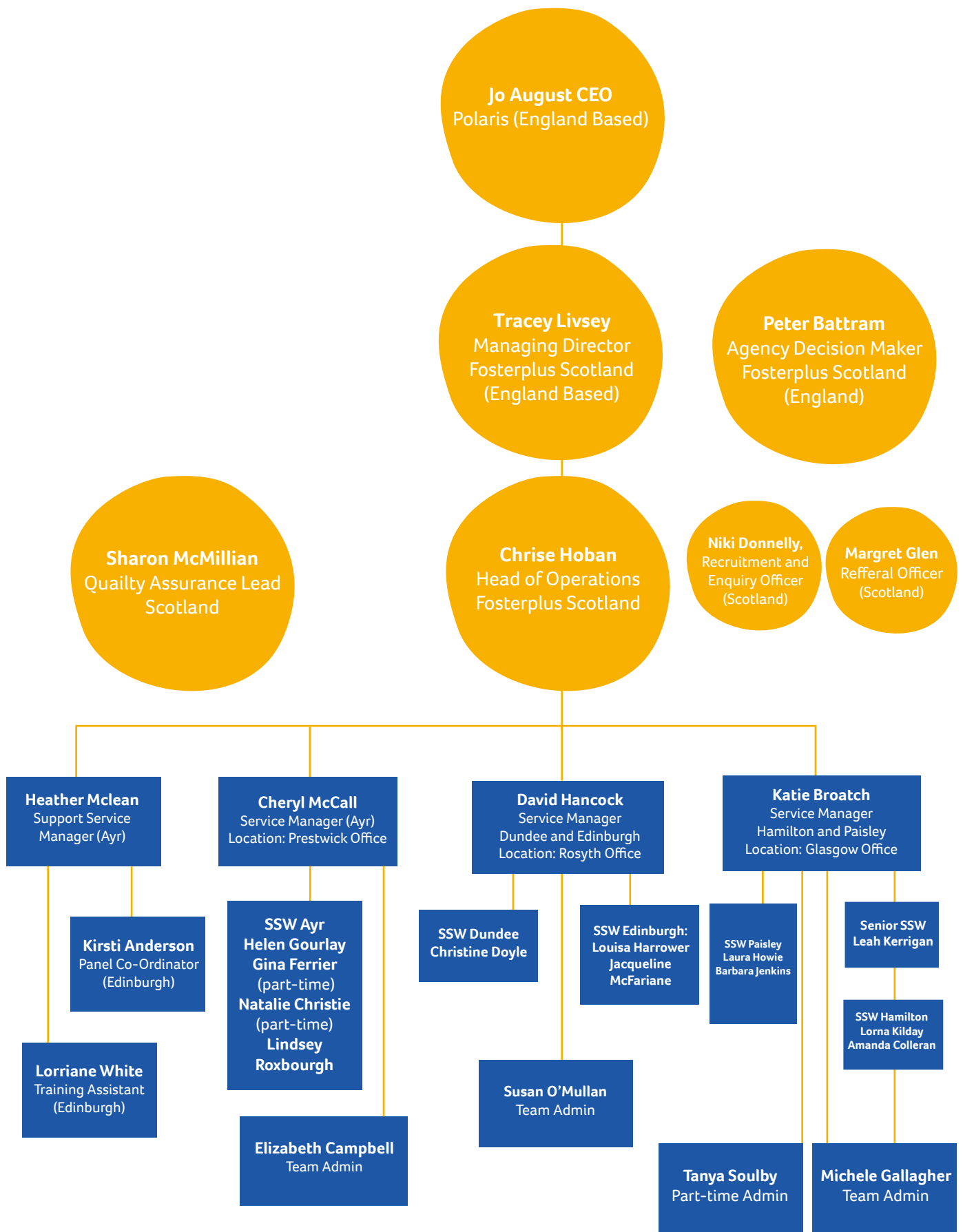


Fosterplus Prestwick
Unit 6
Ladykirk Business Park
Skye Road
Prestwick
KA9 2TA



Fosterplus East
Liberty House
15 Cromarty Campus
Rosyth
KY11 2YB

Fosterplus Scotland Organisational Structure 2024



Aims and Objectives, Principles and Standards

All operations of the Agency are underpinned by Trauma Informed Practice. Trauma-informed Practice is a model that is grounded in and directed by a complete understanding of how trauma exposure affects service user's neurological, biological, psychological and social development. This model supports culture of compassion, empathy and empowerment. The focus is on recognising the impact of trauma on life experiences and promoting healing and recovery.

The aim of the Agency is to assist the placing authorities in meeting their requirements to improve the outcomes of children in relation to Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) and the 8 Wellbeing Indicators. (SHANARRI) These are:

- Safe - Protected from abuse, neglect or harm at school and in the community.
- Healthy - Having the highest attainable standards of physical and mental health, access to suitable healthcare and support in learning to make healthy safe choices.
- Achieving - Being supported and guided in learning and in the development of skills, confidence and self-esteem, at home, in school and in the community.
- Nurtured - Having a nurturing place to live in a family setting, with additional help if needed, or where possible, in a suitable care setting.
- Active - Having opportunities to take part in activities such as play, recreation and sport, which contributes to healthy growth and development, at home, in school and in the community.
- Respected - Having the opportunity along with foster carers, to be heard and involved in decisions that affect them.
- Responsible - Having opportunities and encouragement to play active roles at home, in school and in the community and, where necessary, having appropriate guidance and supervision, and being involved in decisions that affect them.
- Included - Having help to overcome social, educational, physical and economic inequalities and being accepted as part of the community in which they live and learn.

The above outcomes are achieved by:

- Continually reviewing our services to ensure all our children and young people have every opportunity to achieve the best outcomes in their lives in line with the expectations of the Promise.
- Building solutions with and around children, young people and families.
- Enabling children and young people to get the help they need when they need it and for as long as they need it, including a continuing care/ adult placement.
- Providing clear procedural guidance for staff and foster carers which defines the Agency's service standards in a simple manner.
- Consulting with service users and care receivers.
- Recruiting foster carers and staff from a diversity of cultures and backgrounds to reflect the needs of service users.
- Continuing to work with all agencies and those using the service to improve life chances for children, young people and families.



- Providing a service which is based on equal opportunities and is inclusive through valuing diversity.
- Working in true partnership with all significant persons involved with the young person.
- A commitment to on-going training for staff and foster carers.
- Providing the highest quality support to foster carers.
- Supporting a positive shift in culture, systems and practice.

In addition, with the agreement of the foster carer, where the young person is placed, the service will provide young people who meet the eligibility criteria for continuing care under S26A(4) of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 with a continuing care/adult placement within their current home at their request. Where this has been agreed, with the LA, as the best outcome for the individual young person, then the foster carers will have their registration amended through the panel process to include continuing care/adult placement as part of their registration.

The detailed service standards of the Agency are contained within the Agency's policy and procedure documents; these are available on request.

It is the Agency's belief that the best outcomes for children or young people will be achieved by making the best matches between the foster carer and child. We take into account their values, ethnicity, culture and skills and marry them with the specific needs of each child or young person. The Agency will continually strive to improve the services it offers and will not accept anything other than the highest standards.

An integral part of the quality review, the quality improvement process and the Promise, is that it involves care-experienced young people providing input, via consultation, involvement and activities throughout the design, implementation and delivery of the Agency's operations.

Services Provided

- **Emergency Placements**
- **Long term Placements**
- **Interim Placements**
- **Permanent Placements**
- **Continuing Care/Adult Placements**
- **Short Break Placements**

People

Fosterplus is registered under the Companies Act 1985 (Company Registration Number 03196461). Fosterplus Scotland is a Not for Profit Agency and is part of a group of Companies owned by Polaris, alongside Fosterplus England, Clifford House Fostering, Orange Grove Foster Care, ISP (Integrated Services Programme), FCA (Foster Care Associates), FCA (Scotland), Fostering People, and ACS (Active Care Solutions).

Directors

The main function of the Directors will be to ensure that the quality assurance standards of the Agency are maintained.

Chief Executive Officer

Jo August is the Chief Executive Officer of Fosterplus:

At the very heart of our Polaris Community is a common aim where everyone is committed to enabling every child and young person in our care to reach their full potential. We are ambitious for ourselves and our children. I am exceptionally proud that I am surrounded by an inspirational team of staff and families who are completely committed to making a difference and achieving the best outcomes for children across the UK. I have the privilege of witnessing the difference being made by our community every single day and how as a team we have the opportunity to help shape the lives of the young people in our care and influence the future of our sector.

Managing Director

The Managing Director of Fosterplus Scotland is Tracy Livesey, who has a wealth of experience and expertise in the fields of fostering and social care. A significant part of Tracy's role as Managing Director is to advise the Registered Manager as to service development initiatives and policy and practice matters, also providing additional safeguarding advice when needed.

The Registered Manager

The Registered Manager, Chrise Grundy Hoban (Head of Operations), is responsible for the day to day running of the Agency. This role manages the supervision of the senior team. The post holder ensures that all Foster Carers are properly supported, that the outcomes for children & young people are met through the implementation of the Agency's policies and procedures and is responsible for specific areas of legislation under the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 – Looked after Children (Scotland) Regulations 2009 – Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. The Head of Operations is accountable to and reports to the Director.

Service Managers

Our Service Managers are qualified Social Workers who hold Managerial duties such as providing supervisions to staff, Managing and chairing team meetings and are included in the Managers out of hours duty team.

Support Services Manager (SSM)

Our Support Services Manager (SSM) carries out a wide range of supervisory, administrative and IT functions in order to support the Headquarters team and the work of Fosterplus Scotland. The role also involves the programming and carrying out of quantity audits across the teams, and assisting the quality assurance team in reviewing and updating policies and procedures. The Support Service Manager takes the lead on running of agency panels and is also involved in pre-inspection planning.

Senior Supervising Social Worker (SSSW)

Our Senior Supervising Social Worker is a qualified Social Worker who holds some Managerial duties such as providing supervision to staff, Managing and chairing team meetings and is included in the Managers out of hours duty team. Our Senior Supervising Social Worker also holds a small caseload.

The Foster Panel Chair/ Foster Panels

Panel members and Panel Chair are roles independent of the Agency. The Chair ensures the proper running of the Fostering Panel and will advise the Agency on quality assurance and service standards issues. The role of the Panel is to consider applicants for approval and make recommendations on their suitability and terms of approval, consider the first review of approved foster carers and any subsequent reviews referred to it by Fosterplus, make recommendations on continued suitability and terms of approval, oversee the conduct of assessments carried out by Fosterplus and monitor the efficacy of procedures for undertaking reviews, and give advice and make recommendations on any other matters referred to the Panel by Fosterplus.

Supervising Social Workers

Our Supervising Social Workers are qualified Social Workers who are responsible for the direct implementation of the Agency's standards of the service through supporting our foster carers and monitoring the progress of any child in placement. Our Social Workers undertake on-call and duty functions to ensure that our foster carers are fully supported 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Our Supervising Social Workers are employed on a full / part time basis and are line managed by the Service Manager or Senior Supervising Social Worker. Supervising Social Workers attend meetings involving the child and foster carer to ensure that the foster carer is being fully supported and that the child's needs are being met. Supervising Social Workers also carry out assessments on prospective foster carers using the British Association for Adoption and Fostering Form F format.

Recruitment and Enquiry Office

Our Recruitment and Enquiry Office plays a lead role in the recruitment of high quality committed foster carers, ensuring high levels of service and efficient processes are delivered at all times. This role involves professional initial visits to the homes of prospective foster carers across the Agency and to establish an applicant's suitability to progress to preparatory training and application. They produce timely, concise reports detailing the findings of Initial Visits. Our Recruitment and Enquiry Office tracks and monitors the foster carer recruitment pipeline, ensuring that processes are efficient, delays are minimised and prospective foster carers remain engaged with the Agency.

Referrals Officer

Our Referrals Officer is responsible for processing and co-ordinating requests for children and young people's placements from Local Authorities and passes this information to our Supervising Social Work teams for consideration and matching. Our Referrals Officer also records and processes all referral information in a timely manner and works collaboratively with our committed staff team to carefully match children and young people with our fostering families according to their needs.

Training Assistant

Our Training Assistant, in co-ordination with the Head of Operations, is responsible for the management and organisation of the training and development programme for staff, foster carers and Panel Members. Our Training Assistant will converse with all Independent Trainers to book in dates, book venues and catering. The Training Assistant will also liaise with staff, foster carers and panel members, inviting them to training dates and compiling an attendance list to track any that are unable to attend. Our foster carers are provided with our mandatory training programme for completion and undertake refresher courses in relevant areas throughout their fostering career. Foster carer training is discussed and reviewed at foster carer supervision and is included in foster carer internal and panel reviews.

Administrators

Our Administrators provide vital administrative day to day support to their team by ensuring good communication, facilities, IT and general administrative support.

Education

Fosterplus is part of the Polaris group which employs a Head of Education who is able to provide advice, support and guidance on educational issues for children looked after by Fosterplus. The Support Services Manager is the Education Lead for the Agency and ensures we are driving initiatives forward to allow our children and young people to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Quality Assurance Lead Scotland (QA Lead)

We have a designated Quality Assurance Lead for Scotland, thus ensuring that safeguarding is given the highest priority and that improving quality is constantly on the agenda. The Quality Assurance Lead is part of the Polaris Central Services team and is available to provide advice, guidance and quality assurance support to the Agency as required.

Supports

Fosterplus is part of the Polaris group that employs a Head of Therapeutic Support who is able to provide advice, support and guidance on therapeutic issues/needs for children looked after by Fosterplus. In addition to permanent staff, Fosterplus has a pool of practitioners available who work on an independent, self-employed basis across a variety of roles in the Agency e.g. Independent Form F Assessors, Sessional Social Workers, Medical Advisor, Therapists and Independent Trainers. For all self-employed practitioners, Fosterplus ensures that verification of formal qualifications is assured and carries out the required checks and enquiries comparable to those of permanent staff, to ensure that welfare of children and young people is safeguarded and promoted.



Process for Recruiting

Fosterplus aims to recruit applicants from a diverse range of backgrounds, ethnicities, geographical locations, economic situations and from differing family compositions. This supports the Agency's aspiration of providing the most suitable match to meet the needs of any child referred to the Agency. Potential applicants will not be discriminated against on grounds of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, religion, age or economic status. However, prospective foster carers must be able to meet the holistic needs of any child placed within their approval categories.

Fosterplus Scotland has a Recruitment Marketing Strategy which identifies how prospective foster carers are recruited through a number of methods. We advertise on our website and utilise paid search and social media. Prospective foster carers are also recruited through recommendations by our existing foster carers or staff employed by the Agency. Other modes of recruitment may include, for example, advertisements placed in local press, email campaigns, and recruitment events.

All applicants who contact Fosterplus will have an initial enquiry (screening). This initial enquiry is twofold; it enables the Agency to share information about the role of a foster carer, the children referred, the Agency support and training provided, and the assessment process. It also provides an opportunity to gain insight into the enquirer's motivation to foster, their child care experience, family circumstances and whether the accommodation available is suitable and has a spare bedroom for a foster child.

During the screening process, should enquirers demonstrate the potential to move to the next stage, they will be offered a home visit to discuss fostering in more detail and to meet the household members face to face. The home visit allows for direct discussion with the enquirers and an opportunity to view the accommodation on offer to ensure that it is suitable for a foster child to live safely and comfortably.

Process for Approving

To become a Fosterplus foster carer, all applicants must undergo a thorough assessment by a qualified Social Worker. This assessment can take up to six months to complete, however in exceptional circumstances the timescale for assessment may vary. There is never a compromise on the quality of the assessment and the Agency's duty to secure the welfare of any child placed. The process will include a detailed assessment of the applicant's background, including their childhood, education, work, life and parenting experiences, their values and attitudes to diversity and any specific skills they may have, e.g. working with disabilities and working with adolescents. Applicants will be expected to undertake Preparation to Foster training prior to approval. Feedback from the training will be used as part of the assessment to provide evidence within the Form F.

As part of the Form F assessment process, applicants and members of their households, over 16 years old, must undergo a PVG and level 2 with barred list check. Certain offences preclude a person from caring for children. At least 2 personal references per couple and 1 family reference each will be sought for each application. Other references will be sought from employers, professionals, previous partners and other statutory agencies known to the applicants. A minimum of two referees will be visited to verify the information provided in writing. The Agency uses these references to check the applicant's skills and experiences. Other enquiries will be made to assist in verifying the applicant's suitability. These include: local authority checks, a health and safety inspection of the home and a full medical undertaken by their GP to ensure that applicants are fit for the role of a foster carer. The Agency uses the BAAF Form F report to evidence applicants' experiences and skills.

The Assessment Manager will review the Fostering application and, if it is assessed that the applicant has the potential to be considered as a foster carer, the Assessing Social Worker will carry out the assessment and complete a Form F report which will be presented to the Agency's Fostering Panel. After consideration, the Panel will make a recommendation on the information presented before them. The recommendation can either be approval, refusal or to defer the assessment to a later meeting to allow for further evidence to be provided. To assist the Panel in reaching a recommendation all applicants are expected to attend the Panel meeting with their Assessing Social Workers.

Once Panel has made a recommendation, the application is passed to the Agency Decision Maker for the final decision to be made on the application. Applicants will be informed in writing of the Decision Maker's decision within 7 working days of receiving the Panel recommendation. For foster carers who have been approved they will also be sent a Foster Carer Agreement, which will detail the terms and conditions of their approval.

Process for Supporting

Fosterplus recognises that the quality of its services can only be met by having good quality foster carers, who are well supported and trained.

Our training combines a blended learning experience of online e-learning, virtual courses, and face-to-face training within in our local offices, usually during school hours. Courses are generally completed in a day, but some might go over two or three – for example, the Prepare to Foster training course. They take the form of workshops and presentations, as well as discussion and practical exercises. They're designed to be interesting and accessible to everyone and they don't involve exams or written work either. With all of this training, we're able to create a tailor-made package to meet our foster carers' needs, interests and availability.

Fosterplus has detailed Policies and Procedures on supporting and training of foster carers, which are available on our database 'Charms' downloads and further information to view on the Foster Carer Handbook.

www.fosterplus.co.uk/foster-parent-handbook-scotland/

In summary, Fosterplus foster carers have access to:

- An 'on call worker' 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.
- Short break care where appropriate.
- Exceptional Damage Insurance.
- Pre and post approval training.
- Regular monthly structured supervision programme.
- Regular programme of training delivered to meet foster carers' needs.
- Financial support to meet the needs of the child or young person.
- Individual membership to Foster Talk.
- Direct access to Senior Management.
- Regular support group meetings.
- Support in meeting the child's education.
- Becoming a member of a professional team of foster carers.
- Opportunities to be consulted on the function and operation of the Agency.
- Support from their Supervising Social Worker at professionals meetings.
- A fostering allowance when a child is in placement.
- A continuing care allowance when a young person remains in placement.
- Assistance in enrolling children in local schools, registering with GPs etc.
- Additional resources to support any child or young person when in placement.
- Organised activities for children.

Fosterplus recognises that the above items on their own do not necessarily mean that a person feels supported. By the nature of the role, foster carers will face demanding and challenging situations. The aim is to equip foster carers with the skills to deal with the majority of situations, but safe in the knowledge that support is readily accessible, if it is required.

Fosterplus is working to integrate and embed the Trauma Informed Practice model into daily practice and supporting foster carers in their parenting approaches towards children. The goal of the Trauma Informed Practice, which Fosterplus has integrated into daily practice, is to provide sensitive caregiving that develops secure, close relationships. The aim is to help children to recover from their previous harmful experiences and to develop their resilience and sense of stability to enhance their potential and face future challenges in their lives.



Matching

It is the Agency's belief that the best outcomes for children will be achieved by making the best matches between the foster carers, and children and young people, thus taking into account their values, ethnicity, culture and skills, and marrying them with the specific needs of each child/young person.

Fosterplus will ensure that the needs of any children or young people already in placement with foster carers are fully considered and seek a placing alongside agreement from the Local Authority social worker – it's important to consider that the needs of all children will be met. The foster carer(s) will be consulted about any potential matches and their views sought on whether the potential placement is something they feel to be appropriate for the young person and their family. The foster carer's Form F assessment and Profile will be sent to Local Authorities to help with decision making and to establish the right match for the child/young person. Local Authorities may also request the latest Annual Foster Carer Review report if applicable. We consider safeguarding issues, school and education needs, contact arrangements in relation to the foster carers overseeing contacts, foster carer's approval terms, other family members or existing placements, proposed length of placement, foster carer's training and skills, and location of placement.

Process for Reviewing Foster Carers

Fostering regulations require that every foster carer's approval must be reviewed at panel within a year of approval, thereafter every 3 years at panel or whenever the fostering service thinks this is necessary. Internal Reviews are held once in between the 3 years (therefore 18 monthly reviews are held). The review must consider whether the foster carer(s) and their household continue to be suitable to foster and whether their terms of approval are still appropriate. Fosterplus expects foster carer's reviews to look closely at the fostering undertaken by the foster carers, including successes and challenges, as well as the services and support provided by the agency. First reviews and then every third review thereafter are always brought to a fostering panel and foster carers are expected to attend. The purpose of the Review is to ensure that the foster carers terms of approval, and indeed their approval, remains appropriate. Where a foster carer household has a young person(s) who is approaching 16, discussions will take place with the foster carers about the possibility for approval as continuing care/adult placement carers to enable the young person to remain as a member of their fostering household beyond their 18th year. The views of the young person(s) will also be sought, and discussion with the responsible authority will be undertaken to agree the formal transfer of the placement from foster care to a continuing care/adult placement. Care plans, risk assessments etc. will also be reviewed to reflect the change in status of the young person within the household.

For all reviews, we will seek the views of any child or young person who is placed with the foster carer within the period under Review, any Local Authorities who have placed children with the foster carers, their Supervising Social Workers, the foster carers and members of their household. All foster carers will be fully involved in their Reviews and will have the opportunity to comment at any stage of the process.

A written report will summarise the Review and make a clear recommendation on the outcome. The report will be submitted to the Fostering Panel where relevant for recommendation on continued approval and terms of approval. The final decision on the recommendation from each Review will be made by the Agency Decision Maker.

All foster carers will be fully involved in their Reviews and will have the opportunity to comment at any stage of the process.

Complaints, Representations and Compliments

The Agency has a full Complaints, Representations and Compliments Policy and Procedure, which is available on request.

All children/young people placed with our foster carers are informed of the Complaints, representations and compliments procedure when they are first placed. Information about the complaints process is available to the children/young people who are placed with us via leaflets, posters and via our website.

Fosterplus strives for a culture of openness and transparency with all employees, students, foster carers and sessional workers. The Agency has a Whistleblowing Policy, to encourage employees/workers to feel confident in raising genuine concerns about malpractice, whilst maintaining their integrity, and to ensure whistle-blowers know their concerns will be taken seriously and not ignored. Where individuals do not feel they are able to report any concerns to their line manager or senior manager, or they are not confident this will be acted upon, they can report a concern via Whistleblowing@polariscommunity.co.uk

The Agency welcomes feedback on its service standards to enable it to continually improve the service and support offered. It is the Agency's aim to deal with all complaints and, whenever possible, directly between the complainant and the subject of the complaint. However, it is recognised that this is not possible in all circumstances and there is a formal complaints process in place. Complaints can be made directly to the Individual Service Managers or to the Registered Manager at:

Fosterplus
Unit 7, The Arc
25 Colquhoun Avenue
Hillington Park
Glasgow
G52 4BN
0141-4577127



These can be made either in writing or verbally, however the Agency will always request that formal complaints are made in writing.

Alternatively Complaints can be submitted directly by email to the Complaints Officer Chrise Grundy Hoban at Chrise.GrundyHoban@fosterplus.co.uk. Complaints about the Registered Manager can be made to Jo August – Chief Executive Officer, at the Wavendon Tower address, or directly to:



The Children and Young People's Commissioner can be contacted at:

