

FOSTERPLUS SCOTLAND

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Introduction

Fosterplus Scotland is an independent 'Not for Profit' Fostering Agency registered with the Care Inspectorate providing a range of services for Looked After Children. 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 5 operational offices in Scotland in Edinburgh, Ayr, Paisley, Hamilton & Dundee. Our Edinburgh office includes our Headquarters. Each office has an assigned Service Manager, Supervising Social workers and Administrative support. There is also a Head of Operations, Quality Assurance Manager, Support Services Administrator, Senior Recruitment Officer, Referrals officer, Panel Administrators and a Training Assistant.

The registered address for Fosterplus Scotland is:

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Scott House
Mid New Cultins
West One Business Park
Edinburgh
EH11 4DH
0131 241 6200
Askus.edinburgh@fosterplus.co.uk

Sub Offices:

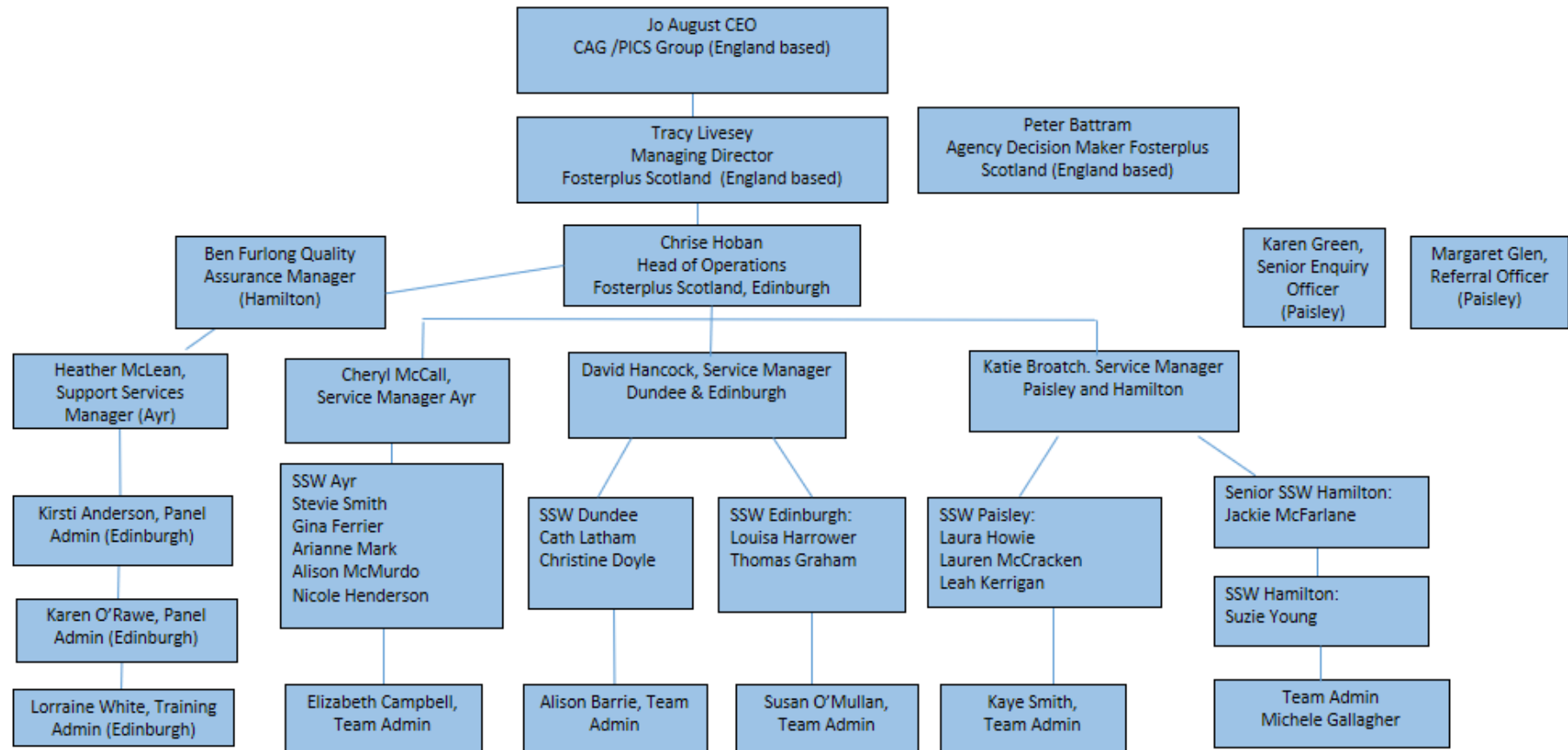
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SCOTLAND ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE



Aims and Objectives, Principles and Standards

All operations of the agency are underpinned by the Secure Base Model. The Secure Base Model is drawn from attachment theory, and adapted to include an additional element, that of family membership, for children who are separated from their birth families. The model proposes five dimensions of caregiving, each of which is associated with a corresponding developmental benefit for the child

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 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 the
- 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

Improving the above outcomes will be achieved by:

- 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 carers which defines the Agency's service standards in a simple manner
- Consulting with service users and care receivers
- Recruiting carers and staff from a diversity of cultures and backgrounds to reflect the needs of service users
- Involves working better together 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
- Supports 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 carer households 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 person will be achieved by making the best matches between the carer and child, thus considering their values, ethnicity, culture and skills, and marrying 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 and quality improvement process 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
- ☀️ Short Break Placements
- ☀️ Permanent Placements
- ☀️ Continuing Care/Adult 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 Nutrius, alongside Fosterplus England, Clifford House Fostering, Orange Grove Foster Care, ISP (Integrated Services Programme), FCA (Foster Care Associates), FCA (Scotland). Fostering People, 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.

Senior Leadership

Chrise Hoban is the Head of Operations for Fosterplus and is the Registered Manager.

The Registered Manager

The Registered Manager (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 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.

Quality Assurance Manager

The Quality Assurance Manager is responsible for Quality Assurance and Safeguarding and will be accountable for work undertaken which will be in accordance with the relevant legislative and regulatory framework and Fosterplus Policy and Procedures.

This role will include coordinating and leading on tasks relative to QA and Safeguarding work. The post holder undertakes the role of Deputy to the Head of Operations in their absence, is involved in pre-inspection planning and Panel business. Fundamentally, the post holder will be required to undertake tasks on all activities within the context of Quality Assurance which lead to each office reviewing and improving practice across Fosterplus and children & young people are safeguarded.

Support Services Manager

The Support Services Manager assists in ensuring the policies and procedures are up to date and staff are aware of and following these. Auditing the system for information and chasing any missing information, liaising with LA's, Scotland Exce and the Care Inspectorate on the information we have. Is involved in pre-inspection planning. Assists in the running of panels. The role is another safeguard for the agency and assisting the Senior Management Team in undertaking tasks.

The Foster Panel Chair/ Foster Panels

This is a role independent of the Agency. The Chair ensures the proper running of the Fostering Panel and as a result of the Panel's functions 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; give advice and make recommendations on any other matters referred to the Panel by Fosterplus.

Supervising Social Workers

These 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. These Social Workers undertake on-call and duty functions to ensure that our carers are fully supported 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

They are employed on a full / part time basis and are line managed by the Service Manager. Supervising Social Workers attend meetings involving the child and carer to ensure that the 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.

Senior Recruitment Officer

To play a lead role in the recruitment of high quality committed foster carers; ensuring high levels of service & efficient processes are delivered at all times. To deliver professional initial visits to the homes of prospective foster carers across the Agency and establish suitability to progress to preparatory training and application. To produce timely, concise reports detailing the findings of Initial Visits. Tracking and monitoring of the carer recruitment pipeline, ensuring that processes are efficient, delays are minimised and prospective foster carers remain engaged with the Agency.

Placement Officer

The placement officer is responsible in processing and co-ordinating requests for foster placements from Local Authorities and passing to the social work teams for consideration and matching. This includes the recording and processing of all referrals with timely, concise, detailed reports. Liaise with all Placement Teams and Access to Resources Teams.

Training Assistant

The Training Assistant, in co-ordination with the Head of Ops, is responsible for the co-ordination and organisation of the training and development programme for staff, carers and panel members. They will converse with all independent trainers to book in dates, book venues and catering. They liaise with staff, carers and panel members inviting them to training dates and compiling an attendance list to track any that are unable to attend.

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 Nutrius 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.

Supports

Fosterplus is part of the Nutrius 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 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.

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

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 facilitates the Agency to meet its 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 Strategy which identifies how prospective foster carers are recruited through a number of methods. We advertise on our website and utilise social media. Prospective carers are also recruited through recommendations by our existing carers or staff employed by the Agency. Other modes of recruitment may include for example, advertisements placed in local press and on the radio; leaflets are displayed in public places and venues such as stores and libraries.

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 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 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 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 carer, all applicants must undergo a thorough assessment by a qualified Social Worker. This can take up to six months to complete but it is the aim of Fosterplus to have this completed in a shorter timescale. However, in exceptional circumstances the term may vary but 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, educational, 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 Skills 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 assessment process applicants and members of their households, over 16 years old, must undergo a PVG and Disclosure check at the enhanced level. 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 carer. The Agency uses the BAAF Form F report to evidence applicants' experiences and skills.

Once the Manager is satisfied 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 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.

Fosterplus has detailed **Policies and Procedures** on supporting and training of carers which are available to view on the Carer Handbook <https://www.fosterplus.co.uk/handbooks-homepage/>

In summary Fosterplus carers have access to:-

- ☀ An 'on call worker' 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.
- ☀ Friday phone calls/emails.
- ☀ Respite care where appropriate.
- ☀ Exceptional Damage Insurance.
- ☀ Pre and post approval training
- ☀ Regular monthly structured supervision programme. from their social worker with interim
- ☀ Regular programme of training delivered to meet carers' needs.
- ☀ Financial support to meet the needs of the child or young person
- ☀ Individual membership to Fostering Network.
- ☀ Direct access to Senior Management.
- ☀ Regular support group meetings.
- ☀ Support in meeting the child's education
- ☀ Becoming a member of a professional team of 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 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 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 Secure Base Model into daily practice and supporting foster carers in their parenting approaches towards children. The goal of the Secure Base Model 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.

Process for Reviewing Carers

Fostering regulations require that every foster carer's approval must be reviewed within a year of approval, at Panel every 3 years following and internally every year and whenever the fostering service thinks this is necessary. 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 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 will be always brought to a fostering panel and foster carers are expected to attend. The purpose of the Review is to ensure that the carer's terms of approval and indeed their approval remains appropriate. Where a carer household has a young person(s) who are approaching 16 discussions will take place with the 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 carer within the period under Review, any Local Authorities who have placed children with the carers, their Supervising Social Workers, the Foster Carers and members of their household.

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 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.

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 at the lowest appropriate level 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 more formal process for making a complaint.

Complaints can be made directly to the Individual Service Managers or to the Registered Manager at Fosterplus, Scott House, Mid New Cultins, West One Business Park, Edinburgh EH11 4DH. 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 e-mail to the Complaints Officer Chrise Hoban at choban@fosterplus.co.uk Complaints about the Registered Manager can be made to Jo August – Chief Operating Officer, at the Wavendon Tower address, or directly to:

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY
Telephone 0345 600 9527

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

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

The Children and Young People's Commissioner
Roseberry House
9 Haymarket Terrace
Edinburgh
EH12 5EZ
Telephone: 0131 346 5350

Whistleblowing

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.

Chrise Hoban – Head of Operations