

# STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

## FOSTERPLUS SCOTLAND

## 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 offices in Scotland in Ayr, Dundee, Edinburgh (Headquarters) Hamilton and Paisley. Each office has a Service Manager, Supervising Social workers and Administrative support. There is also a Quality Assurance Manager, Training and Development Manager, Senior Administrator, Senior Recruitment Officer and Referrals and Placements officer.

### The registered address for Fosterplus Scotland is:

#### **Fosterplus Fostercare (Ltd)**

Scott House  
Mid New Cultins  
West One Business Park  
Edinburgh  
EH11 4DH  
Tel: 0131 241 6200  
e-mail: [askus.edinburgh@fosterplus.co.uk](mailto:askus.edinburgh@fosterplus.co.uk)  
[www.fosterplus.co.uk](http://www.fosterplus.co.uk)

### Sub Offices:

#### **Fosterplus Ayr**

1 Racecourse Road  
Ayr  
KA7 2UP  
01292 288990  
e-mail: [askus.ayr@fosterplus.co.uk](mailto:askus.ayr@fosterplus.co.uk)  
[www.fosterplus.co.uk](http://www.fosterplus.co.uk)

#### **Fosterplus Dundee**

Lothian House  
31 South Tay Street  
Dundee  
Tel: 01382 220066  
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#### **Fosterplus Hamilton**

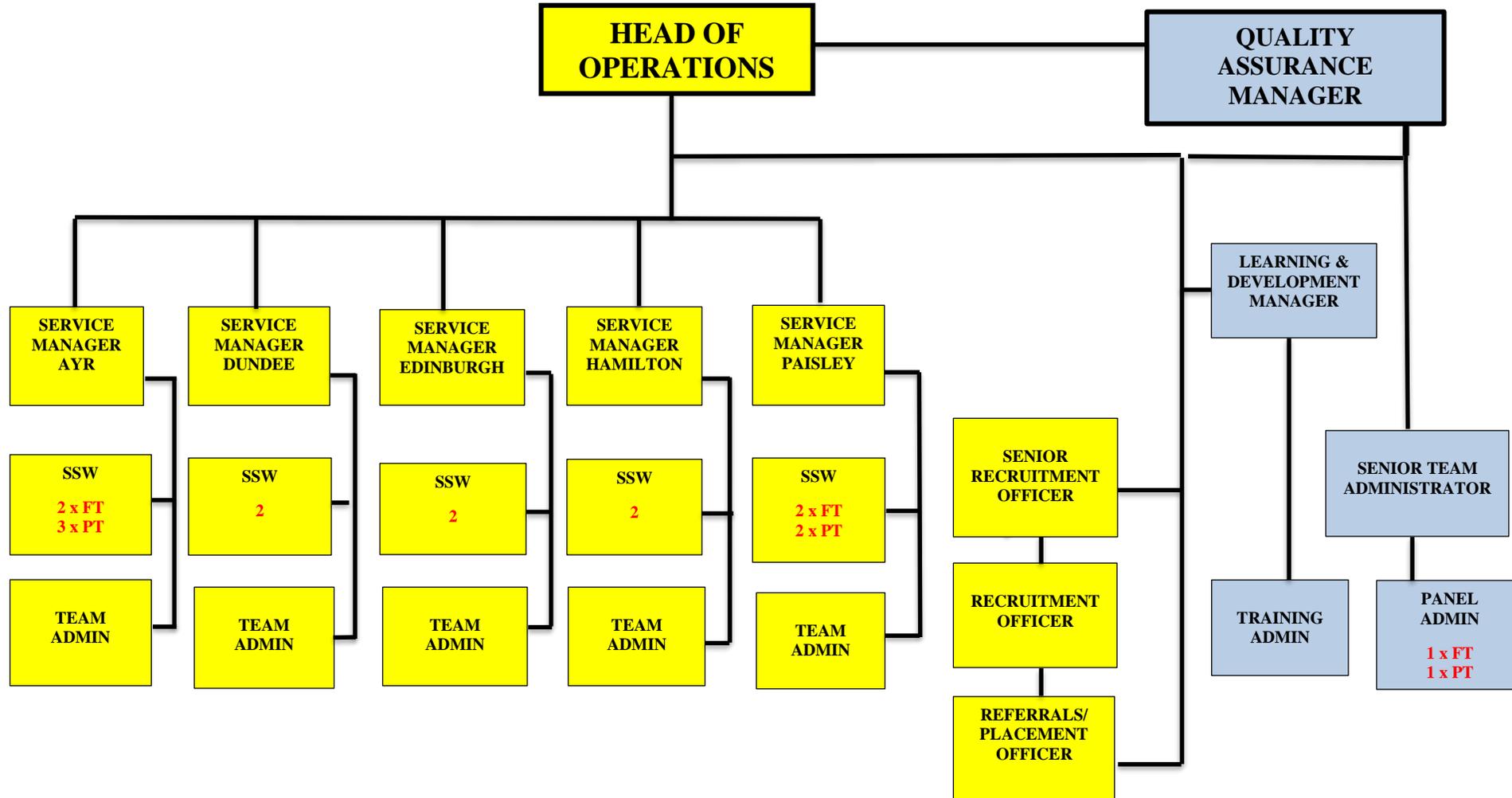
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#### **Fosterplus Paisley**

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123 Renfrew Road  
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## SCOTLAND ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

### SENIOR MANAGEMENT SCOTLAND



### **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 an 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
- Enables children and young people to get the help they need when they need
- 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

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 will be achieved by making the best matches between the carer and child, thus taking into account their values, ethnicity, culture and skills, and marrying them with the specific needs of each child. 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

## **PEOPLE**

### **Fosterplus Scotland**

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 Partnerships in Children's Services (PiCS), alongside Fosterplus England, Clifford House Fostering, Orange Grove Foster Care and ISP (Integrated Services Programme).

### **Directors**

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

### **Senior Leadership**

Geoff Armstrong is the Head of Operations for Fosterplus and is the Registered Manager.

### **The Registered Manager**

The Registered Manager is responsible for the day to day running of the Agency. He manages the supervision of the senior team. He ensures that all carers are properly supported, that the outcomes for children 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 and Safeguarding 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. As the Quality Assurance and Safeguarding Manager the post holder will be expected to undertake the role of Deputy to the Head of Operations in their absence, be 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 registration achieving 'outstanding' practices across Fosterplus and children are safeguarded.

### **Training and Development Manager**

The Training and Development Manager is responsible for the co-ordination and organisation of the training and development programme for staff, carers and panel members. Other key responsibilities include; the monitoring of staff having met the training requirements for their SSSC registration, the evaluation, standard and effectiveness of training offered and the efficient and effective management of the training department. The training manager is also responsible for ensuring the training team operates in accordance with the relevant legislation and guidance and the agencies policies and procedures and to contribute to service development and improvement and take a lead on areas of development.

### **The Foster Panel Chair/ Foster Panels**

This is a role independent of the Agency. The Chair ensures the proper fit 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.

### **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**

To be 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.

### **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 Registered 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.

### **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 PiCS 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.

### **Therapy**

Fosterplus is part of the PiCS 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 and 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 Introduction to Fostering 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 must undergo a PVG and Disclosure check at the enhanced level. Certain offences preclude a person from caring for children. At least 3 personal / family references 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.
- ☀ Regular monthly structured supervision from their social worker with interim visits as required.
- ☀ Support in meeting the child's education needs through their Supervising Social Worker and the Education Support team.
- ☀ Support from their Supervising Social Worker at professionals meetings.
- ☀ Organised activities for children
- ☀ Friday phone calls.
- ☀ Exceptional Damage Insurance.
- ☀ Direct access to Senior Management.
- ☀ Regular programme of training delivered to meet carers' needs.
- ☀ Regular support group meetings.
- ☀ Becoming a member of a professional team of carers.
- ☀ Opportunities to be consulted on the function and operation of the Agency.
- ☀ Generous fostering allowance when a child is in placement.
- ☀ Respite care where appropriate.
- ☀ Pre and post approval training programme.
- ☀ Financial support to meet the material needs of the child or young person placed.
- ☀ Assistance in enrolling children in local schools, registering with GPs etc.
- ☀ Additional resources to support any child in placement.
- ☀ Individual membership to Fostering Network.

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. Training on the Secure Base Model is part of our Core Training programme provided to all foster carers.

### **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. The Review will seek the views of any child who has been or 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.

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. The Agency welcomes feedback on its service standards to enable it to continually improve the service and support offered.

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 Geoff Armstrong at [garmstrong@fosterplus.co.uk](mailto:garmstrong@fosterplus.co.uk)  
Complaints about the Registered Manager can be made to Simon Newstone, 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](mailto: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

## **Number of Complaints**

In the year April 2016 – March 2017, Fosterplus Scotland had 1 complaint.

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.

## **Geoff Armstrong – Head of Operations**