



# STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

**FOSTERPLUS LIMITED**

**FOSTERPLUS SOUTH**

**SC 065614**

## INTRODUCTION

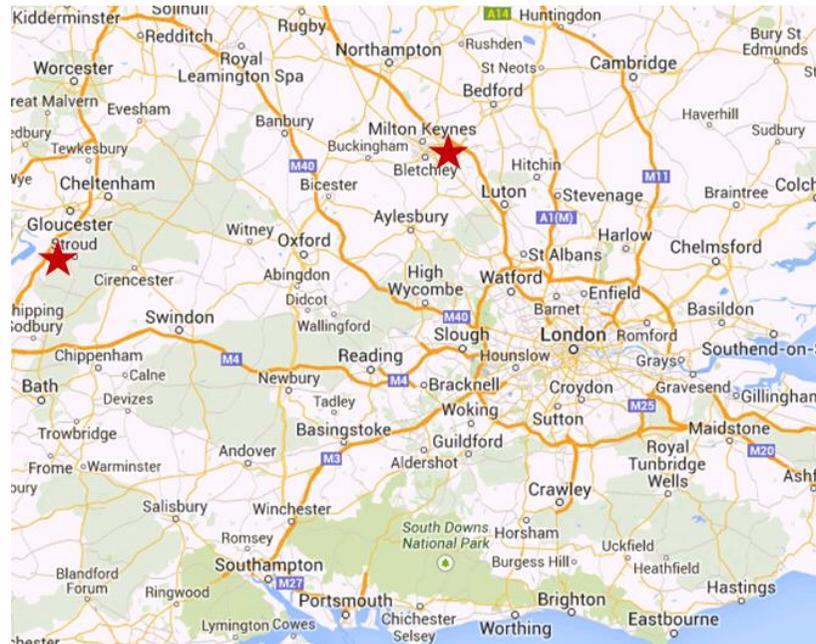
Fosterplus is an independent fostering Agency providing a range of services for Children Looked After. The Agency is run in accordance with all current legislation including the Children Act 1989, The Children Act 2004, the Care Standards Act 2000, The Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011 (amended 2013) and Fostering Services National Minimum Standards 2011.

Fosterplus Limited currently has 2 registered offices in England; 1 at Wavendon, Milton Keynes, covering the South of England, with a sub-office at Stonehouse, Gloucestershire, and 1 at Long Eaton, Derbyshire (Midlands and South Yorkshire) with sub-offices in Doncaster and Coventry. The functions carried out from each of the registered offices include carer recruitment, marketing and administration. The sub-office functions include carer training and support.

Fosterplus South Limited is registered and regulated by Ofsted, Registration number SC 065614. The Manager is **Michael Carter**.

### The registered address for Fosterplus South is:

**Fosterplus Limited**  
Wavendon Tower  
Wavendon Business Park  
Ortensia Drive  
Milton Keynes  
MK17 8LX  
Tel: 01908 804499  
[www.fosterplus.co.uk](http://www.fosterplus.co.uk)



### The sub-office address of Fosterplus South is:

**Fosterplus Limited**  
2, 4 & 6 Queens Road,  
Stonehouse,  
Gloucestershire  
GL10 2QA  
Tel: 01453 825600  
[www.fosterplus.co.uk](http://www.fosterplus.co.uk)

## Aims and Objectives, Principles and Standards

The aim of the Agency is to assist the placing authorities in meeting their requirements to improve the wellbeing of children in relation to the *Five Outcomes for Children*. These are:

- ☀ Physical and mental health and emotional well being
  - ☀ Protection from harm and neglect
  - ☀ Education training and recreation
  - ☀ The contribution made by them to society
  - ☀ Social and economic well being
- (Section 10 Children Act 2004)*

Improving the above outcomes will be achieved by:

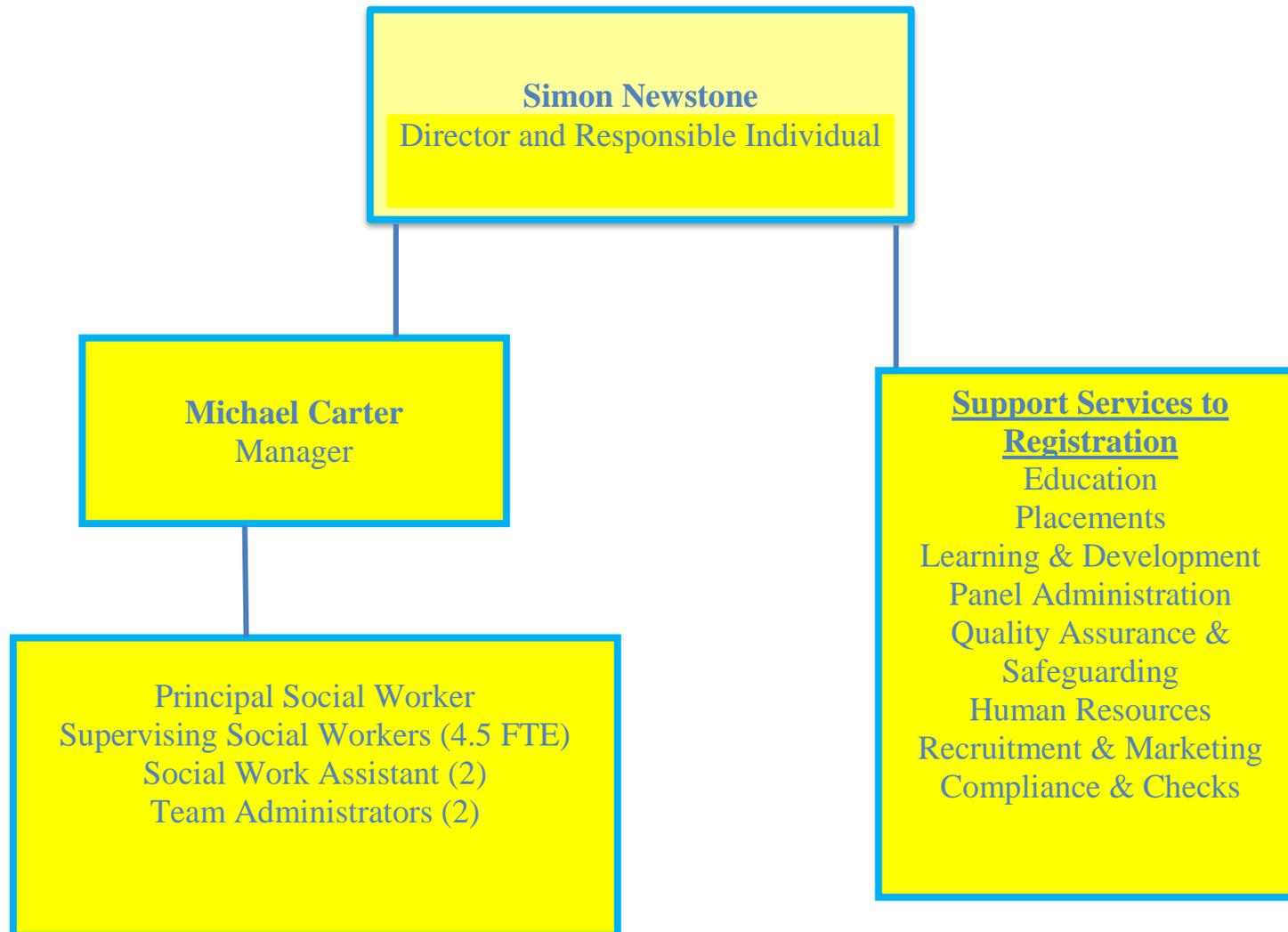
- ☀ Placing the child at the centre of all services provided
- ☀ Providing clear procedural guidance for staff and carers which defines the Agency's service standards in a simple manner
- ☀ Consulting with service users and care receivers
- ☀ Recruiting carers and staff from a diversity of cultures and backgrounds to reflect the needs of service users
- ☀ 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

The detailed service standards of the Agency are contained within the Agency's policy and procedure documents; these are available either by request or online at [www.proceduresonline.com/pics/fosterplus/](http://www.proceduresonline.com/pics/fosterplus/)

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

- |                       |                         |                                  |                           |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| ☀ Form F Assessments  | ☀ Emergency Placements  | ☀ Unaccompanied Minor Placements | ☀ Disability Placements   |
| ☀ Respite Placements  | ☀ Long term Placements  | ☀ Permanent Placements           | ☀ Pre-Adoption Placements |
| ☀ Bridging Placements | ☀ Short term Placements |                                  |                           |



## PEOPLE

### **Fosterplus Limited**

Fosterplus Limited is comprised of 2 Registrations: Fosterplus South and Fosterplus Midlands and South Yorkshire. Both are registered under the Companies Act 1985 (Company Registration Number 3196297). Fosterplus Limited is part of a group of Companies owned by Partnerships in Children's Services (PiCS), alongside Fosterplus (Fostercare) Limited in Scotland, Clifford House Fostering, Orange Grove Fostercare 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**

Simon Newstone is the Director of Fosterplus and Responsible Individual.

### **The Registered Manager**

The Registered Manager is responsible for the day to day running of the Agency. Michael Carter has been appointed by Fosterplus to the position of Manager of Fosterplus South. The Registered Manager manages the supervision of the staff group for both the main and sub-office teams. 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 Fostering Services National Minimum Standards 2011 and Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011 (Updated 2013). The Registered Manager is accountable to and reports to the Operational Director.

### **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.

### **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 either by the Registered Manager or Principal Social Worker. 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.

#### **Social Work Assistants**

These are non-social work qualified. They undertake outreach and support work to foster carers in their day to day task of looking after children and young people. They also co-ordinate activities and undertake age appropriate consultation with children and young people who are looked after and birth children in addition they help to support children looked after into independence.

#### **Administrators**

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

#### **Education Co-ordinator**

Fosterplus is part of PiCS, which employs a qualified teacher who is able to provide advice, support and guidance on educational issues for children looked after by Fosterplus.

#### **Therapy**

Fosterplus engages consultant therapists to support and work with foster carers in meeting the therapeutic needs of children and young people.

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 Investigators for formal complaints. 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 South is supported by a central staff group, including Human Resources, Placements, Checks and References, Marketing and Recruitment, Finance, Panel Administration, Learning and Development, Quality Assurance and Safeguarding and the Operational Director.

At 18.08.2017 Fosterplus South currently has 57 approved Foster Carers with 58 children placed.

## 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 South 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) completed over the telephone. 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 eight 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 Disclosure and Barring Service 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 orally of the Decision Maker's decision within 2 working days, and written confirmation sent to them within 5 working days. 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 [www.proceduresonline.com/pics/fosterplus/](http://www.proceduresonline.com/pics/fosterplus/)

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.
- ☀ Frequent telephone calls to and from their Supervising Social Worker.
- ☀ Wilful Damage Insurance.
- ☀ Direct access to Senior Management.
- ☀ Regular programme of training delivered to meet carers' needs.
- ☀ Regular support group meetings.
- ☀ Paid 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.

- ☀ Support in meeting the child's education needs through their Supervising Social Worker and the Education Support Worker.
- ☀ Support from their Supervising Social Worker at professionals meetings.
- ☀ Organised activities for children
- ☀ 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.
- ☀ 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

All carers must undertake a Review at least annually including following a significant event or for changes to their terms of approval. The first Review of a carer following their approval will be presented to the Fostering Panel. The Fostering Panel will also consider Reviews in relation to significant changes to carers' circumstances and any concerns of Standards of Care or allegations involving foster carers.

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.

## Number of Children Placed

There are currently 58 children placed. Placements have a wide range of needs from young children through to adolescents, sibling groups, and children with disabilities, to name a few.

## Outcomes

Fosterplus is dedicated to ensuring that children and young people achieve the best possible outcomes, including that they:

- ☀ Are appropriately matched into a suitable fostering family
- ☀ Have good access to leisure and health services
- ☀ Feel safe
- ☀ Attend education and achieve their full potential
- ☀ Enjoy their experiences and develop self-confidence
- ☀ Are involved in decisions about their life
- ☀ Are supported to prepare for their future

## Complaints, Representations and Compliments

The Agency has a full Complaints, Representations and Compliments Policy and Procedure which is available on request or online at [www.proceduresonline.com/pics/fosterplus/](http://www.proceduresonline.com/pics/fosterplus/)

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 Registered Manager or to the Director / Responsible Individual at Fosterplus Ltd, Wavendon Tower, Ortensia Drive, Milton Keynes, MK17 8LX. 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 Janet Forbes at [complaints@fosterplus.co.uk](mailto:complaints@fosterplus.co.uk)

Complaints about the Registered Manager can be made either to the Responsible Individual, Simon Newstone, at the Wavendon Tower address, or directly to:

**Ofsted**

Piccadilly Gate, Store Street,  
Manchester  
M1 2WD  
Telephone: 0300 123 1231  
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Children's Rights Commissioner can be contacted at:

**The Office of the Children's Rights Commissioner**

Sanctuary Buildings  
20 Great Smith Street  
London  
SW1P 3BT  
Telephone: 0207 783 8330  
[info.request@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:info.request@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk)  
[www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk](http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk)

## Number of Complaints

In the year April 2016 – March 2017, Fosterplus South received 1 Complaint, which was satisfactorily resolved at Stage 1 of the Complaints Procedure

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 whistleblowers know their concerns will be taken seriously and not ignored.

*Michael Carter - Manager*

