

FOSTERING RELATIONS

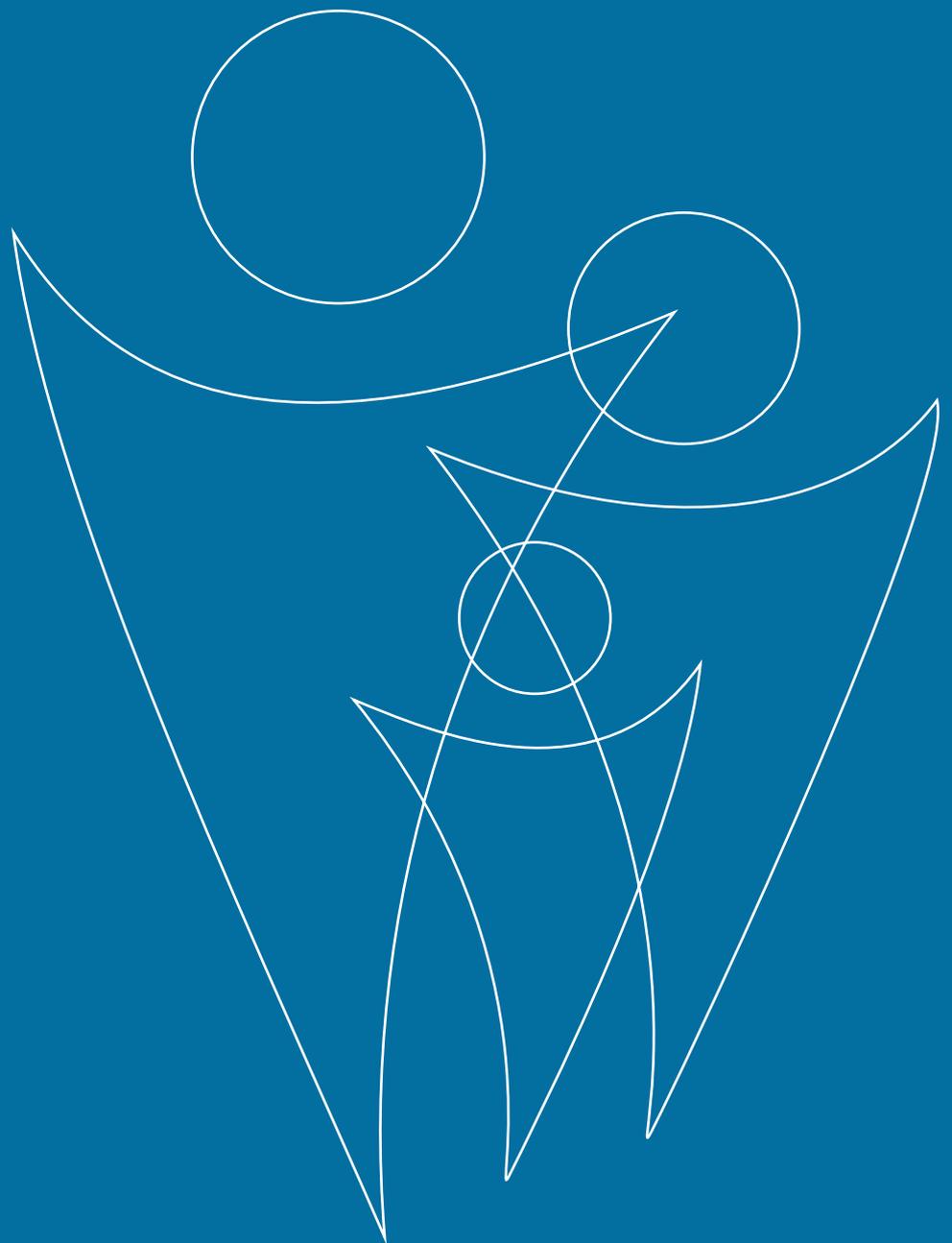


ANNUAL  
REPORT  
2017



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# WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Once again I would like to welcome you to this our sixth annual report.

This Report covers the financial year 2016/17.

The year was extremely challenging with a number of specific areas of difficulty requiring a comprehensive review of operations and processes.

Nevertheless we continued to grow the business and to consolidate best practice both in terms of developing our carers by way of increased learning opportunities for carers and staff as well as the development of our Young People Group.

As always the staffing complement has grown and we now employ 13 individuals across Scotland, their skills and experience has enabled us to grow our carer number s and continue to offer a qualitative service to carers and children.

I hope you enjoy reading this Report and please contact us if you have a question or comment.

**Bryan Ritchie**  
Registered Manager

# AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Fostering Relations aims to provide a first class service across central Scotland. We recruit assess and approve carers throughout the year and this activity is an increasing part of our work as we strive to grow the carer pool in order to provide a greater service to Local Authorities in Scotland. Our support package for Carers is designed to ensure we provide a safe and nurturing environment, one where children and young people can thrive.

As always we believe that the carers are the main agents of change and that by providing a multi-disciplinary support to carers they can in turn effect positive changes in the children they look after on behalf of Local Authorities.

We understand that Carers require high levels of both support and supervision if they are to undertake their work in a professional manner and our low levels of caseloads within the agency facilitated this and the average caseload in 2016/17 being 11 households for each of our supervising social workers.

In addition we believe that Carers require ongoing high quality Training and we provided an Integrated Training Calendar for all Carers in 2016/17 with over 35 separate courses representing a broad spectrum of areas of focus during the year.

This training was delivered by way of both classroom and online provision and both proved successful in respect of both core, mandatory, and developmental training.

As usual we worked closely with our partners in Local Authorities and played a full part in the Care Plans for children and young people.

We looked after children from 10 Local Authorities within the year primarily by way of Contractual Arrangements.

It remains the case that our agency will always have as its focus quality of provision as we are absolutely committed to improving the lives of these our most vulnerable children.

Our aim remains the same as it has since the Agency was established in 2007 and that is to provide the very best foster carer service in the country so that children and young people placed with us can enjoy a happy caring and secure childhood

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FOSTERING RELATIONS AIMS TO PROVIDE A FIRST CLASS SERVICE ACROSS CENTRAL SCOTLAND.



# STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

- > Fostering Relations is an Independent not for profit fostering agency that works with local authorities across Scotland to provide quality supported stable family placements for children and young people.
- > We believe that every child has the right to feel safe, healthy and happy and so are committed to provide this for children and young people who have experienced abuse, disruption and trauma in their lives.
- > Our aim is to provide the best service through support, training and remuneration to carers and to value the enormous contribution they make to the lives of children who cannot live with their own family.
- > Our goal is to provide the best value service to Local Authorities placing children with us by working alongside them to achieve care plans for children and young people and by ensuring safe and supported placements until plans have been achieved.
- > We work in a culture of continuous improvement of our services to children, carers and placing authorities and regularly evaluate our service by seeking their views as well as other stakeholders.



# CHILDREN

As mentioned in the Introduction although still the smallest Independent Foster Agency in Scotland we have grown and at the end of the year 2016/17 were looking after 50 children and young people in 44 Carer Households.

Of these 15 children were subject to Permanency Orders.

All were in full time Education or Further Education

The average age of our children and young people was 11

The Children's web site continued to be part of the care experience for our children and they actively participated in its ongoing development.

In addition the Young Team (Children's Participation Group) worked with a Film Maker to produce a recruitment DVD that will be used in the recruitment of carers and staff.

Our Achievement Day was again a massive success with nearly 60% of all our children and young people attending and participating, the children's participation group (The Young Team) met regularly and have contributed ideas and suggestions that the Agency has taken forward.

# PARTICIPATION

As already mentioned we see it as vital that those children and young people who we look after and those who do the caring play a role in shaping our future to that end we continued our audit and survey work both with children and carers this will remain a vital part of our work particularly as we move towards our LILAC Inspection in 2017.

Survey work featuring other stakeholders including placing social workers, teachers, and other professionals was repeated this year and the outcomes shared with all carers and staff.

We also continued our Carer Support Groups and Carer Forums managing changes within the structures as requested by carers.

The Carers Academy and DDP Training will we hope work to firm up the generation of a carer community within the Agency and this in turn will be of benefit to the children and young people in our care.



# STAFFING

The biggest challenge this year was the changes in staffing with a turnover of over 50 % of our staff. This was due to life style choices by some and career choices.

All vacancies were filled quickly and these new workers have brought a fresh impetus to the Agency. We recruited a second Education Support Coordinator who will work alongside our existing Coordinator to support educational provision for all our children and young people.

We began a Staff Engagement Programme in order to ensure team homogeneity and buy in.

We also recruited a new Team Manager following Laura Lowries departure to Fife.



# SUMMARY

We remain the smallest Fostering Agency in Scotland albeit we are growing by around 15% per year.

It is likely that this will be the norm over the next few years.

We will continue to provide a bespoke service featuring 52 week placements and high levels of supervision and support.

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