

FOSTERING RELATIONS ANNUAL REPORT 2014



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Welcome & Introduction

For the fourth year in a row I would like to personally welcome you to this our 2014 Annual Report.

The year was marked by a number of changes notably in terms of continued growth and successful placements. It was a year that seemed to go past very quickly and one that contained a number of successes for us as an Agency. It continues to be the case however that our focus was on the lives and achievements of the children and young people in our care and as ever it was this that inspired and motivated us.

Whilst we grew we still remain one of the smallest Independent Foster Agencies in Scotland and this sense of "family" pervades all our activities.

Indeed many of our new carers stated that it was this sense of us being small and special that made them apply to us as opposed to the other larger foster agencies.

This year was the first full year of us operating as part of Belton Associates who purchased the Agency in 2013, a focus on quality and continual improvement were evident from the very start of the year and remained in evidence throughout 2014.

Bryan Ritchie

Registered Manager

Our commitment remains the same in that we believe that every child has the right to feel safe healthy and happy.





Aims and Objectives

Fostering Relations aims to provide an excellent child centred service to Local Authorities across Scotland.

We believe that our 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. Our low levels of caseloads within the agency facilitated this with the average caseload in 2014 being 8 households for each of our supervising social workers.

In addition we facilitated on going skills enhancement by way of an integrated training package comprising both face to face training and online provision.

We added a number of courses to our list principally by way of suggestions from carers in terms of what they felt they needed in order to improve and consolidate good practice.

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 will work in a culture of continuous improvement of our services to children, carers and placing authorities and will regularly evaluate our service by seeking their views

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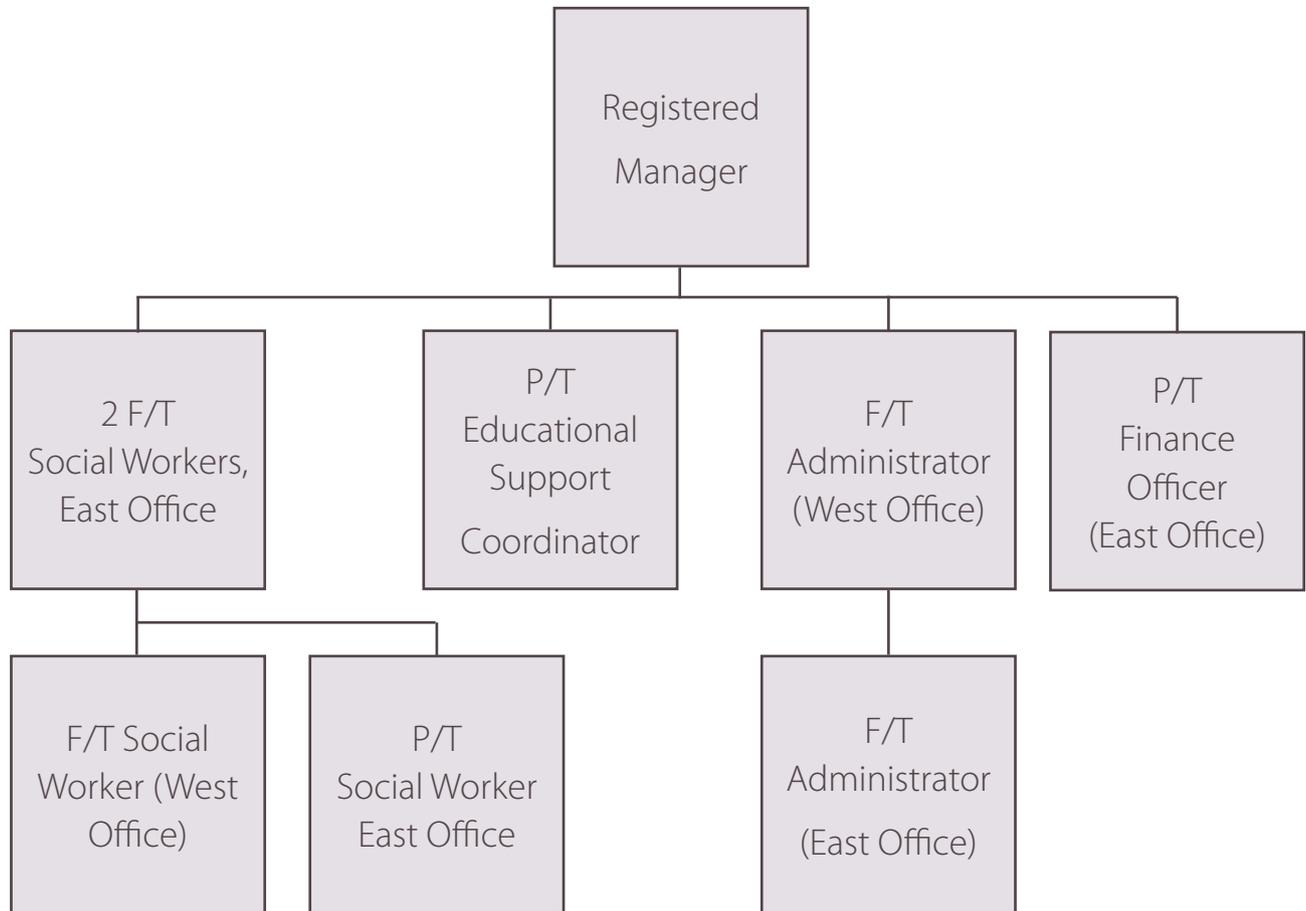


Children

- In 2014 we grew our carer group and ended the year with 38 carer households looking after 42 children and young people at the end of the year
- 32 Children were in long terms placements.
- 20 Children were subject to a Permanency Order
- All our children and young people were in full time educational provision
- The care and stickability of our carers added to the resilience of our children remains for me the outstanding story of 2014

Staffing

We saw a number of changes in staff with four members of the team leaving during the course of the year with three being replaced.



Participation

As an Agency we continued to strive for greater participation by all our stakeholders in the direction and development of the organisation.

This was notably through the work we did in preparation for our Inspection by LILAC (Leading Improvements for Looked After Children) who as part of a National Voice looked at our services towards the end of the year as a result we were awarded a 6 which is the second highest award.

Following on from this we intend continuing the Young People Group to guide us through further participative actions

In addition we surveyed Carers Panel Members and Children and instituted a number of practice improvements as a result.

Our Carer Support Groups and Carer Contact Groups continued throughout the year and both added to the participative processes.

We were also awarded Investors in People Gold Award.

Inspection.

"Fostering Relations Ltd are committed to providing high quality foster care. Overall, we found that the outcomes for children, young people and foster carers were very good."

We were inspected in June and received grades of 4 and 5 against most Quality Statements with no Recommendations or Requirements.

Following on from this we worked hard to tackle the suggested areas for improvement and this effort we hope will result in sustained improvements to our practice.

The Rest.

The persistent recruitment begun in 2013 continued in 2014 and we recruited 11 new carer households this allowed us to grow but in a measured way thus ensuring we could continue to provide good support to our existing carers.

This steady growth will continue and will mean that we change as an organisation however both I and the staff and carers are determined to retain the culture of the Agency in order to continue to benefit the children we look after

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