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**STATEMENT OF**

**PURPOSE**

**Barnardo’s Fostering Services**

**Region:** North Scotland

**Date:** June 2024

**Registered:** Fostering Agency

**Registration Body:** Care Inspectorate

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**Introduction**

**Legal Framework**

This Statement of Purpose has been developed in accordance with regulations, statutory guidance and National Minimum Standards as applying to fostering providers, including:

* Looked After Children (Scotland) Regulations 2009
* Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014
* Continuing Care (Scotland) Amendment Order 2019
* Children’s Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011
* United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024 (Coming into force into force on 16th July 2024)

As part of the regulatory requirement, a copy of the Statement of Purpose will be provided to the Care Inspectorate and will be placed on Barnardo’s website. The document is also available on request to: staff, placing Authorities, foster parents, prospective foster parents and children.

This Statement of Purpose has been prepared in accordance with these requirements and will be a useful source of information to Barnardo’s staff, foster carers and prospective foster carers, children and young people who are placed with the fostering service, and also to colleagues from other agencies.

This Statement of Purpose is reviewed and updated on a regular basis, and at least annually.

**Barnardo’s Status and Constitution**

Barnardo’s is a company limited by guarantee (registered in Scotland under number 61625) and is a registered charity SCO 37605. It was also registered as a trust corporation on 16 December 1926. Its governing instrument is the Memorandum and Articles of Association, most recently amended by special resolution passed on 17 July 2001.

Barnardo’s Scotland Fostering Edinburgh and Barnardo’s Scotland Fostering Glasgow are part of the Barnardo's Family Placement Service.

The Head of Service is Brenda Farrell.

Head Office Address:

Barnardo’s Tanners Lane Ilford, Essex IG6 1QG

Telephone: 0191 2404800

**Aims, Objectives and Outcomes**

**Aims**

Barnardo’s Fostering Service is a leading national independent fostering agency, providing fostering and short break services across England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland.

We aim to achieve high quality, stable placements for children and young people by ensuring that foster carers are appropriately recruited, assessed, trained, and supported within the required regulations and national minimum standards.

**Objectives and Outcomes**

1. To protect children and young people from abuse and neglect.

2. To recruit, assess, support and train carers to provide a range of fostering placements for children who are unable to live with their birth families.

3. To provide short break care for children and young people with a learning and / or physical disability or

complex health needs living with their birth families.

4. To ensure that foster carer recruitment strategies and initiatives are targeted appropriately so that children and young people have the opportunity of living within a family which values, recognizes and supports their ethnic origin, cultural heritage, and religion.

5. To provide support, regular supervision, and training opportunities to equip foster carers in meeting the complex needs of children placed.

6. To ensure that all regulatory and minimum standard requirements are met in relation to the approval, review and supervision of carers and placement of children, and to monitor that they are being met via quality assurance processes.

7. To provide an out-of-hours contact service for foster carers.

8. To promote secure attachments and placement stability for children and young people to achieve better outcomes for children’s health, education, employment, and future independence.

9. To prepare young people adequately for when they leave their foster family and create lifelong attachments with foster carers.

10. To maintain and promote contact between children placed and their birth families and or significant others and communicate effectively with parents as appropriate.

11. To promote positive working relationships / partnerships between Barnardo’s fostering, adoption and short break services and Local Authorities or trusts to facilitate communication and promote good practice for the benefit of children and young people who are placed by the service.

12. To ensure that the Fostering Panel operates according to guidelines laid down by legislation and regulations in relation to carer approvals, reviews, allegations, and complaints.

13. To ensure that the way in which the Service develops considers the views and wishes of its carers, the foster children in placement and staff by encouraging feedback from staff, foster carers, looked after children and birth children.

14. To ensure continuous improvement and development of the fostering services through regular training for staff around changes to legislation and regulations and identifying the needs and type of specialist placements required.

**Service Registration Details**

**Name and address of the Registered Provider**

Barnardo’s Scotland Fostering North

20 Carden Place

Aberdeen

AB10 1UQ

**Name and address of the Responsible Individual**

Fiona Hogg

Barnardo’s Scotland Fostering North

20 Carden Place

Aberdeen

AB10 1UQ

The relevant qualifications and experience of the Registered Manager

Fiona is a qualified Social Worker, B.A Applied Social Studies, Certification of Qualification in Social Work with 33 years’ experience. This has included work as Children and Families Social Worker, Supervising Social Worker, Foster/ Kinship and Through Care Panel Member, Team Manager and Registered Manager.

She has significant experience in both statutory Social Work and Fostering and Adoption experience with Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council and the last 6 years with Barnardo’s Fostering.

**Service Staff Structure**

**Anne Whyte**

Assistant Head of Business

Full Time

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**Fiona Hogg**

Operations Manager

Full Time

Child & Adult Psychotherapist

Part Time

P

Practice Manager

Full Time

Practice Manager

Full Time

Admin Manager

Full Time

Supervising Social Worker

Full Time

Supervising Social Worker

Full Time

Administrator

Full Time

Supervising Social Worker

Full Time

Supervising Social Worker

Full Time

Administrator

Part Time

Supervising Social Worker

Part Time

Supervising Social Worker

Part Time

Children’s Worker

Full Time

Supervising Social Worker

Part Time

Children’s Worker

Full Time

**Roles and Qualifications**

**Operations Managers/Registered Managers**

Our professionally qualified Social Workers registered with the SSSC.

Operations Managers/ Registered Managers are responsible for the overall operation of the fostering services to foster carers, children, and young people.

The Operations/Registered Managers are responsible for budgetary control and are involved with the development and implementation of the strategic aims and objectives of the organisation. The Operations/Registered Managers are responsible for the management of Practice Managers and Admin Manager, sit on Panel as Panel Advisor, ensure all policies and procedures are up to date, complete audits of the service to ensure a high standard, and monitor and advise on serious complaints and allegations ensuring appropriate procedures are followed and safeguards are in place.

**Practice Managers**

Our professionally qualified Social Workers registered with the SSSC and are responsible for the supervision and management of the FP Social Workers and Children’s Workers. Practice Managers are involved in developing training and supporting services for foster carers, alongside responsibilities for recruitment and assessment and audits. In the absence of an Operations Manager, they sit on Panel as Panel Advisor.

**Child and Adolescent Psychotherapist**

Provides psychotherapy sessions to young people, with the agreement of the responsible authority, the young person, and carers on a one-to-one basis. Work undertaken in partnership with management team and Supervising Social Workers to develop trauma informed practice and therapeutic relationships with carers and children and young people. The post also supports training, develop attachment, trauma informed and therapeutic toolkits for practitioners and carers, to promote better and sustainable outcomes for children and young people.

**Supervising Social Workers (SSW)**

Our qualified Social Workers registered with the SSSC and undertake the assessment, support, and annual review of foster carers. SSW’s work in partnership with the looked after child’s Social Worker to promote good outcomes. SSW’s also support training, coordinate support groups, and cover the out-of-hours support service.

**Supervising Social Work Assistant**

Our non-qualified workers, undertaking duty services in respect of enquiries and referrals across Scotland wide.

**Children’s Workers**

Provides therapeutic support to children and young people either on a one-to-one basis or in groups. One to one work can include helping to build a child’s confidence and self-esteem, life story work, understanding emotions and supporting them to achieve an SQA. The Children’s Worker also runs activity groups each year which often includes a residential trip. They are involved in work relating to The Promise, UNCRC and EDI.

**Recruitment Officer**

Responsible for recruitment of Foster Carers, managing advertising and targeted recruitment and retention. The role is responsible for marketing, recruitment, and retention information analysis, and working closely with senior management team to develop and implement recruitment strategies.

**Administration Manager**

The Administration Manager undertakes financial duties in the fostering service including invoicing, carer payments, credit control and accounts payable. The role provides support to the management team, and often, they are also the Panel Administrator. The Administration Manager is responsible for health and safety and ensures that the office remains a safe working environment with appropriate risk assessments completed by staff. The Administration Manager supervises the Administration team.

**Administrators**

Undertake a wide range of admin tasks to support the work of the service such as inputting and monitoring of statistical data, coordinating training, ensuring all checks and repeat checks are completed.

**Services Provided**

**Placement Types**

**Emergency**

We have carers who can provide unplanned / emergency placements for individual children or sibling groups.

**Short Breaks**

We have foster carers who provide short break placements either on a regular basis or one- off holiday breaks. These can be for children living at home with their birth parents, children within our full-time placements or children from other fostering agency placements.

**Interim**

Short-term placements can last for up to two years, while long-term plans are being formulated.

**Long-term/Permanency**

Placements are available with long-term foster carers who can take individual children or sibling groups. Long-term placements are matched in accordance with placing authority procedures.

**Disabled Children and Young People**

We provide enhanced placements for children and young people who have severe learning difficulty, a physical disability or who need complex medical care. The team has extensive experience in making successful long-term placements as well as supporting children on a short break basis.

**Parent and Child**

We can provide placements for parents who are under 18-years-old, so that they can receive support in developing parenting skills. Foster carers can assist Local Authorities with their assessments by providing information relating to parenting capacity/capabilities.

**Solo Placements**

Solo placements are offered to children who could be a risk to other children and young people, or whose behaviour is so challenging that carers cannot offer enough support if other children are present.

**Sibling Placements**

Many of our carers can care for sibling groups to enable children to stay together.

**Continuing Care**

These are to enable young people to remain in their foster placement post 18 to support their transition into adulthood.

**Recruitment, Approval, Review and Support for Foster Carers**

This section provides information on the procedures for recruiting, preparing, assessing, approving, and supporting prospective foster carers.

Barnardo’s policies, procedures and standards for the recruitment and assessment of foster carers are in line with required regulations and standards for fostering services.

**Enquiries**

On receiving an enquiry from a prospective foster carer, the Service requests basic information and sends out an information pack containing material about Barnardo’s, the Service and fostering generally. An initial home visit is then arranged by a FP Social Worker from the Service to discuss in more detail the work of the Service, to find out more about the enquirer and to answer any queries or concerns the enquirer may have. A decision will be reached as to whether the prospective foster carer wishes to and is suitable to proceed.

**Assessment and Approval**

If a prospective foster carer is deemed suitable and wishes to proceed, a Registration of Interest form will be completed together with an application form with written consents to enable the Fostering Service to ascertain their suitability to foster.

The process for assessing a person’s suitability to foster consists of two parts. This is referred to as **Stage 1** and **Stage 2.**

These stages can be carried out concurrently, but the information for **Stage 1** must be sought as soon as possible, and the decision about whether an applicant has successfully completed Stage 1 must be made within 10 working days of all the information required in that stage being received by the fostering agency.

**Stage 1**

The information gathered in Stage 1 includes:

1. Full details of the applicant(s) and all household members as well as any children of the applicants living elsewhere.

2. Checks undertaken with the police via the Disclosure/Police Checks/ Access NI on all household members 16 years and over, as well as with the Department of Health, Social Services, and any other relevant agency, for example Health, Education, NSPCC, Care Inspectorate, previous fostering and adoption agencies.

3. Disclosure checks may also be undertaken on any other regular visitor to the household who may have care of foster children when placed. These checks are repeated every three years.

4. The applicant is required to have a medical examination which is completed by their GP, who sends the completed Medical Report to Barnardo’s Regional Medical Adviser for comments about the applicant(s)’ health.

5. The applicant is also asked to name three to six personal referees from which a minimum of three will be selected to provide written references and who will also be interviewed as part of the approval process. Where appropriate we also ask for

permission to approach the applicant’s current or past employer. Adult children and

previous partners will also be contacted.

Stage 1 of the assessment process is intended to provide the decision maker with basic information about the applicant’s suitability (or not) to proceed to Stage 2 of the assessment in which more detailed information is collected.

**Stage 2**

If it is decided to undertake Stage 2 of the assessment, the fostering service is to obtain the information about the applicant set out in Part 2 of Schedule

1. Details of personality and life experiences.

2. Religious persuasion and capacity to care for a child from any particular religious persuasion.

3. Racial origin, cultural and linguistic background, and capacity to care for a child from any particular racial origin or cultural or religious background.

4. Past and present employment or occupation, standard of living, leisure activities and interests.

5. Previous experience (if any) of caring for their own and other children.

6. Skills, competence, and potential relevance to their capacity to care effectively for a child placed with them.

A qualified and experienced FP Social Worker will carry out the assessment by visiting the applicant(s)’ home and meet with all members of the family and collate information about the applicant(s)’ experience and skills. The information from the FP Social Worker’s visits will be collated and forms the basis of an assessment report (Coram BAAF Form F). This report is shared and discussed with the applicants.

During the assessment preparation period, training – Skills to Foster - is provided by the Service. This training includes the role and responsibilities of foster carers, working with different agencies, safer caring, allegations and child development. All applicants are required to attend.

The completed assessment report is presented to the Barnardo’s Scotland Fostering (North) Panel. Applicants are expected to attend the Panel.

The Panel will then make a recommendation about the suitability of the applicants to be approved as foster carers. These will be passed to a Senior Manager in Barnardo’s, who is nominated as the organisation’s ‘Agency Decision Maker’, who has the final decision about approval on behalf of Barnardo’s.

Applicants are informed, in writing, of the Agency Decision Maker’s final decision.

**Foster Carer Reviews**

Reviews take place by Barnardo’s Fostering Service, in line with regulative requirements regulation 25 and 26 of Looked After Children (Regulation) 2009.

A first review must take place within 12 months after approval and subsequent reviews take place every 12 months thereafter. Barnardo’s must be satisfied that the foster carers continue to meet the required standards set out in Regulation 26 of Looked After Children (Regulation) 2009.

Reviews may also take place at other times for example as a result of a request to change

the terms of approval; following a serious complaint, allegation of abuse, or other matters of serious / safeguarding concern; in response to a significant change of circumstances, such as a carer’s adult child returning home, relationship problems or separations, significant health issues, pregnancy, etc.

**Foster Carer Support**

Barnardo’s Fostering Service values the work that foster carers do and the contribution they make to the lives of children and young people in their care. The key to a successful placement is the quality of support that foster carers receive. Barnardo’s Fostering Service offers the following support to all our carers:

1. Supervision and support from a named, qualified, and experienced FP Social Worker, Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm.

2. Access to a fostering help and advice out of office hours support telephone line.

3. Frequent visits, (minimum of once per month), negotiated with the carer and regular telephone contact from the FP Social Worker, including at least two unannounced visits per year.

4. Regular support group meetings and / or buddy support.

5. Mockingbird constellations, a unique peer-to-peer carers support model in Scotland that nurtures the relationship between children, young people and foster families supporting them to build a resilient and caring communities.

6. Events for children in placement, carers’ children, and carers.

7. Support/activity groups for carers of children.

8. Comprehensive post-approval training.

9. Where appropriate, and where in line with the child’s care plan, a short break service to provide alternative experiences / respite for the child and a short break for the main carer.

10.Good quality liaison and working arrangements with Local Authorities including attendance at relevant meetings such as Education (PEP) and Looked After Child reviews.

11. A level of financial support that values and recognises carer’s skills, achievements and

time including a foster care fee and fostering allowance.

12. Links can be offered to approved foster carers to share experiences and receive advice and support.

**Foster Carer Training**

Barnardo’s Fostering Service recognizes that fostering is an extremely complex and demanding job, and we are committed to providing high quality training that is accessible and relevant to all our foster carers.

Training is provided to help foster carers develop their fostering role, to improve knowledge and to define and refine the skills they already have. The training is delivered within an explicit value base which promotes equality of opportunity and recognises and celebrates diversity. It seeks to ensure that all carers are competent and confident in providing safe care and in protecting children from harm.

Foster carers are supported to complete their mandatory training within 24 months of approval.

Training is offered throughout a carer’s career with Barnardo’s Fostering Service and incorporates a range of topics which evolve with changes in practice, legislation and needs, examples of which are:

* Child/adult protection
* Recording
* First aid
* Managing difficult behaviour
* Attachment
* Bereavement and loss
* Health and safety
* Relationships and sexual health
* Sexual exploitation
* Resilience building
* Life story work
* Managing and promoting contact
* Child development
* Equal opportunities
* Drugs and alcohol awareness
* Education and health
* Anti-radicalization

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

There are a range of systems in place to monitor and evaluate the provision of Barnardo’s fostering services, to ensure they are effective and that the quality is of an appropriate standard.

The following mechanisms are in place to monitor and evaluate the service:

* Carers’ Annual Reviews
* Carers’ feedback
* Children’s feedback
* Child’s Social Worker feedback
* Birth parent feedback
* Carers’ supervision
* Staff supervision
* Annual staff appraisals
* File Audit
* Quarterly performance reviews by the Assistant Head of Business
* External Monitoring via LA / Trust / Framework monitoring processes
* External monitoring via the Care Inspectorate

**Complaints, Allegations and Whistleblowing**

Whistleblowing is the reporting of a concern in the public interest that something is happening within Barnardo’s that should not be, or not happening that should be. It is based on the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (PIDA).

Barnardo’s is committed to the highest standards of openness, integrity, accountability and practice and concerns can be raised via the Whistleblowing process.

For details on where to report a concern see Section 8 – Other Contacts.

**Complaints**

The aim of Barnardo’s complaints process is to resolve a complaint at the most informal level possible.

Complaints can be made in writing or orally to any member of staff up to and including the

CEO.

Complainants and staff subject to complaints are kept informed of the progress of the investigation and any associated procedures subject to normal staff confidentiality.

The stages to managing any complaint are:

1. Stage 1 Local Resolution

2. Stage 2 Independent Investigation

3. Stage 3 Review of Process

**Stage 1 Local Resolution**

This stage will be conducted by the line manager of the person or service being complained about. At the outset the complainant must be asked for their desired outcome.

Stage 1 should normally be completed within 10 working days.

**Stage 2 Independent Investigation**

The investigation should be completed within 25 workdays from the date of the agreement that it should take place. Extensions can be given if agreed by the lead manager, the Complaints Officer and complainant and the reasons for delay must be recorded.

**Stage 3 Review of Process**

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the independent investigation (Stage 2) they or their advocate can request review of how this was undertaken, and their representation considered.

**Other Routes of Complaint**

Where a service is registered with an external body (e.g. Care Inspectorate or Ofsted), complainants may directly approach the relevant regulatory body at any stage. The regulatory body has the power to investigate the complaint itself or require Barnardo’s or the relevant local authority / trust to do so.

**Allegations Against Foster Carers/Staff**

Allegations made by a child (or on behalf of a child) will be followed up via Safeguarding. Procedures under ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’

As part of Working Together procedures, there is a section on Managing Allegations against People who Work with Children.

This applies to all people who work with children and includes foster carers. Further information can be provided if such a situation should arise.

**Regulation and Inspection of Services**

Barnardo’s Fostering Services are regulated under the Children Act 1989, the National Minimum Standards and Regulations for Fostering Services regulations 2011 and Fostering Services (Scotland) Regulations 2011 as amended by the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review and Fostering Services (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2013.

Barnardo’s Fostering Services are registered and inspected as an independent fostering

agency with the Care Inspectorate.

The Care Inspectorate is responsible for inspecting the fostering agency. They will also receive and investigate any complaints about the fostering agency.

Significant Incidents are reported to the Care Inspectorate under Schedule 7 of the Care fostering Services Regulations 2011.

In evaluating quality, a six-point scale is used, where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent.

The last inspection of Barnardo’s Scotland Fostering (North) was carried out by the Care Inspectorate in December 2022, with an overall outcome of Adequate (3); 1.1 Children, young people and adults and their caregiver families experience compassion, dignity, and respect (4), 1.2 Children, young people and adults get the most out of life (3), 1.3 Children, young people and adults’ health and wellbeing benefits from the care and support they experience (4), 1.4 Children, young people and adults and their caregiver families get the service that is right for them (3), 2.2 Quality Assurance and improvement are well led (3), 3.2 Staff have the right knowledge, competence, and development to support children, young people, adults, and their caregiver families (4), 5.1 Assessment and care planning reflects the outcomes and wishes of children, young people, and adults (4).

**Contact details**

Care Inspectorate

Address: Ground Floor, Right Wing, AB1, 48 Huntly Street, Aberdeen, AB10 1SH

Telephone:

Email: [enquiries@careinspectorate.com.](mailto:enquiries@careinspectorate.com)

**Other Relevant Contact Details**

**Whistleblowing**

Safecall are our Whistleblowing service provider and their details are below. The link [here](https://inside.barnardos.org.uk/employee-and-volunteer-support/whistleblowing-policy) also takes through how we handle any reports we receive.   
 **How do I contact Safecall?**You can contact Safecall on 0800 915 1571 or online through the ‘[**Report a Whistleblowing Concern**](http://www.safecall.co.uk/barnardos)’.Your report won’t be traced and Safecall has trained operators to support you.

The service is free, confidential and open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

**Complaints**

Barnardo’s Head Office

Tanners Lane, Ilford, Essex, IG6 1QG

Telephone: 020 8550 8822

Email: [cs.complaints@barnardos.org.uk](mailto:cs.complaints@barnardos.org.uk)

**Children’s Commissioners**

[www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/](http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/)