



adopters
for adoption

Statement of Purpose – August 2022

Head of Service: Sally Heaven-Richards
Responsible Individual: Tracy Livesey

Senate House, Saxon Business Park, Hanbury Road, Bromsgrove Worcestershire, B60 4AD



Contents

1.	About Us	Page 3
2.	Agency Values	Page 4
3.	Aims & Objectives	Page 5
4.	Details of the Registered Provider	Page 6
5.	Details of the Registered Manager & Responsible Individual	Page 7
6.	Organisational Structure	Page 9
7.	Qualifications & Experience	Page 10
8.	Services Offered	Page 11
9.	The Adoption Process	Page 12
10.	Monitoring & Evaluation	Page 18
11.	Comments, compliments & complaints	Page 19
12.	Details of the Registration Authority	Page 21



where life begins
and love never ends

1. About Us

Adopters for Adoption is a national voluntary adoption agency (VAA) that was founded in 2014. It was set up by people with first-hand experience of adoption to improve the way adopters are recruited, prepared, assessed and supported.

Our aim is not just to find homes for children or children for adopters, but to create loving, stable, and well-supported families that thrive. We do this by putting both children and prospective adopters at the centre of our thinking.

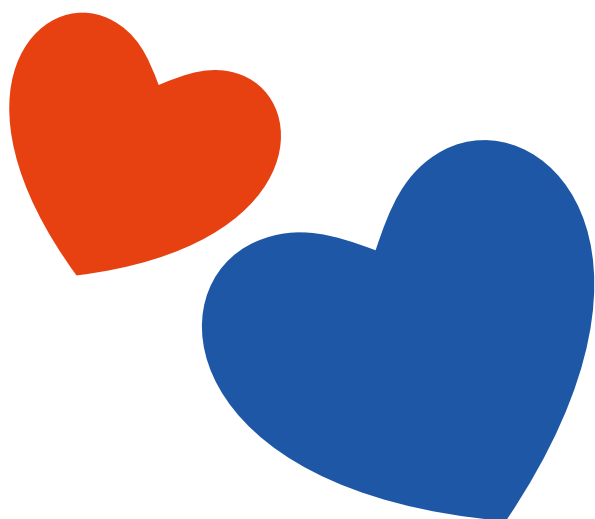
Our commitment to children waiting for an adoptive family is to deliver the best possible outcomes and reduce delays in the adoption process. Our agency is also dedicated to making adoption a positive, timely experience for prospective adopters and providing valuable, effective adoption support to adoptive parents and their children.

We believe many potential adopters rule themselves out, even before applying. There are many misconceptions about who can adopt; it is our job to challenge those misconceptions and encourage applications from a wide range of people.

At Adopters for Adoption we work closely as a team, calling on each other for support and guidance to offer our prospective adopters the best possible experience. We have members of the team who have experienced adoption either as adoptive parents or as adopted people that offer a unique insight into adoption.

We are a friendly, approachable and trustworthy team that treats all prospective adopters with respect and kindness.

Adopters for Adoption is a part of the Polaris Community, one of the UK's largest leading communities of children's service providers.



“Prospective Adopters are not discriminated against because of any specific individual characteristics. For example, there are older adopters, single adopters and adopters in same-sex relationships.”

Ofsted, 2018 Inspection

2. Agency Values

Our values are a set of beliefs that guide us and motivate us. These values help us to keep heading in the right direction and influence the actions we take. As a voluntary adoption agency, our values are underpinned by the Adoption National Minimum Standards (2014).

At Adopters for Adoptions we believe:

- The safety, needs and welfare of the child should be at the center of the adoption process. Whilst we aim to be an inclusive agency and rule adopters in rather than out, the safety, needs, and welfare of the child are at the forefront of any decisions we make.
- Every adopted child should have an enjoyable childhood leading to a successful adult life. They should benefit from excellent parenting and education and should have a wide range of opportunities to develop their talents and skills.
- Every adopted child deserves a loving family that can meet their developmental needs throughout their life.
- The wishes and feelings of the child are important and will be actively sought and taken into account at all stages of the adoption process.
- Delays can have a severe impact on the health and development of children awaiting adoption so should be minimised or avoided altogether.
- Every child should have a sense of identity. To help them develop their sense of identity we will recognise, value, and positively promote their ethnic origin, cultural background, religion, language and sexuality.
- The particular needs of disabled children and children with complex needs should be fully recognised and taken into consideration.
- The child, birth parent(s) or guardians, birth families, adoptive parent(s) and adoptive families should be treated with respect and should feel valued.
- The best outcomes for children are achieved when there is a partnership between all those involved in adoption including the government, local authorities and statutory agencies.



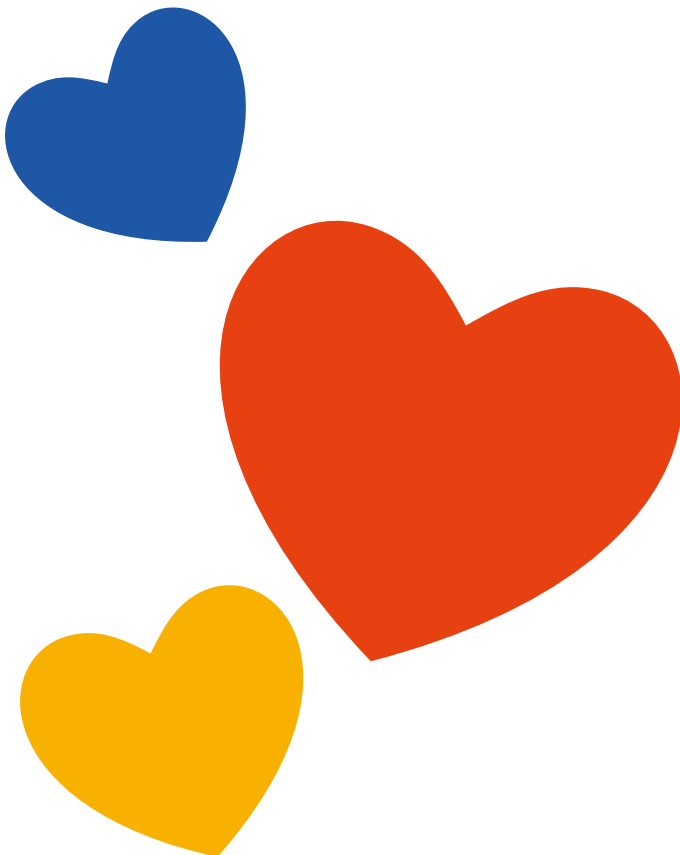
3. Aims & Objectives

Adopters for Adoption aims to:

- Provide permanent, loving and stable homes for children and young people who need to be adopted.
- Recruit, prepare, train and assess suitable and diverse families who can meet the needs of the children who need to be adopted.
- Provide adopters with the knowledge, skills and support to deliver excellent parenting.
- Fully support adoptive families through any challenges they might face.
- Educate adoptive parents on the importance of self-identity for adopted children.
- Educate potential adopters and their friends and families on the backgrounds of the children who need to be adopted and how to support them.
- Ensure all those involved in the adoption process are listened to and supported.

The objectives of Adopters for Adoption are:

- To build positive relationships with stakeholders such as local authorities, regional adoption agencies, steering groups and charities to provide the best outcomes for adopted children.
- To provide continued growth through infrastructure investment and developing relationships with local authorities and regional adoption agencies.
- To have a diverse range of approved adopters available for family finding.
- To minimise delays in the adoption process by working towards agreed time frames.
- To encourage those considering adoption to explore it further.
- To dispel the misconceptions and break down the barriers to adoption, encouraging applications from a more diverse range of people.
- To improve the service we offer by encouraging open and honest feedback from prospective adopters and those involved in the adoption process.
- To recruit, prepare, train and assess a diverse range of families who can meet the needs of children and young people who need to be adopted.
- To ensure prospective adopters are prepared and supported to promote the child's social and emotional development, enabling the child to develop emotional resilience and positive self-esteem.
- To improve the opportunities for children through adoption enabling them to reach their full potential.
- To facilitate the success of a placement by offering support and guidance to families after matching and during introductions.
- To ensure that children and young people feel heard and are provided with opportunities to voice their thoughts and feelings.
- To encourage sustainability of our services by setting and achieving annual targets and by allocating a budget annually.
- To make certain that our services remain driven by the adopter experience through open communication and opportunities for feedback.
- To maintain a commitment to high-quality services that focus on compliance and achieving the best outcomes for adopted children.



4. Details of the Registered Provider

Adopters for Adoption is a national voluntary adoption agency (VAA) registered with Ofsted to provide domestic adoption services and adoption support services to both children and adults. Our Ofsted reference number is SC476482. Adopters for Adoption Limited is a registered company in the UK, company number 08689629.

Adopters for Adoption is a subsidiary of Polaris – company number 06023385.

Our registered address is:

Adopters for Adoption
Senate House
Saxon Business Park
Hanbury Road
Bromsgrove
Worcestershire
B60 4AD

Telephone: 0800 5877 791

Email: contactus@adoptersforadoption.com

Website: www.adoptersforadoption.com



5. Details of the Registered Manager & Responsible Individual

Details of the Registered Manager:

Sally Heaven-Richards – Head of Service

Adopters for Adoption
Senate House
Saxon Business Park
Hanbury Road
Bromsgrove
Worcestershire
B60 4AD

Telephone: 01527 573700 / 0800 5877 791

Email: sally.heaven-richards@adoptersforadoption.com

Qualifications and experience of the registered manager:

- Certificate in Social Services (CSS)
- Diploma in Nursery Nursing (NNEB)
- Diploma in Management
- NVQ Level 4 Management

Head of Service, Sally Heaven-Richards, has always worked with children and families in a variety of settings, starting off her career as a Nursery Nurse straight after leaving school; including working in residential care, day nurseries and family centres. She has enjoyed the opportunity to manage a range of different services within local authorities and voluntary agencies, gaining management qualifications and experience along the way. Since qualifying as a social worker in 1991 she has worked mainly in family placement including assessing and training foster carers and adopters, family finding for children, supporting families and providing access to records. She joined Adopters for Adoption in 2018 as the Head of Service. Over the years Sally has had the chance to work within a diverse range of communities across the UK. She has been a vice-chair for a busy local authority panel and is currently an independent chair of an adoption panel in her spare time. Sally is a proud mother and grandmother and as an adopter herself, her passion lies with adoption; witnessing the fantastic outcomes that are possible and experiencing for herself what a joy it can be.

Details of the Responsible Individual:

Tracy Livesey - Managing Director (Polaris Community)

Adopters for Adoption

Senate House

Saxon Business Park

Hanbury Road

Bromsgrove

Worcestershire

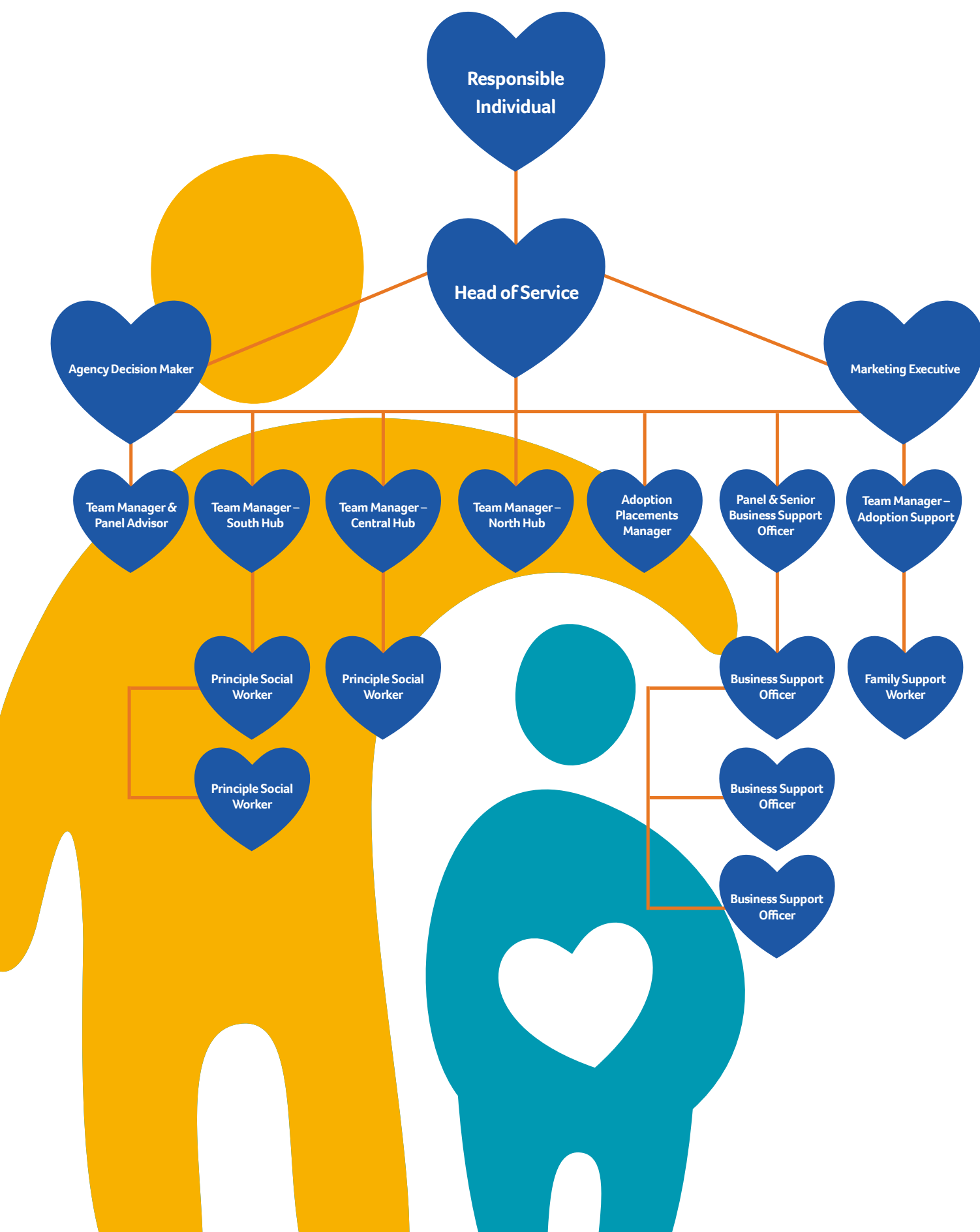
B60 4AD

Telephone: 01795 428097

Email: tracy.livesey@polariscommunity.co.uk



6. Organisational Structure



7. Qualifications & Experience

Adopters for Adoption employs 15 members of staff to support the agency in achieving its goals. Within the team, there are 8 qualified social workers, including the head of service.

Their qualifications include:

- Master's Degree in Social Work (MA)
- Bachelor's Degree in Social Policy with Social Work (BA Hons)
- Advanced Award in Social Work (AASW)
- Post Qualifying Award in Social Work (PQSW)
- Certificate of Qualification in Social Work (CQSW)
- Diploma in Social Work (DipSW)
- Certificate in Social Services (CSS)

Within the core team there are members of the following professional bodies:

- The British Association of Social Workers (BASW)
- The Professional Association for Children's Guardians, Family Court Advisers and Independent Social Workers (NAGALRO)

All social workers are registered with Social Work England with a minimum of three post-qualifying years of social work practice, which includes adoption; or they are supervised by a manager who has experience in adoption.

The agency also works with at least 35 independent experts including social workers, support workers and therapists to provide a national service.

Adopters for Adoption also employs an adoption support team manager and a family support worker who form the adoption support team.

The qualifications of the adoption support team include:

- Advanced Diploma in Counselling and Psychotherapy
- Diploma in Counselling Skills and Psychotherapy
- Level 3 Certificate in Counselling Skills
- Level 2 Certificate in Counselling Concepts
- Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Studies (BA Hons)

The services provided by Adopters for Adoption are supported by a team of business support officers, made up of 3 business support officers and a senior business support officer, as well as a dedicated adoption placements manager.

Members of the Adopters for Adoption team also have the following relevant training and qualifications:

- Level 4 Standard Triple P Training
- Level 4 Group Triple P Training
- Level 4 Group Teen Triple P Training
- Standard Teen Triple P Training
- Theraplay Level 1
- Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy Level 1 (DDP)
- Post-Qualifying Diploma Non-Directive Play Therapy
- Practice Teacher Award
- Level 3 in Health & Social Care (QCF)
- Level 5 in Leadership & Management for Health & Social Care (QCF)
- NVQ Level 3 in Customer Service

Adopters for Adoption employees have a combined experience of 250 years working with children and families, in fostering and adoption services within local authority social services departments, independent fostering providers and voluntary adoption agencies.

All staff, including independent experts, are provided with opportunities for further career development through supervision, consultations, training, surgeries and practice development opportunities.



8. Services Offered

The recruitment, preparation, training and assessment of prospective adopters to meet the needs of the diverse range of children waiting to be adopted. This includes:

- A three-day Preparation to Adopt training course for all prospective adopters in stage one.
- A two-day Preparation to Adopt training course for all prospective adopters in stage two.
- Access to further online training in areas such as safeguarding, cyberbullying, mental health and child development.
- Regular Friends and Family training events for friends and family members of the prospective adopters to learn how to support them and their adopted child/children.
- Support and guidance from a dedicated social worker throughout the adoption process.
- Opportunities to connect with approved adopters and prospective adopters.

Adoption Support, which includes:

- Access to adoption support surgeries for practical advice tips and resources.
- Telephone support and professional advice including an out-of-hours support line.
- Regular support groups and workshops for approved adopters and their children.
- Regular training events specifically relating to adoption issues.
- Opportunities for befriending other adopters.
- Access to an extensive range of online training courses.
- Regular visits and reviews from social workers and the local authority to check that the adoption is progressing positively and identify any areas of support, if necessary.
- Support and guidance in applying to the court for an Adoption Order.
- A free 12-month subscription to Adoption UK providing adoption support for approved adopters.
- Membership to New Family Social, offering adoption support services for approved LGBT+ adopters.
- Invitations to participate in events and activities organised by Adopters for Adoption.
- Bi-monthly newsletters with news and updates from the adoption community, resources, safeguarding advice, family support, and upcoming events for approved adopters and prospective adopters in stage two.
- Assisting adopted adults who were placed through Adopters for Adoption in seeking and accessing relevant information and support.

Family Finding

- Support and assistance from the adoption placements manager in finding the right child/children for each adoptive family.
- Working closely with local authorities and regional adoption agencies (RAAs) to identify suitable families for children waiting to be adopted.
- Guiding approved adopters in using the placement service Link Maker to find a suitable child for their family.



9. The Adoption Process



Initial Enquiry

At Adopters for Adoption we want to find suitable families for children who, for a range of reasons, cannot live with their birth families and know from personal experience how rewarding it can be. Rather than presenting unnecessary barriers, we want to encourage prospective adopters to take that first step and are ready and waiting to answer any questions to help enquirers find out if adoption is right for them.

Having originally been set up by trustees who had personal experience of adoption, we really do appreciate how difficult it can be for many people to make their first enquiry into adoption. For some, it has taken a long time to reach this point and it can require a lot of courage to take that first step, for others it can seem overwhelming or confusing. That's why we've tried to make it as easy as possible for prospective adopters to access the information they might need.

People interested in adoption can gain further information from our website, or by getting in touch with our enquiries team. They can access our detailed information pack, sign up for our bi-monthly online information events and submit an enquiry via the website. Alternatively, they can get in touch with us by telephone or email. Our friendly team will respond within 10 working days with further resources and invite enquirers to attend one of our upcoming information events.

If the enquirer(s) is happy with all the information and wish to proceed, they can apply to become an adopter with Adopters for Adoption. They can do this by requesting a registration of interest form (ROI). This will be sent to them electronically to be completed on their smart device, laptop, or computer or can be posted out on request.



Stage One

Upon receiving the completed registration of interest and signed consent form, one of our team managers will give the prospective adopter(s) a call to go through the details and explain the next steps.

After accepting the registration of interest form (ROI), we will invite the prospective adopters to start stage one of the process. We will then set about seeking the relevant checks and references that are required, allocate a social worker, and will agree on a date for the prospective adopter(s) to complete the Preparation to Adopt training.

There are a number of checks and references required when applying to adopt and it can seem intrusive but our team will be happy to explain the reasoning behind each of the checks and references if required. Our team will obtain the relevant checks and references on behalf of the prospective adopter(s), although they may at times require assistance from the prospective adopter(s).

Prospective adopter(s) will be notified when their social worker has been allocated and will be provided with their social worker's details as well as information on how to prepare for their first visit. The allocated social worker will be in touch within 7 working days to introduce themselves and arrange a date for the first visit. The social worker will visit 2-3 times during stage one.

The prospective adopter(s) will also be booked on to the three-day Preparation to Adopt training, which takes place each month and provides the prospective adopter(s) with the knowledge and skills needed to assist them on their adoption journey.

During stage one, the prospective adopter(s) will also be required to complete a medical assessment with their GP.

They will also be given various information guides, booklets, and documents to assist them with the adoption process.

The aim is to complete stage one of the process within 2 months of accepting the applicant's ROI form. Our team will carry out regular progress reviews to encourage the completion of stage one within the given timeframe. However, we will always move at a pace that is right for the prospective adopter(s).

At the end of stage one, a report will be produced by the social worker on the prospective adopter(s)'s suitability to adopt. This will be reviewed by a team manager at Adopters for Adoption and a decision will be made on whether to invite the prospective adopter(s) to proceed to stage two of the process. The prospective adopter(s) will be notified in writing of the decision made. If the decision is made not to invite them to stage two, they will be given the reasons why and recommendations on how to strengthen their application.

It is at this point in the process, between stages one and two, that the prospective adopter(s) can choose to take a break of up to six months, without having to start the process again.



Stage Two

Stage two commences when Adopters for Adoption receives confirmation of the prospective adopter(s)'s decision to proceed. The aim is to complete stage two within 4 months. If the prospective adopters have opted to take a break we will ask them to provide a date for when they would like to recommence the process.

The social worker will contact the prospective adopter(s) to arrange a preliminary visit to discuss the outcomes from stage one and identify areas to work on for stage two. There will be approximately 5-7 visits from the social worker during stage two. The social worker will also visit 3 of the prospective adopter(s)'s referees at this stage, two friends and one family referee.

During stage two the allocated social worker will prepare a prospective adopters report (PAR) to be presented to the adoption panel and a date for the panel will be confirmed. The PAR is a detailed report that covers life experiences, family background, relationships, current circumstances, lifestyle and motivations to adopt.

Further training will also be undertaken by the prospective adopter(s) during this stage. This will include a two-day preparation to adopt course, which covers areas such as matching, introductions and life story work. There will also be training opportunities for friends and family members of the prospective adopter(s) to learn how to support them and their adopted child(ren).

Once the social worker has completed the PAR, at the end of stage two, it will be reviewed by a principle social worker and quality assured by a team manager at Adopters for Adoption. The PAR will then be sent to the prospective adopters to review and sign.

The prospective adopters and their social worker are invited to attend the adoption panel where the PAR is presented to the adoption panel who take all of the information into account before making their recommendation. The panel chair informs the prospective adopter(s) of their recommendation on the day and makes a formal recommendation about their suitability to adopt to the agency decision maker. The agency decision maker will make the final decision within 7 working days. The prospective adopters(s) is informed of the decision verbally, within 2 working days and receive a letter of confirmation within 5 working days.

Following a positive recommendation from panel, the prospective adopter(s) will meet with the adoption placements manager who will provide them with further information on linking and matching and will assist them with family finding.

In the unlikely event that panel concludes that they do not have sufficient information in order to reach a recommendation, they would make clear what information is required in order to reach a recommendation and a new panel date would be scheduled.

If for any reason the panel were to recommend that the prospective adopter(s) is not suitable to adopt they would be provided with the reasons why and would be informed of their right to appeal or to make representations to the Independent Review Mechanism (IRM).



Family Finding

Following approval, the prospective adopter(s) meet with our adoption placements manager to start identifying the children that would be best suited to them and to find out more about these children and their backgrounds. This is typically done through the placement service Link Maker but there are also activity days that provide opportunities to meet children waiting to be adopted and exchange days that involve meeting with social workers to discuss the profiles of children waiting to be adopted.

The prospective adopter(s) are encouraged to join Link Maker and create a profile for themselves which will allow the children's social workers to find out more about them and contact them if they think they would be a good match for a child they are supporting. The prospective adopter(s) will also be able to view children's profiles on Link Maker and express an interest in the children that they believe might be a good match for them.

This can be a difficult part of the process to come to terms with as typically this is when the prospective adopter(s) see the profiles and faces of the children waiting to be adopted and details of why they need adopting for the first time. However, their social worker and the adoption placements manager are always on hand to offer support and guidance.

Once a potential match has been identified and information has been shared, the child(ren)'s social worker will usually meet with the prospective adopter(s) and their social worker to find out further information and to decide whether to proceed.

When a link has been made between the prospective adopter(s) and the child(ren), then they will be invited to attend another panel with the local authority who currently has care of the child(ren). If the decision is made by the local authority panel to proceed then a plan for introductions between the child(ren) and the prospective adopter(s) will be made.

The introductions are arranged to suit the child(ren)'s individual needs and will involve the prospective adopter(s) getting to know the child(ren) where they are currently living (typically with foster carers), before transitioning them to their new home.

We are experienced in placing children from all over the UK with families throughout the UK and will offer extensive support during the introductions and the early weeks of the placement. Typically the introductions will take place over a few weeks but every child responds differently and we will move at their pace.



Adoption Support

Adoption Support is provided from the day of placement and is designed to help families and children settle in, get to know each other better and begin forming close attachments to one another. Extensive support is provided during the introductory period and early weeks of placement. Support continues to be provided at a level and frequency in accordance with assessed and agreed needs. The adopter(s) will receive regular visits from their social worker and the local authority social worker for their child(ren), as well as regular reviews which are carried out by the local authority to check on the progress of the adoption placement.

In situations where a placement is not going well and is at risk of disruption, we will do everything we can to support those involved. We never underestimate the impact that a breakdown of placement can have on the child(ren), the adoptive family, and their wider support networks, so we encourage our families to consider this only as a last resort. In very rare circumstances when a placement sadly does come to an end, we will endeavour to support all parties involved.

The aim of adoption is to provide a child with a permanent family, with parents who hold full parental responsibility. Eventually, when our adopters feel ready, we support them to make an application to the court to adopt. A report is prepared for the court where a Judge has the authority to grant an Adoption Order. An adoption certificate is provided shortly after the court hearing that replaces the child(ren)'s birth certificate. An Adoption Order is an irrevocable order, providing adopters with full parental responsibility.

Adoption Support remains available to our adopters for as long as they want or need it. After the Adoption Order is granted it is made available at their request. We encourage our adopters to keep in touch with us and to continue attending training, support groups, and social activities. Unless we receive a request not to, we will continue to send regular newsletters and invitations to all of our families. Many of our adopters enjoy returning to speak to other adopters about their experiences, getting involved in activities or helping us to promote the services that we offer.

In addition to the standard adoption support (details of this can be found under section 8. Services Offered), we also offer a range of distinctive adoption support packages called Safer Stronger Families. This can be provided with additional funding, normally following an assessment of need and an application by the local authority to the Adoption Support Fund (government funding to support adopters). If a family feels that support is needed, they have the right to request an assessment from the Local Authority, who can then submit an application for an Adoption Support Fund.



10. Monitoring and Evaluation



There are a number of processes and procedures in place to continually monitor and evaluate the services we provide to ensure that they are effective and of a high standard. This includes regular feedback, scheduled reviews, observations and inspections.

Feedback

- Written feedback is requested from prospective adopters at various key points in the process including after attending an information event, making an enquiry, completing stage 1, completing stage 2, attending adoption panel, attending training courses, family finding and accessing adoption support.
- Feedback is also obtained from staff, independent social workers, panel members and observers throughout the various stages of the adoption process.
- Regular team meetings are held for members of staff to give feedback.
- Any feedback by and to panel members is shared with them on a monthly basis in the form of a snapshot.
- Any feedback relating to individuals is discussed with them as part of their appraisal process.
- Any compliments and complaints received are presented at the monthly board meeting and discussed during team meetings to identify areas for improvement.
- Quarterly meetings are held with independent social workers to share any procedure and policy updates, discuss practice issues and obtain feedback and suggestions.

Recording and reviewing

- All records kept are regularly monitored by the managers to ensure compliance with the agency's policies and to identify any concerns, patterns or trends.
- Timescales between actions in the adoption process are measured and reported on in the monthly board meeting.
- Any reasons for withdrawal from the adoption process are recorded and evaluated.
- The agency maintains a record of all notifiable and critical incidents as well as complaints and compliments received. These are discussed at the monthly board meeting.

- There is an annual review process in place for prospective adopters that have not had a child placed with them or where there have been significant changes in circumstances since approval. The review will identify if any checks (such as medicals and DBS) are still valid, if there have been any changes in circumstances, if contact and support from the agency had been sufficient and if there are any areas for improvement.
- A biannual adoption panel review report is issued by the panel chair evaluating the effectiveness of the panel and reflecting on the feedback.
- A panel review meeting takes place quarterly.
- A review of the performance of all central list and panel members takes place annually.
- An annual business review and development plan is produced and shared with team members.
- A service improvement plan is produced annually and reviewed monthly.
- The statement of purpose is reviewed annually and updated in line with any service improvements.
- Weekly management meetings are held in which feedback, compliments and complaints are discussed.
- Staff supervisions are carried out on a monthly basis.
- A Board of Directors oversees the governance of Adopters for Adoption. The Board holds quarterly meetings to review management information including risk logs, financial information, service activity and progress towards outcomes. This enables them to monitor performance against targets and take corrective action, where required.

Observations and inspections

- Any work carried out by independent social workers will be overseen by a principle social worker or team manager at Adopters for Adoption.
- The head of service, responsible individual and agency decision maker regularly observe the adoption panel.
- Any new panel members and agency staff are invited to observe the adoption panel.
- The services provided by Adopters for Adoption are regulated by Ofsted and an inspection is carried out approximately every 3 years.



11. Comments, compliments and complaints

As an agency, we are always keen to improve the services we offer and welcome any comments and feedback on our agency and its services. There are several stages in the adoption process in which we request written feedback. However, we would encourage feedback and comments whenever possible and in a way that feels most comfortable to the individual. We value all feedback and will use this to improve our services. Please be assured that no person will be subject to any reprisal, neither will the service they receive be reduced, as a result of any comments or feedback they make.

Any comments, compliments, or complaints can be made face to face, by written letter, email, or telephone call to any member of the Adopters for Adoption team. See our office contact details below.

Our registered address is:

Adopters for Adoption
Senate House
Saxon Business Park
Hanbury Road
Bromsgrove
Worcestershire
B60 4AD

Telephone: 0800 5877 791

Email: contactus@adoptersforadoption.com

Website: www.adoptersforadoption.com

Any comments, compliments or complaints, including those about individual members of staff can be made directly to Sally Heaven-Richards, Head of Service by emailing sally.heaven-richards@adoptersforadoption.com.

Any complaints about the Head of Service, Sally can be sent to the Responsible Individual for Adopters for Adoption, Tracy Livesey at tracy.livesey@polariscommunity.co.uk.

Comments

We encourage feedback from anyone who uses our services and provide opportunities for written feedback at several points within the adoption process. We welcome any comments or suggestions about our agency and our services at any time.

Compliments

It's always a pleasure to receive compliments about our agency, the services we offer, or individual team members who deserve recognition and praise. Any compliments made about individual team members are shared with them and they receive the recognition they deserve.

Complaints

All users of Adopters for Adoption's services have the right to make a representation or complaint about the services they have received. Users are advised of this right and are issued with the Representations and Complaints Procedure leaflet.

Children and young people are issued with an age-appropriate children's guide that contains information about their right to complain. The children's guides can also be found on our website.

Complaints may be made about any person who completes work on behalf of the agency, about the services provided, or about a failure to provide services that are reasonably expected. Please be assured that no person will be subject to any reprisal, and neither will the service they receive be reduced, as a result of making a complaint. We have a three-stage complaints process to ensure complaints are dealt with promptly and effectively.





Stage one – Informal problem solving

All complaints will be recorded to monitor, evaluate and improve the quality of our services. In the first instance, a team member will work with the complainant in an attempt to resolve the complaint promptly and with fairness. The head of service is made aware of all complaints both informal and formal.

The majority of complaints are resolved at this stage. However, if the complainant does not feel that the complaint has been fully resolved, they can request for it to be escalated to the next stage by responding to any letters they have received regarding the complaint or by contacting the complaints manager at Polaris on 01527 556480 or emailing contactus@polariscommunity.co.uk.

Stage two – Independent investigation

At this stage, the complaint will be passed to an independent investigator who has had no previous involvement with the complaint. This could be a member of the quality assurance team within Polaris or an external individual with relevant qualifications and experience. Any such appointment will be discussed with all parties, including the complainant, before the investigation begins.

The independent investigator will speak to the complainant in order to fully understand the complaint, will interview other people concerned, and will seek permissions to access any relevant paperwork relating to the complaint. A report detailing the independent investigator's findings and recommendations will be produced for the Polaris complaints manager.

The complaints manager will then write to the complainant to let them know the outcome and decisions made. If at this stage, the complainant still feels that the complaint has not been resolved, they can request that a complaints review panel be set up to consider the investigation and its findings.

Stage three – Complaints review panel

The panel will consist of an executive director and a senior manager within Polaris, who have not been involved with the complaint previously, and an individual independent of Polaris, who has the relevant qualifications and experience.

The date and time of the panel will be agreed with the complainant and they will be invited to give their views. They may attend with the support of another person but this may not be a legal representative as this is not a judicial hearing. The complainant will receive a verbal decision from the panel within 24 hours and a written response within 5 working days.

This is the final stage of our agency's representations and complaints procedure. If having been through our complaints process, the complainant still feel dissatisfied then they can contact our regulator, Ofsted. Ofsted investigates concerns to make sure that we as a registered agency continue to meet the National Minimum Standards and associated regulations and remain suitable for registration.

Please find more information about our complaints procedure in our Representations and Complaints Procedure leaflet which is issued to prospective adopters and can be found on our website www.adoptersforadoption.com. This can also be requested from us at any time.

12. Details of the Registration Authority

Details of the registration authority:

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

Telephone: 0300 123 1231

Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The services provided by Adopters for Adoption are regulated by Ofsted.

Ofsted is the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills. They inspect services providing education and skills for learners of all ages and regulate services that care for children and young people.



Contact Us

T: 0800 5877 791

E: contactus@adoptersforadoption.com

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for adoption