



8.14 Adoption Case Records (Adoption File and Memory Box)

SCOPE OF THIS CHAPTER

See [Access to Birth Records and Adoption Case Records Procedure](#).

Please see the following LCS guidance regarding adoption records

[Initial Enquiry](#)

[Adoption in the UK](#)

[Approval](#)

AMENDMENT

This chapter was revised in March 2013 and information about the Memory Box added.

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1. Opening an Adoption Case Record

1.1 Children

An Adoption Case Record, on LCS, for a child should be opened as soon as there is an adoption plan for the child i.e. once adoption has been identified as the permanence plan for the child at his or her Looked After Review or, where a child has been relinquished for adoption, as soon as the parent's request for adoption has been made. The Adoption Case Record is separate from the child's existing case record on LCS. Additionally a Memory Box should be started for a child, with original signed hard copies of some items.

The child's Looked After case record should indicate that a separate Adoption Case Record exists and must not include information in relation to the new identity or address of the child or any information whereby the child's pre and post-adoption identity could be linked. Such information should only be contained on the Adoption Case Record. This principle applies to information kept in whatever form - electronic, hard copy or microfilm. Particular vigilance is required where an adopted child has siblings who are looked after, but not adopted, as the cross over of identity may occur in error.

Where the plan relates to a group of siblings, there must be a separate Adoption Case Record for each child.

Care may be required to anonymise material and exceptionally exclude confidential information about third parties or provide separate sections so that information is provided 'in confidence and not for wider dissemination'.

1.2 Applicants to Adopt

An Adoption Case Record should also be opened for every prospective adopter as soon as a formal application has been received. In the case of a couple, a single case record can be set up for them both. This also applies to foster carers wishing to be considered as adopters.

2. Contents (includes Memory Box)

2.1 Children

The child's Adoption Case Record on LCS should contain the following information and documents, scanned into LCS:

1. Frontsheet/checklist for key biographical information and record of key actions taken resulting in an Adoption;
2. The child's original birth certificate and birth details (time, place, term, weight, type of delivery etc) with supporting evidence if available;
3. Description and details (including genogram) of the birth family and household set out in a [Child and Family Assessment](#) or other relevant document;
4. Photographs, certificates, other significant personal mementos and Life Story Book;
5. Completed Neo-natal and obstetric reports;
6. CoramBAAF Form A (completed by birth parents);
7. CoramBAAF Development Assessment Forms or equivalent;
8. The [Child's Permanence Report](#);
9. The [Prospective Adopter's Report](#) and [Adoption Placement Report](#);
10. The Adoption Support Plan;
11. The child's profile, Selection Meeting minutes and any other documents prepared and presented for the matching decision, including Matching Agreement;
12. Record of social work with child about adoption, including recording of direct work. This should include the date of every contact, whether the child was seen, issued discussed, child's views, analysis and evaluation of the content of the report. This will provide a record to inform current actions and a record for the young person in later years;
13. Details of siblings, together with any assessments and decisions to place brothers and sisters separately, including minutes of relevant meetings;
14. All relevant minutes and the Agency Decision Maker's decisions in relation to the child's adoption plan and placement, including records of discussions held by the Agency Decision Maker. Copies of all notifications of agency decisions will be sent to birth parents and adopters;
15. [Looked After Review](#) minutes and the child's [Care Plan](#) from the point when adoption was identified as the plan;
16. Details of any substitute carers (foster carers) prior to adoption placement;
17. Details of contact between the prospective adopter(s) and birth family or carer(s) prior to Adoption Order;
18. Assessments, correspondence and signed agreements relating to post-adoption contact;

19. Any other key correspondence to and from members of the child's birth family;
20. Minutes from Placement Planning Meetings;
21. Itemised List and copies of information supplied to child;
22. Itemised List and copies of information supplied to adopters;
23. Later Life letter/information from the birth parents to the child;
24. Later Life letter from the social worker outlining the circumstances of the adoption plan;
25. The Adoption Placement Plan and any amendments;
26. Reports of visits to the child post-placement and records of any [Adoption Review](#) meetings. As previously stated, this should provide sufficient detail to inform current actions but also enable the young person in future years to make sense of his/her history;
27. Court reports and other documents prepared for [Placement Order](#) applications (if applicable) and the adoption application;
28. Any Judgement;
29. Copies of Care Orders (including [Interim Care Orders](#));
30. Copy of any [Parental Consent to Adoptive Placement](#) and Parental Consent to the adoption and/or a copy of the Placement Order;
31. Copy of Adoption Order;
32. Any recording relating to requests for access to birth records by the adopted person or access to the Adoption Case Record by any person;
33. Any [Veto](#) - absolute or qualified - registered by the adopted person;
34. Minutes of any Disruption Meetings.

It is essential that all case records reflect the supervisory process and comprehensive management overview.

2.2 Memory Box

It is the responsibility of the child's social worker to ensure that the memory box is collated and passed to the adoptive parent(s) at point of placement. The social worker may pass it to the foster carer prior to this, but remains responsible for the handover and completion.

This list is not exhaustive and if it is felt an original hard copy would be of benefit to the child, in future years, it should be kept for him or her.

1. Key correspondence to and from members of the child's birth family to the child;
2. Original letters from parents;
3. CoramBAAF Obstetrics Form M/B;
4. Correspondence between the agency and birth family about the emerging plans for the adoption of the child;
5. Later Life Letter;
6. Original photographs, certificates, personal mementoes of early years;
7. Photographs, cards, open letters provided by birth family for the child specifically;
8. Original copy of Adoption Order, Birth Certificate, Passport, Final Court Orders, Trust documents.

2.3 Post Adoption Order

The child's social worker should close the LCS record in the child's pre-adoption name, making sure that there is not current identifying information e.g. **the surname of the adopter** remaining on the record.

If the Adoption Support Service provide a service at any time then a new LCS record must be opened in the child's new name. This record should include details of any adoption financial support

The social worker should send Post Adoption Agreement pack - (see [Post Adoption Agreements Procedure](#))

2.4 Applicants to Adopt

1. The prospective adopter's Adoption Case Record should contain all the information obtained about him or her in relation to the application for approval, including the Prospective Adopter's Report, photographs etc;
2. All relevant checks;
3. References;
4. All relevant Panel minutes and the Agency Decision-Maker's decisions in relation to the suitability of the adopters and the placement of the child with them;
5. Assessments, correspondence and signed agreements relating to post-adoption contact;
6. The [Adoption Placement Plan](#);
7. Itemised List and copies of information supplied to adopters;
8. Any other key correspondence;
9. Reports of visits to the adopters.

Note: Where the Adoption Service places a child with an adopter or adopters approved by another adoption agency, an Adoption Case Record for the prospective adopters must still be set up and maintained in the Adoption Service.

3. Security and Retention of Records

Adoption Case Records must be stored in secure conditions. Paper records should be kept in locked cabinets. Electronic records should be password protected.

In cases where an Adoption Order is made, children's Adoption Case Records will be retained for a minimum of 100 years after the Adoption Order is made. The Adoption Service Manager will first ensure that the Adoption Case Record is complete, and especially contains the 'Later in Life' letters and Post-Adoption Contact Agreements.

Where an Adoption Order is not made, children's Adoption Case Records should be transferred back to the child's Looked After record. Any duplicated information should be shredded.

Where an Adoption Order is not made, the prospective adopter's Adoption Case Record should be retained for 50 years.

Whenever it is necessary to send any part of an Adoption Case Record by post, either within or outside the Council, the information should be placed in a sealed plain envelope and marked 'PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL'. When the external post is necessary, then arrangements should be made for copies of relevant documents to be sent by recorded delivery.

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