

Adoption process flow chart

Every cared for child should have a Permanence Plan by the date of the second review, this may still be a triple or twin track plan at this time, where parents and/or family/friends are still being assessed. However, if the contingency includes a plan of adoption an early referral needs to be made to our Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) Together4Children (T4C). Where it is clear that children are unable to be cared for their birth family/wider relational network, planning must be swift and clear to identify permanent alternative caring arrangements.

The following is a guide to the adoption process. There are a number of relevant guidance and policy documents that should be referred to alongside this guide and these have been embedded in the flowchart.

**** PLEASE NOTE**

- There is a separate flowchart for when the criteria is met for a Foster for Adoption (FFA) placement i.e. the Local Authority has already determined that the child is unlikely to return to the birth family or it has considered and ruled out any potential family and friends.
- There is a separate flowchart for when a parents give consent for adoption

Key

 Orange boxes are Protocol System Processes  Yellow boxes are manual processes  Green boxes are decision making points


Acronyms


T4C – Together 4 Children – our Regional Adoption Agency
SDM – T&W Service Delivery Manager
IRO – Independent Reviewing Officer
ADM – Agency Decision Maker
MTC – Midlands Together Collaboration
LGP – Legal Gateway Panel



SHOBPA – Should be placed for adoption decision
CPR – Child Permanence Report
APR – Adoption Placement Report
APP – Adoption Placement Planning report
PAR – Prospective Adopter Report

Adoption journey	LCS pathway (protocol)	Completed by	Where is this recorded?	Timescale	Notes
	Legal Gateway panel minutes form	LGP BSO	LGP form		Early alert referrals to T4C may be recommended by Legal Gateway Panel at an early stage if there is a potential plan of adoption even if other plans for permanence are being considered. This will be recorded in the minutes of the panel meeting. Please see separate flowchart for achieving early permanence through Foster for Adoption (FFA) or relinquished children.
	Permanence Panel	T&W BSO			In some circumstances the referral to T4C may be triggered at the second review permanence panel
Referral made to T4C	Family finding referral form	Child's Social Worker	<i>This form can be found on the child's file in the Forms drop down list</i>	5 working days from Legal Gateway panel	This form gives T4C details of the child and family and needs to be fully completed and include brief background, details of geography (such as areas to avoid), any outstanding assessments, sibling assessments and court timescales. Ensuring sibling details are correct (if applicable).
	Social Worker to open domestic adoption in pathway	Child's Social Worker	<i>In episode of care</i>	When making referral to T4C	Open the domestic adoption process via the decisions tab in the episode of care, click 'start the adoption process'
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	T4C Administrator picks up the Referral form from Adoption Work tray	T4C Administrator			The T4C administrator will email the social worker acknowledging receipt of the referral form and ask the Child's Social Worker to arrange a referral meeting with T4C Permanency Coordinator. The adoption Medical Referral, blood-borne virus check list and CORAM BAAF medical forms will be sent to the child's social worker via email.
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Adoption medical forms to be completed	T4C will send the following forms to the Child's Social Worker to take to family to complete Form PH report on health of birth parents Form M obstetric health of mother Form B neonatal report on child Blood-borne infection checklist Consent form Checklist for child adoption referrals	Child's Social Worker			The Child's Social Worker will receive the medical forms listed and will complete in as much detail as possible with the birth family. If parents do not wish to complete the form or are not engaging with the LA, the SDM will sign the form with an explanation why we do not have birth parents signature/consent ALL forms MUST be returned <u>before an adoption medical can be arranged</u> , this must be done at the earliest opportunity to prevent delay The email of the T4C administrator is Hannah.R.Jefferies@shropshire.gov.uk
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Adoption journey	LCS pathway (protocol)	Completed by	Where is this recorded?	Timescale	Notes
	Medical Forms returned to T4C Administrator	T4C Administrator	<i>Signed forms attached to documents in the adoption module</i>		When all forms have been returned the T4C administrator will liaise with the medical Adviser and request a medical T4C administrator will save the signed forms in documents in the adoption module
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Adoption Referral Meeting	Referral Meeting with T4C Permanency Coordinator Arranged by T4C Perm. Coord. within 10 days of the referral form being received	T4C Permanency Coordinator	<i>The Family Finding Referral form will be saved in Forms on the child's file</i>	Recorded within 5 days of the meeting	This meeting will be recorded within the existing referral form with the following information: Present: name and role Update on assessments: birth parents and connected people Court timetable: Progress of child(ren): Matching consideration: i.e. specific needs, geography, siblings, any previous adopted children so contact can be made with adopters Post adoption contact: with birth family, including birth parent/adopter meetings Family finding: the type of the search required: local search, wider network or nationwide. If the needs of the child indicate that an external search is required, SDM agreement must be obtained prior to seeking final approval at RAMP*. Medical forms: check progress of completion and referral to medical Adviser Actions: * The SDM for fostering, Adoption and Permanence will need to agree that an external search is necessary and the Child's Social Worker will then need to attend RAMP for final approval. Permission may need to be sought from the court to undertake an anonymised search at an early stage*
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Adoption medical report	Medical Report	T4C Administrator	<i>The report will be attached to documents in the adoption module</i>		The Agency Medical Adviser will complete the medical report on the child. This completed form must be copied and pasted into the child's CPR.
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Adoption journey	LCS pathway (protocol)	Completed by	Where is this recorded?	Timescale	Notes
Child in Care Review	Child in Care Review for IRO to ratify plan of adoption	IRO & Child's Social Worker	Child in Care Review form		Once the court timetable and ADM (Agency Decision Maker) decision date has been confirmed the Child's Social Worker needs to contact the IRO to arrange a Child in Care Review for the adoption plan to be ratified by the IRO. The IRO is to provide a clear rationale of their decision making.
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CPR	Child Permanence Report (CPR)	Child's Social Worker	Form in the adoption module	Completion date will be determined by court timetable and ADM decision date as agreed with the Agency Panel Adviser	<p>The CPR is an important report which is kept as part of the child's adoption record for 100 years after an adoption order is made. The report has a wide audience and so it is important that clear, balanced and inclusive language is used throughout. The purpose of the report is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To inform decision making by the ADM, the court and the adoption panel - To inform family finding and help prospective adopters understand the life experiences and needs of children they may go on to care for - To provide the adopted child/adult with information to help understand their life story. - The report will also be shared with the birth parents to seek their views, wishes and feelings <p>The CPR should be started as soon as possible as it is a lengthy piece of work and will allow Children's Social Workers to add to it as work is undertaken with the child and family. Recent good quality photos of parents, siblings and other relevant people for the child to include in CPR in addition to the genogram</p> <p>Assign for final approval for quality assurance by Team manager</p>
	CPR quality assured by Team Manager	Team Manager	CPR Audit checklist to be attached to case note in the adoption module	Completion date will be determined by court timetable and ADM decision date as agreed with the Regional Adoption Agency Adviser	<p>The Child's Social Worker will send the CPR to their manager to be quality assured and authorised. The CPR can be re-assigned to the Child's Social Worker if amendments are needed</p> <p>The team manager will complete the CPR Audit Checklist and authorise and assign to the Regional Adoption Agency Adviser for final approval</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Microsoft Word 97 - 2003 Document</p> </div>

Adoption journey	LCS pathway (protocol)	Completed by	Where is this recorded?	Timescale	Notes
	CPR and relevant paperwork quality assured and final approval by T4C Panel Adviser	T4C Panel Adviser	<i>Adoption Agency Adviser to be attached to the CPR in the adoption module</i>	5 working days	<p>All paperwork needed for an ADM decision will be attached to the CPR by the date agreed with the Regional Agency Adviser (see checklist below for documents required)</p> <p>Once all paperwork is ready in Protocol the Child's Social Worker must notify the Regional Adoption Agency Adviser by email using the child's Protocol number (No documents are to be sent via email)</p> <p>The Regional Agency Adviser has 5 working days to quality assure and prepare agency advice. Practitioners will need to ensure they are available to provide amendments/clarifications to the Regional Agency Adviser if required.</p> <p>When ready it can be sent for final approval</p> <p>Legal advice – when agency advice is sent to the ADM it is sent to legal at the same time. Legal then provide legal advice to the ADM before the ADM decision date. Legal advice sent to ADM and Kim on specific template</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  Checklist for children's social work </div>
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SHOBPA ADM decision	ADM Should be placed for Adoption decision (SHOBPA)	ADM Darren Knibbs – Director Tina Knight - SDM	<i>Form is saved in the adoption module</i>	7 working days from receipt of paperwork	<p>ADM reads CPR and all other relevant documents and completes decision on LCS</p> <p>Child's Social Worker and IRO to ensure they read the ADM decision and action any advice or recommendations given. Any actions need to be recorded in a case note in the adoption module when completed.</p>
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Statutory notifications to birth parents	The outcome of the ADM decision should be verbally communicated to child's Birth Parents	Child's Social Worker	<i>Case note to be added in adoption module</i>	Within 2 working days of the ADM decision	Case note to be added in the adoption module of the conversation with birth parents
Statutory notifications to birth parents	Written confirmation of the ADM decision should be provided for birth parents	T4C Administrator	<i>Letter to be attached to case note in the adoption module</i>	Within 5 working days of the ADM decision	Letter save in the adoption module


Adoption journey	LCS pathway (protocol)	Completed by	Where is this recorded?	Timescale	Notes
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Placement order Application	Placement Order Application form	Child's Social Worker	Form in Adoption module		<p>The application form used must be the current one as per the Government website Guidance notes can be found below Legal Services have to finalise the application form, not the social worker Legal submit the signed form to court and have a copy on their recording system. Please complete the form in the adoption module with details of when and where the application was filed</p> <p> </p> <p>HMCTS A50 Notes 23.03.2023 Form on completing the for A50 Template Drafting</p> <p><u>Form A50: Application for a Placement Order (Section 22 Adoption and Children Act 2002) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</u></p> <p>** T4C must be informed immediately when a Placement Order is granted to avoid any delay in family finding**</p>
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Family Finding	T4C Permanency Coordinator records themselves as the Adoption Social Worker on LCS	T4C Permanency Coordinator			
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Adoption family finding form (matching matrix)	Adoption family finding form (matching matrix)	T4C Permanency Coordinator & Child's Social Worker	In forms in adoption module		<p>Form is started by T4C Permanency Coordinator then reassigned to Child's Social Worker to complete the child's details of current and future needs for matching considerations Social worker completes the matching matrix and reassigns to T4C Permanency Coordinator This matching matrix will be distributed the social workers whose have a family that may be able to meet the child's need</p>
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Adoption journey	LCS pathway (protocol)	Completed by	Where is this recorded?	Timescale	Notes
Decision for external search	SDM / RAMP decision for external family finding search <i>*This can be done at different stages of the adoption journey depending on need*</i>	SDM	Case note in adoption module		If there are no available adopters from T4C or if a child's needs are not likely to be met locally permission is needed from SDM/RAMP for the search to be widened to either MTC (Midlands Together Collaboration) and/or nationwide. The SDM for fostering, Adoption and Permanence will need to agree that an external search is necessary and the Child's Social Worker will then need to attend RAMP for final approval. <i>*This can be done at different stages of the adoption journey depending on need*</i>
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Profile of the child	Child's family finding Profile Used for family finding and Link Maker.	T4C Permanency Coordinator	PDF to be saved in docs in the adoption module		This is completed on Link Maker by T4C following an ADM SHOBPA. The profile should be downloaded as a PDF and saved in the child's adoption module. Each updated version will also be saved to the child's file
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Monthly T4C family finding meetings (locality hub and central hub)	Update from T4C family finding meetings:	T4C Permanency Coordinator	Case note to be added to adoption module		Detailed case notes to be added in the adoption module: Any interest shown? Is search local, MTC, national? Is this still appropriate Activity days or events Timescales/permission for widening search, dates this is done
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	Prospective Adopter's Report (PAR) sent to Child's Social Worker	Child's Social Worker	Case note to be added in adoption module		Child's Social Worker to record as a case note in the adoption module when PAR(s) received. Please record each PAR received but do not include any identifiable information in the case note at this stage.
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Potential adopter link identified	Linking discussion with external adopters	T4C Permanency Coordinator	Case note to be added in adoption module		A linking discussion is only held when adopters are external to T4C, (for example, a Voluntary Adoption Agency or a Regional Adoption Agency). Those attending include Child's Social Worker, adopter social worker, adopters and T4C Permanency Coordinator. T4C to record a detailed case note to be added in adoption module <i>*This meeting can be held at any stage when prospective adoptive parents are being considered as a potential family for the child*</i>
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Adoption journey	LCS pathway (protocol)	Completed by	Where is this recorded?	Timescale	Notes
Matching meeting	Linking Meeting	T4C Permanency Coordinator	<i>Adoption family finding form (matching matrix) is updated at this meeting</i>	Record within 7 days of meeting by T4C administrator	<p>If the families are from T4C up to 3 of the most appropriate families will be presented at a linking meeting. Those attending include Child's Social Worker, Adoption Social Worker and T4C Permanency Coordinator, (prospective adopters do not attend this meeting) The matching matrix will be updated with all families considered. Short-listing decision to be recorded and an anonymised version placed on child's file</p> <p>The Child's Social Worker will choose the most suitable family and then arrange meeting with prospective adopters. If at the meeting the Child's Social Worker does not feel the match is suitable we can return to a linking meeting to discuss the other potential links. If suitable the CPR should be shared with the adopters at this point so they can have a full understanding of the child's details. All paperwork is needed to progress the match will be provided at this meeting along with timescales for completion.</p>
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Meeting with the adopters	Child's Social Worker and Adoption Social Workers to meet with the prospective adopters	T4C permanency coordinator / Child's Social Worker	<i>Case note to be added in adoption module</i>		<p>Case note to be added in adoption module with detail of the meeting and outcome of potential match</p> <p>Prospective adopters will have been provided with CPR and other relevant info i.e. health or education reports, photos or videos.</p>
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Adoption Support	Adoption Support Meeting	T4C Permanency Coordinator	<i>Case note to be added in adoption module</i>		<p>An Adoption Support meeting should take place if there are identified support needs. A case note will be added to the adoption module.</p>
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Matching panel booking	Panel date requested	T4C Permanency Coordinator or T4C Adoption Social Worker			<p><i>*Panel can be booked prior to a Placement Order being granted if an IRH or final hearing date has been set* - planning to align these dates will reduce delay for the child.</i></p>
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Adoption journey	LCS pathway (protocol)	Completed by	Where is this recorded?	Timescale	Notes
Child Appreciation Meeting	Child Appreciation Meeting (CAM)	T4C Permanency Coordinator	Minutes attached to CAM case note in adoption module		The T4C minute taker shall forward the finalised minutes securely to the chairperson to ratify via email. The chairperson should then ratify and the minutes will be attached to a case note in the adoption module  T4C Child Appreciation Meeting
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Meetings between prospective adopters & others	Details of meetings, relevant observations, discussions and any actions	T4C permanency Coordinator / Child's Social Worker / Adoption Social Worker	Case note to be added in the adoption module		Case note to be added in adoption module when any meetings take place between prospective adopters and relevant people such as medical Adviser, foster carers, schools, bump in etc. with relevant details or observations * These meetings may take place before and/or after matching panel* These meetings will be arranged by the Child's Social Worker following recommendations from the linking meeting
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Matching paperwork	Paperwork submitted to T4C Adoption Manager for QA	Perm. Coordinator or Adoption Social Worker		10 working days prior to submission to Panel Adviser	The APR also contains the adoption support plan which needs to be fully detailed with any support that may be identified now or likely support in the future. Adopters will refer to the support plan if they have any concerns at a later date.  75. Adoption Placement Report (1)
Matching paperwork	Paperwork submitted to T4C Adoption Agency Adviser	Perm. Coordinator or Adoption Social Worker		11 working days prior to the Adoption Panel date	All relevant paperwork which includes: CPR (updated) Medical Adviser's Report Child's ADM decision Adoption Placement Report Adoption Support Plan PAR Minutes from adopter's approval & ADM decision sheets BAAF carers report
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Matching panel	Matching panel	T4C Administrator			<u>All</u> documents submitted to panel to be added to child's records by T4C administrator

Adoption journey	LCS pathway (protocol)	Completed by	Where is this recorded?	Timescale	Notes
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Placement Planning Meeting	Adoption placement planning meeting (also referred to as Introduction planning meeting)	T4C Permanency Coordinator	<i>In 'Forms' in adoption module</i>	To be added within 2 days of the meeting (date will not be completed until ADM has been granted)	The Adoption Introduction Plan (which includes the APP form) is completed. The responsibility for drawing up this plan is jointly held between the Adoption Team, Children's Team and the Fostering Service Present at the meeting will be the T4C Permanence Coordinator/Adoption Team Manager or Senior Adoption Social Worker, Child's Social Worker, Foster Carers, Foster Carer's Social Worker, Prospective Adopter, Adopter's Social Worker and Adoption Support Social Worker if needed *This may be done before or after ADM for the match has been granted*
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ADM decision on the match	ADM decision	ADM Darren Knibbs – Director Tina Knight - SDM	<i>In 'Forms' in adoption module</i>	To be made 7 working days after receipt of minutes	ADM reads CPR and all other relevant documents and completes decision on LCS if this a suitable match Child's social worker and IRO to ensure they read the ADM decision and action any advice or recommendations given. Any actions need to be recorded in a case note in the adoption module when completed.
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Statutory notifications to birth parents	The outcome of the ADM decision should be verbally communicated to child's Birth Parents within by the Child's Social Worker.	Child's Social Worker	<i>Case note to be added in adoption module</i>	Within 2 working days of the decision	After speaking to the birth parents the Child's Social Worker will add a case note in the adoption module
Statutory notifications to birth parents	Written confirmation of the ADM decision	T4C Administrator	<i>Letter to be attached to case note in the adoption module</i>	within 5 working days of the decision	Birth parents letter of notification a match had been agreed by ADM. Letter save in the adoption module
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Introductions	Moving to Adoption update	T4C Permanency Coordinator / Child's Social Worker / Adoption Social Worker	<i>Case note to be added in adoption module</i>		All workers involved are responsible for ensuring there is a full picture of the progress of the moving to adoption plan. Daily notes that reflect what is happening for all involved, child / adopters / foster carers. Detailed descriptions and email threads if appropriate
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Adoption journey	LCS pathway (protocol)	Completed by	Where is this recorded?	Timescale	Notes
Birth parent meeting/other birth relative	Meeting between birth family and prospective adopters	T4C permanency Coordinator / Child's Social Worker / Adoption Social Worker	Case notes in adoption module		Detailed recording of meeting between birth family and adopters with discussions held, observations and feedback from all parties
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Review of introductions	Review Placement Planning meetings	T4C permanency Coordinator	In 'Forms' in adoption module	Midway review	This form can be added as many times as needed during the transition phase. T4C word doc to be attached to the form  78. Review of Introductions Templat
Child to be placed	Final Review Placement Planning meeting	T4C permanency Coordinator	In 'Forms' in adoption module	Final review of introductions	When it is agreed that the introductions have been successful and the child should be placed with the prospective adopters the outcome of the Review Placement planning meeting should be recorded as Complete Placement Agreement
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Placement day	Adoption Placement Agreement	Child's Social Worker	In 'Forms' in adoption module		This form updates LCS that the child is now being cared for within an adoptive placement
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Statutory visits	Recording of statutory visits / calls to adopters and child	T4C permanency Coordinator / Child's Social Worker / Adoption Social Worker	In 'Forms' in main module		Statutory visits are recorded within the main module. The Child's Social Worker should visit the child on a weekly basis up until the first CIC Review and thereafter on a monthly basis if agreed at the review. The ASW will not carry out statutory visits to the child. The ASW will visit as often as needed to support the carers.
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Child in Care review	A Child in Care Review After child has moved into the prospective adopter's home	IRO	In 'Forms' in main module	Within 28 days of the move	This meeting will be held at the home of the prospective adopters. The review should facilitate open and honest discussion around the experience of the child and the adopter during the transition period and the early days of the child living with their new family. The review should highlight the positives and challenges, discuss the child's ongoing contact with foster carers and identify any additional support needs.

Adoption journey	LCS pathway (protocol)	Completed by	Where is this recorded?	Timescale	Notes
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Application for AO	Annex A report	Child's Social Worker / Adoption Social Worker	In 'Forms' in adoption module	10 weeks following placement	The application is made by the prospective adopters after the child has lived with them for 10 weeks or following ADM for FFA and Foster carer placements, as long as the child has lived there for at least 10 weeks. The Annex A is completed as a word document and attached to the form
	Annex A QA by T4C manager	T4C manager		5 working days	
	Adoption Order application form	T4C adoption Worker			T4C records date of application
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Directions Adoption hearing	Directions Adoption hearing	T4C adoption Worker			The Child's Social Worker is required to attend the Hearing and will be asked for an update. The Adoption Social Worker will complete the form on protocol.
Adoption Order Hearing	Adoption Order Hearing	T4C adoption Worker			The Child's Social Worker is required to attend the Hearing and will be asked for an update. The Adoption Social Worker will complete the form on protocol.
	LSC updated to record child is no longer LAC	Child's Social Worker			A new record will be created in the child's adopted name
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Celebration Ceremony	Celebration Ceremony	Child's Social Worker updates LCS			The Team Manager for the Child's Social Worker will need to quality assure the life story book and Later in Life Letter. The completed life story book should be provided to the adopters within ten working days following the Celebration Ceremony i.e. the event to celebrate the making of the Adoption Order. A copy of the Later Life Letter should be attached to a case note in the adoption module with the date it was shared with the adopters recorded. A copy of life story work will also need to be photographed/scanned as an attachment to a case note.
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Adoption journey	LCS pathway (protocol)	Completed by	Where is this recorded?	Timescale	Notes
Close file	Closure record Adoption Order granted – end CLA	Child's Social Worker			When the Adoption Order is granted the child is no longer in the care of the local authority.

If at any point the plan changes and adoption is no longer the permanence plan the adoption module will need to be closed separate guidance to follow