



Permanence Planning – Adoption points for consideration during tracking/permanency planning meetings

Referral to Adopt South West

- A referral form can be located here - [Family Finding Referral Form \(office.com\)](#)
- At the point of referral, the child's CPR and medical should be emailed to adoptsouthwestfamilyfinding-mailbox@devon.gov.uk

'Twin-track' or parallel planning - the possibility of adoption for most children is unlikely to arise suddenly and unexpectedly; in many cases during the early stages of the local authority's involvement there will be a need for:

- **Early exploration** - it is important that this also includes the child's paternal family. The exploration of this can be supported with a family group conference (FGC).
- **Assessment of family** - where a family member or friend wishes to be assessed for a child, it is crucial that this assessment is written up, authorised, and shared with the prospective applicant. If the assessment is negative, they should also be advised of their rights to challenge information contained within the assessment.
- **Adopted sibling** - Where the child already has an adopted sibling, the sibling's adopters should be contacted to see if they wish to be assessed for the child before any other family finding is commenced. Adopt South West will contact any sibling adopters. Before undertaking any assessment contact should be made with family finding team manager for advice and support.
- **Sibling Assessment** - Where there is adoption planning for siblings, a sibling assessment should be completed to consider the needs of the children and whether they should be placed together or apart.

Early Permanence - Fostering for Adoption (FfA) is where a child is placed with carers who are both approved adopters and then temporarily approved as foster carers for a specific child. It is a fostering placement which may lead to adoption by those foster carers, where it is decided that adoption is the plan for the child. The advantage of this type of placement is that the child will be able to be placed much earlier with foster carers who are likely to go on to become the child's adoptive family. There is substantial evidence of the serious long-term effects on children, especially those under-two who from birth did not receive sensitive, committed, and stable care from their primary carer.

- It is important to consider FfA at the earliest stage possible in care planning, in order to reduce the number of moves for a child. Even where a child has been in the care of family members as connected carers or in mainstream foster care, foster for adopt can be considered as the child's next move and last move prior to a final hearing.
- It is important to consider FfA for those children within parent and child placements at the review points where the indicators are the child may not remain in the care of their parents and where the parallel assessment of family are seemingly negative.
- It is recommended that Team Managers use the 'Early Permanence Screening matrix' with social workers when care planning for children and considering FfA. <https://earlypermanence.org.uk/wp->

It is the fundamental right of every child to belong to a family; this principle underpins the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child which the United Kingdom ratified in 1991. Where children cannot live with their birth parents for whatever reason, society has a duty to provide them with a stable, safe and loving alternative family. It is important to remember that delay can have a significant effect on achieving permanence for children. That is why the legislation makes clear that delay in coming to decisions, and in the subsequent stages of the process, is likely to prejudice the child's welfare. Research shows that delay in the adoption process can have negative consequences for the child's psychosocial outcomes and reduces the likelihood of finding an adoptive family. (Statutory Guidance on Adoption)

[content/uploads/Fostering-for-Adoption-Good-Practice-Guide-web-Coram-Centre-for-Early-Permanence-2017-1.pdf](#) (Appendix 2, pg 120)

- Where fostering for adoption is being considered it is essential that exploration and assessment of the wider family and friends has been progressed.

Relinquished children - A child, usually a baby or at pre-birth stage, whose parents are making the choice of adoption for the child and are giving written consent for the placement of a child. The child is then placed for Adoption under section 19 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002

- If a birth family wishes to relinquish their child for adoption then a referral should be made immediately to Adopt South West and consent sought for birth parent counselling.
https://devonchildcare.proceduresonline.com/p_relinquished_children.html?zoom_highlight=relinquished
<https://proceduresonline.com/trixcms2/media/16405/asw-guidance-on-children-relinquished-for-adoption.pdf>
https://devonchildcare.proceduresonline.com/files/cafcass_adcs_relinquished_adopt.pdf?zoom_highlight=relinquished#search=%22relinquished%22

Adoption is the plan - Where the first or second review (or any subsequent review) decides that adoption is the preferred option for permanence, an adoption plan must be commenced and the information on the care plan be transferred to the adoption plan. It is at this point that regulation 11 of the Adoption Agencies Regulations 2005 (AAR) provides that AAR 12 to 17 apply, as the agency is clearly considering adoption for the child.

- **Agency Decision Maker (ADM) decision** - where adoption is considered the social worker should consider timings for booking an agency decision maker (ADM) best interest decision.
- kate.beasley@torbay.gov.uk
- **Adoption medical** - Where a child is being considered for a plan of adoption, an adoption medical report must be completed and submitted with the paperwork for the Agency Decision maker to consider prior to the date of the ADM decision.
- **Child Permanence Report (CPR)** - The child's social worker should complete a CPR (meeting the requirements of the Restriction on the Preparation of Adoption Reports Regulations 2005). Essentially gathering information, including on the wishes and feelings of the child, parents and significant family/connected persons to the child. Guidance to writing a CPR can be found here on the ASW Tri- X site [Local Resources \(proceduresonline.com\)](#)

You can contact the adoption team at adoptsouthwestfamilyfinding-mailbox@devon.gov.uk or 0345 155 1076 for guidance and support.

Key Contacts:

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Helen Atkinson – Family Finding Team Manager (north) – helen.atkinson@devon.gov.uk

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Jim Fitton – Adopter Recruitment and Assessment Team Manager (north) – jim.fitton@devon.gov.uk

Alison Barker - Adopter Recruitment and Assessment Team Manager (south) – alison.barker@devon.gov.uk

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