

This Business Plan correlates to the [SCS Business Plan](#)

Kent Adoption Service Vision: To achieve an outstanding adoption service by March 2018 that ensures legal permanence for children either within their birth/extended family or with non-related adults via Adoption & Special Guardianship Orders

This document uses the National Minimum Standards (NMS) applicable to the provision of adoption services. The NMS together with the adoption regulations form the basis of the regulatory framework under the Care Standards Act 2000 for the conduct of adoption agencies and adoption support agencies.

Adoption Service Business Plan April 2018 – March 2019

Kent County Council (KCC) is committed to ensuring that children are able to remain in the care of their parents and birth families wherever possible. However, where it is not possible to achieve stability for the child within the birth family, we work to achieve alternative permanent arrangements for the child within a family setting and these include adoption. This Business Plan set out how Kent Adoption intends to deliver its services to ensure timely progression for children whose care plan is adoption and the support that we aim to provide to them, their birth and adoptive families. It outlines Management and Leadership of the service to ensure the workforce is appropriately equipped to meet the requirements

Quarterly reviewed to ensure continuous development

Target 1: Outcome / Value					
The child's welfare, safety and needs are at the centre of the adoption process. NMS 1, 4,10,13,15,22					
Objective	Action to be undertaken	Timescales	Lead	Performance Management	Outcome
Securing Permanence for children through a timely Adoption process	Effective and timely quality assurance of children's adoption plans	Compliant with ADM availability and court deadlines	Panel Advisors	Weekly Tracking, Case audits, Supervision, Joint Tracking, Adoption Scorecard and monthly MIU performance data	Court process completed
	Ensuring the child is matched within 3 months of a placement order being granted	Ongoing – six-month reviews (October 2018 and March 2019)	Head of Adoption, Adoption Managers	Weekly PPM tracking of unborn and children aged 0-10 subject to legal planning meetings and BLA	Children are matched within 121 days
	Weekly linking meetings to identify potential early links				
	PPM lead to continue offering consultations and attending				

	early PPMs				
Increase use of foster-to-adopt	Adoption Service to deliver two workshops per year to raise awareness with childcare professionals, IROs and Adoption Social Workers PPM lead to continue offering consultations and attending early PPMs	Two workshops to be held per year Weekly	Amy Coombs Nina Gurung	Weekly PPM tracking of unborn and children aged 0-2 subject to legal planning meetings and BLA Consider PPM tracking in weekly management linking meetings	To increase placements by 50% on 2017/18 to 15 children Early identification of pre-birth and children under 2 entering care

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Recruit sufficient adopters to meet the needs of children with an adoption plan	Recruit a minimum of 82 adopter households (based on number of placement orders granted in 2017/18, against proportion of placements for sibling groups and allowing an additional 20% for choice)	March 2019	RAS Team Managers	Monitor TOD Case audits Supervision	20% of approved adopters will have dual-approval
	Hold monthly recruitment events	Ongoing	RAS Team Managers	Feedback forms	Initial visits requested by a third of attendees
	Prioritise applications from families able to adopt children with complex needs and sibling groups	Ongoing	RAS Team Managers	Linking meeting	Children are matched within 121 days
	Maintain and update website and social media	Ongoing	RAS Team Managers	Information events Feedback forms	Minimum of 20 attendees at information events

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<p>Secure adoption order at earliest opportunity</p>	<p>Every adopter is provided with support from allocated Adoption Social Worker</p> <p>Every adopter is offered peer support via mentoring scheme</p> <p>Review current application process at Adoption Operational Meeting</p> <p>Liaise with and escalate to IROs and Service Managers – potential delay</p>	<p>Minimum of six-weekly visits post placement following first LAC review</p> <p>Matching meeting</p> <p>Monthly</p>	<p>RAS & Family Finding Team Managers</p> <p>RAS and Family Finding Team Managers</p> <p>Head of Adoption</p> <p>Head of Adoption</p>	<p>Supervision, Case audits, adopter feedback, QA matching minutes and APR</p> <p>QA Reports Supervision Case audits</p> <p>Joint tracking and Supervision</p>	<p>Adoption Order application made and Adoption Social Worker completes Annex A within ten weeks</p> <p>Prospective adopters receive support from mentor</p>
<p>Ensure children with an adoption plan are safeguarded</p>	<p>Ensure Social Workers and Adopters have an understanding of Safeguarding issues</p>	<p>Assessment phase</p>	<p>Social Workers</p>	<p>QA of PAR, Feedback from prep training & Supervision</p>	<p><i>Children are safeguarded in adoptive placement</i></p>

	Ensure each adoptive household has a risk assessment completed in time for approval	Assessment phase	RAS & Family Finding Team Managers	QA of PAR	<i>100% have risk assessment</i>
	Safeguarding and mandatory eLearning training completed and annually refreshed by staff	Annually	Team Managers	PDPs	<i>All staff complete and refresh course</i>
	Training for Panel Members	Twice a year	Panel Advisors	Annual reviews	<i>Panel Members are updated on national and local initiatives</i>

Target 2: Outcome / Value

- Adopted children should have an enjoyable childhood, and benefit from excellent parenting and education, enjoying a wide range of opportunities to develop their talents and skills leading to a successful adult life.
- Children are entitled to grow up as part of a loving family that can meet their developmental needs during childhood and beyond. **NMS 5,6,7,10,13**

Objective	Action to be undertaken	Timescale	Lead	Performance Management	Outcome
Ensure smooth and effective transition of pre and post adoption support services	Review the pre-order support plan template with a view of adding potential post order support needs	June 2018	PAST Team Manager	Matching meeting, APR, Adoption Panel QA and	Revised template
	Review current practice around roles & responsibilities for completing APR	June 2018	Family Finding Team Manager	Supervision	Revised process
	Support Plans include pre and post order support needs	Ongoing	RAS Team Managers	QA, Case Audit, Panel	APR reflects current and potential

					needs
	Life story work to be considered as part of matching meeting	April 2018	Family Finding Team Manager	QA APR, Case audits, Panel & Supervision	Completion of good quality life story book when AO is granted
	Life story book to be considered as part of matching meeting	April 2018	Family Finding Team Manager	QA APR, Case audits, Panel & Supervision	
	Further development of Life Story workshops for adopters	December 2018	PAST Team Manager & RAS Team Managers	Two workshops per year, Feedback forms	
	Further development of Life Story training for Social Workers	December 2018	PAST Team Manager & RAS Team Managers	Four training events across county, Feedback forms, QA APR	
	Review and effective use of Mentoring Scheme	June 2018	PAST Team Manager & RAS1 Team Manager	Evidenced in APR, Feedback from mentors & mentees	Increased use of mentors

	Review and effective use of Learning and Development workshops and Parenting programmes	June 2018	PAST Team Manager	Feedback forms & bookings	Revised rolling annual programme in place
	Development of education support package: Education Champion scheme, EPACs, Attachment Training for education professionals and information for adopters on website. Formalising links with Virtual School Kent	March 2019	PAST Team Manager	Champion profiles and linking process in place	Adopters will have access to list of Education Champions
	Train adoption social workers in Theraplay techniques.	May 2018	PAST Team Manager	Completion of workshop at service meeting, feedback from Social Workers	Social Workers confident in use of skills

Families requesting support receive an assessment of their needs	Pathway to accessing services confirmed and shared with adopters and Social Workers	April 2018	PAST Team Manager	Liberi reflects and captures data	Pathway in place, assessments and support plans in place within timescales
	Initial response	Within 24 hours of contact	PAST Team Manager	Liberi	Evidenced increased use of internal PAST therapeutic service
	Support & Advice	Within five working days of contact	PAST Team Manager	Liberi	
	Assessment commenced	Within three months of Support & Advice	PAST Team Manager	Liberi	
	Assessment & Support Plan to be completed	Within six weeks	PAST Team Manager	Liberi	
Families presenting to the service on the verge of family breakdown	Initial response	Same day	PAST Team Manger	Liberi	Evidenced referrals to Central Duty/Early
	Family breakdown preventative support	Within five working days of contact	PAST Team Manger	Liberi	

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	package (6 weekly sessions with a therapist & social worker)				help & use of internal PAST therapeutic service
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Target 3: Outcome / Value					
Children's wishes and feelings are important and will be actively sought and fully taken into account at all stages of the adoption process. NMS1,6,15,18,27					
Objective	Action to be undertaken	Timescales	Lead	Performance Management	Outcomes
Children's voice is heard throughout their care planning process and adoption journey	Agency adoptions Pre-Placement Order at ADM stage – evidence of the voice of the child in CPR	ADM Stage	Panel Advisor	ADM QA Head of Service supervision File audit	ADM granted, voice of child recorded on CPR
	Adoption service to actively start family finding to include minimum of one visit to child and foster carer(s)	ADM Stage	Family Finding Team Manager	Linking meeting Supervision File audit	Adoption Social Worker to understand needs of child and promote early family

	<p>Post Placement Order Children's Family Finding profiles reflect the child's voice and parenting needs</p> <p>Family Finding Social Worker to ensure evidence of the voice of the child in matching meetings and APR</p> <p>Post-Placement, Pre-Adoption Order Adoption Social Workers to ensure adoptive family are supported in understanding and meeting the needs of their child.</p>	<p>Three months post placement order</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>From matching until adoption order</p>	<p>Adoption management</p> <p>Head of Service and Adoption Team Managers</p> <p>Head of Service, RAS Team Managers</p> <p>Post Adoption Team</p>	<p>Adoption Scorecard and TOD Linking meeting</p> <p>Monthly audits and QA processes</p> <p>Supervision, Monthly audits and case tracking.</p>	<p>finding</p> <p>Child(ren) matched at panel within 3 months of placement order</p> <p>Match approved by panel and ADM</p> <p>Adoption Order application submitted at 10 week stage</p>
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	<p>Post Adoption Order The continuous development of Participation Groups and activities for adopted children</p>	May 2018	Manager	Supervision and feedback from children and adoptive parents	Yearly participation plan engagement from whole service
	<p>Promote opportunity for Adopted Young people to communicate with Corporate Parenting Panel (once per year)</p>	March 2019	Head of Service and Post Adoption Team Manager	Record of attendance. Minutes of CPP	CPP informed of views of adopted child(ren)
	<p>Effective consultation with Adopted young people (18-25) to shape development of the Service</p>	October 2018	Head of Service and Post Adoption Team Manager	Feedback and suggestions	Adoptee advisory board established
	<p>Employ adoptee apprentice to focus on participation and engagement</p>	October 2018	Head of Service	Appointment made	Adoptee Apprentice employed
	Non-Agency Adoption				

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	Views of the child evidenced in all Annex A reports filed to court	Ongoing	Head of Service, RAS Team Managers	Supervision Case audits	Court endorse plan
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Target 4: Outcome / Value					
Delays should be avoided as they can have a severe impact on the health and development of the children waiting to be adopted. NMS 5,10,13					
Objective	Action to be undertaken	Timescales	Lead	Performance Management	Outcomes
Secure permanence for children who have an adoption plan	All children with adoption plan have allocated Family Finding Social Worker	ADM decision	Family Finding Team Manager	Tracking meeting Supervision Adoption TOD	Early Family Finding progressed
	Suggested link to be explored	Within 2 working days	Family Finding and RAS Team Managers,	Linking Meeting Adoption Scorecard Panel chair's report Panel evaluation forms Supervision	Presentation to adoption panel within six weeks of decision
	Visit to take place	Within 5 working days			
	Decision regarding outcome agreed	Within 2 working days of visit			
	Matching Panel booked	Within 1 working day of decision			

	Matching meeting to be held for all linked children	Within 10 working days of decision			
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Target 5: Outcome / Value

- A sense of identity is important to a child's well-being. To help children develop this, their ethnic origin, cultural background, religion, language and sexuality need to be properly recognised and positively valued and promoted.
- The particular needs of disabled children and children with complex needs will be fully recognised and taken into account.
NMS 2,5,11,12,13,14,17

Objective	Action to be undertaken	Timescales	Lead	Performance Management	Outcomes
All children are prepared and supported throughout adoption journey to understand their story	Pre-Placement At ADM stage, allocated Family Finding Social Worker to offer support and guidance to CIC Social Worker with direct work and Life Story Book	Between ADM and match	Head of Service, Family Finding Team Manager	Supervision Chair of matching meeting to ask for status of Life Story Book Draft Life Story Book presented at matching panel	Every adopted child to have a Life Story Book and Later Life Letter
	Post Placement				

	<p>Adoption Social Workers to support and advise adopters with their understanding of child's story and use of Life Story Book</p> <p>Post Adoption Order</p> <p>Develop full support around Life Story work, distinguishing between stages of development</p>	<p>From matching to adoption order</p> <p>September 2018</p>	<p>Head of Service, RAS Team Managers</p> <p>Post Adoption Team Manager</p>	<p>Supervision</p> <p>Supervision Feedback forms</p>	<p>All adopters will feel supported and able to use Life Story Book</p> <p>L&D workshops and support groups established</p>
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Target 6: Outcome / Value

Children and adults affected by adoption receive an assessment of their adoption support needs. **NMS 15**

- Children live in a healthy environment where their physical, emotional and psychological health is promoted and where they are able to access the services they need to meet their health needs. **NMS 5**
- The education and achievement of children is actively promoted as valuable in itself and as part of their preparation for adulthood. Children are supported to achieve their educational potential. **NMS 7**

Objective	Action to be undertaken	Timescales	Lead	Performance Management	Outcomes
Support needs are identified for children and/or their adoptive family	Development of a pathway to allow access to therapeutic service within PAST at any stage of adoption journey	May 2018	Post Adoption Team Manager	Supervision	Timely access to services
	Pre-Placement Post ADM/Pre PO Family Finder will work with child's Social	Prior to paperwork submission for matching panel	Family Finding Team Manager	Supervision QA of matching minutes and support	Adoption Support Plan meets child

	<p>Worker, adopter's Social Worker, PAST and foster carer(s) and VSK to identify support and transitional needs</p> <p>Post Placement</p> <p>Adoption Social Worker to provide ongoing support to families and identify needs through support visits, PEPs and CIC reviews and amend support plan accordingly</p> <p>Post Adoption Support</p> <p>Developing a core offer</p> <p>Developing a process for accessing post</p>	<p>From placement to adoption order</p> <p>May 2018</p> <p>May 2018</p>	<p>RAS Team Managers</p> <p>Post Adoption Team Manager</p> <p>Post Adoption Team Manager</p>	<p>plan</p> <p>Supervision Case audits</p> <p>Report produced detailing core offer</p> <p>Liberi pathway</p>	<p>and family needs</p> <p>Adoptive families are well supported and adoption applications are submitted appropriately</p> <p>Adopters having access</p> <p>Assessment within six</p>
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	adoption support assessment				weeks
	Refine process to access Adoption Support Fund	May 2018	Post Adoption Team Manager	ASF Database	Increased internal provision and more timely access to intervention
	Development of Education Mentor scheme and partnership working with VSK	May 2018	Head of Service and Post Adoption Team Manager	Feedback from families Established group of Education Mentors Established arrangement with VSK	Children and families' education needs are supported

Target 7: Outcome / Value

Where a child cannot be cared for in a suitable manner in their own country, intercountry adoption may be considered as an alternative means of providing a permanent family. **NMS 11,14**

Objective	Action to be undertaken	Timescales	Lead	Performance Management	Outcomes
Ensure children from other countries for whom adoption is the plan are supported and timely assessments are completed	Commissioned inter-country adoption RAA	Annual renewal	Head of Service	6 monthly reports	Service provided

Additional expected outcomes (Values) for adopted adults and birth relatives

Target 8: Outcome / Value

- Children, birth parents/guardians and families and adoptive parents and families will be valued and respected **NMS 12, 15**

Objective	Action to be undertaken	Timescales	Lead	Performance Management	Outcomes
Provide responsive and positive service to stakeholders	Recommissioning of contract for birth family and adult adoptee support	June 2018	Head of Service	Quarterly contract meetings	Contract awarded
	Develop Adoption Advisory Board further with input from adopters and Adoption staff See Target 3 for	May 2018	Post Adoption Support Team Manager	Supervision	Established and effective advisory board meetings

	details of development of Adoptee advisory board				
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Target 9: Outcome / Value					
Records are clear, accurate, up to date and stored securely, and contribute to an understanding of the child's life					
Objective	Action to be undertaken	Timescales	Lead	Performance Management	Outcomes
Continue to develop accurate case recording in a timely fashion	<p>Ensure all Adoption Service staff are trained and competent in the use of Liberi</p> <p>Ensure all Adoption Service staff are compliant with KCC recording policy guidelines</p>	<p>For new staff to complete within first month of employment</p> <p>Refresh training for current staff where required</p>	Relevant Team Manager	Supervision Case audits	Case recording is accurate and up-to-date

	Accurate recording of adoption panel data and ADM decisions	Ongoing	Panel Advisor	Audit	Effective panel booking tool
	Adoption panel members to have annual review	Annually	Panel Advisor	Audit	Compliance with statutory regulations

Target 10: Outcome / Value					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The agency is managed ethically, effectively and efficiently and delivering a good quality service which meets the needs of children and other service users. NMS 25 					
Objective	Action to be undertaken	Timescales	Lead	Performance Management	Outcomes
Ensure Kent Adoption Service complies with national policy and developments for adoption services	Development of a Regional Adoption Agency	September 2019	Head of Adoption	Reporting to CPP, Cabinet and DfE	RAA established