

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL ADOPTION SERVICE

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of Aberdeenshire Council Adoption Service is to ensure the recruitment, preparation, matching and support of adoptive families for children requiring a permanent alternative family by this route.

Aberdeenshire Adoption Service will work to ensure that every child requiring an adoptive family in Aberdeenshire will be valued and helped to realise their potential.

Aim

To provide secure and stable adoptive families that provide the opportunity for children to grow, develop and realise their potential.

Objectives

- Take forwards the development of an effective and integrated adoption service within Aberdeenshire's Child Care Service through improved planning based on identified assessment of need.
- Provide for every child in Aberdeenshire, for whom it is required, a permanent family by adoption, which will meet their particular needs.
- Ensure the provision of child centred best practice.
- Ensure the provision and development of equitable and accessible services.
- Ensure effective outcomes for children and young people requiring adoptive families.
- Ensure people interested in becoming adoptive parents (including those wishing to adopt a child from overseas) will be welcomed without prejudice, responded to promptly, given clear information about training, assessment, approval and support.
- Prepare and support adoptive families prior to and following a child's placement.
- Ensure that birth families will be treated fairly, openly and with respect throughout the adoption process, and that they have access to adoption support services.

To achieve this Aberdeenshire will:

- Ensure that the service provided to children, adoptive families, birth parents and families meets the legislative requirements and the National Care Standards for adoption agencies and Aberdeenshire Council's Adoption Policy;
- Recruit a wide range of prospective adoptive parents to meet the placement needs of the children in Aberdeenshire needing adoptive families.

- Prepare, train and assess prospective adoptive parents, to develop their abilities leading to the best possible outcomes for children throughout their life times;
- Liaise with the North East of Scotland Consortium and Scottish Resource Network at BAAF to ensure that, where a child's placement needs cannot be met from families recruited by Aberdeenshire Council, a suitable placement is identified as quickly as possible.
- Feature a child in the BAAF journal "Be My Parent" where a local family has not been identified;
- Provide a service to children who are being adopted, fully assessing their needs and taking account of their views;
- Provide a service to birth parents and birth families both before and after the adoption;
- Select a family which matches the child's ethnic and cultural background and religion, using Aberdeenshire's matching criteria;
- Provide full information on a child's background and needs to prospective adoptive parents, and a Life Story Book and Later Life Letter to the child;
- Prepare reports for Aberdeenshire's Permanence Panel and any other Agency's Permanence Panel and the court on all aspects of adoption work;
- Support arrangements for contact both before and after adoption, both direct and indirect, through Aberdeenshire's Letterbox Scheme;
- Provide post adoption support to adoptive parents to children who have been adoption;
- Provide a counselling service for adopted adults;
- Ensure that the workforce is appropriately skilled trained and managed.
- Operate the service within Aberdeenshire's Equality policies.
- Consult on the quality of the service and use feedback to inform development.

Principles

- Hold the child at the centre
- Value and respect individuality and diversity;
- Have clear and transparent decision making procedures;
- Consider and take account of the needs and wishes of the child;
- Consider and take account of the needs and wishes of the birth family;
- Consider and take account of the needs and wishes of adoptive parents.

April 2006
Revised February 2008

Aberdeenshire embraces the principles agreed by the Adoption Policy Review Group, Phase II.

1. Children benefit from being brought up in families by a parent or parents committed to them in parent/child relationships.
2. Children generally benefit when the three “roles” of birth parent, person with daily care and person with legal responsibility are combined in the same person.
3. Substitute parents should generally bring up those children who cannot be safely brought up by their birth parents.
4. Children generally require stability, predictability, and the opportunity to form secure attachments, in order to develop into healthy adults.
5. There must be respect for the private and family lives and other fundamental rights of children, birth parents and substitute parents.
6. The interests of children, birth parents and substitute parents should, where possible, be held in balance, albeit the welfare of children is the paramount consideration.
7. The principles should apply that the welfare of children throughout life is the paramount consideration, the children’s view should be taken into account and any interventions should be the least intrusive to achieve the necessary objective.
8. Any decision in relation to children should respect their racial origin, religious persuasion and cultural and linguistic background.
9. A framework is required whereby individual solutions can be found for individual children.
10. Decisions relating to children should be clear, consistent and taken within a timescale, which meets children’s needs. Prolonged uncertainty is detrimental to children.
11. Adoption is an appropriate solution for some children, but modifications may be required to enable it to better achieve the above objectives.