

Your Step-by-step Guide to the Adoption Process

Below is an overview of the adoption process. If you have any questions, or want to know more detailed information about any of the stages below, please don't hesitate to get in touch with us: 0116 454 4540.

1. You make initial contact with us

When you contact us we will ask some questions in order to learn more about you and your personal circumstances and we can answer any questions you may have. We will then send out an information pack if requested within 10 days.

2. Registration of Interest Form

If, after receiving further information via a DVD or Information Session followed by a home visit (Initial Visit) you wish to proceed, you will then need to complete the Registration of Interest Form (ROIF)

3. Call from an adoption social worker

Once the adoption team receives your ROIF we will contact you within 5 days of receiving it and a social worker from the adoption team will have a detailed discussion with you. We will then let you know if we can accept you into Stage One of the process.

4. Stage One

Statutory references and checks will be taken up. Stage One will usually

be completed in 2 months but can be extended up to a maximum of 6 months. It will be very much an adopter led process and will move at your pace. If your application is not able to progress to Stage Two the adoption team will inform you in writing of the reasons and if appropriate refer you on to other agencies or the National Gateway 4 Adoption.

5. Plan and agreement

During Stage One the adoption team will draw up a Prospective Adopter Plan and ask you to sign an agreement setting out what the adoption team will provide and it will detail what steps you need to take and what needs to happen for you to progress to Stage Two.

6. Stage Two (4 months)

You will be allocated a worker to complete your adoption assessment following completion of a Stage Two Agreement form. The agreement will set out details of each visit (minimum of 6) and you will be given a provisional panel date for your approval. You will receive further information and training in both Stage One and Stage Two which will include Adoption Preparation Groups. As part of the course you will have the opportunity to speak to experienced adopters who share their knowledge of what it is really

like to adopt a child. All of this information is brought together in the Prospective Adopters Report (PAR).

7. Adoption Panel

This happens on completion of the adoption assessment. At the end of the assessment, your PAR is presented to the Adoption Panel, which meets at least monthly. Adopters are invited to attend. You will be given the panel's

recommendation on the day. This then goes to the Agency Decision Maker who formally considers the recommendation and makes a decision within seven days.

8. Matching and Placement

This takes from 4 weeks to several months. We work with you to identify the right child and we will complete a Matching Plan Agreement with you. How long you have to wait depends on the needs of the children and what age and type of child you are best suited to. We try to place children as soon as possible and matches can take place as soon as a few weeks after approval but usually there is a wait of several months before a match. seven days.

9. Matching Panel

Panels are held every month. The adoption panel then makes a formal recommendation that the child can be placed with you and this is then subject to the Agency Decision Maker agreeing the match and this is done within seven days of the date of the panel.

10. Introductions

This usually takes between 1 - 2 weeks. Your child's placement is carefully planned and following a series of introductions they will move and become part of your family. Your social worker supports you as you get used to being an adoptive family and the local authority has a statutory duty to review the child's placement up until an adoption order is granted.

11. Adoption Order

This takes between 3 - 6 months. Following the placement of a child, or children, the granting of the Adoption Order usually takes three to six months, although in some cases it can take longer. If you have any questions, or want to know more detailed information about any of the stages below, please don't hesitate to get in touch with us: 0116 454 4540.

Independent Review Mechanism

If you don't agree with the decisions that are made by the Adoption Panel, you have a legal right to have your case reviewed by the IRM (Independent Review Mechanism).

You will need to contact them within 28 days from when you receive written notification of the Adoption Panel's recommendation.

This review process is conducted by an independent panel run by BAAF (British Association for Adoption and Fostering) for prospective adopters.

Whilst it cannot overturn the Panel or Agency decision, it is able to make a recommendation to the Agency about your suitability to adopt.

The Agency then takes this recommendation into consideration when making its final decision.

We can provide more details about this, or you can find out more here: www.independentreviewmechanism.org.uk

