



Adoption Service Statement Of Purpose 2022-2023





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1. Introduction

This Statement of Purpose sets out the aims, values, principles and the objectives of Cumbria County Council Adoption Service, which is a partner in Adopt Coast to Coast, a Regional Adoption Agency. The other partners are Durham County Council and Together for Children, who deliver children's services on behalf of Sunderland City Council. Adopt Coast to Coast was launched on the 1st April 2021 and the Statement of Purpose for the RAA should be read alongside this one.

This Statement of Purpose describes how the values, principles and objectives will be met in partnership with children, children, young people, their families, carers and partner agencies. It also explains the facilities and services of the Adoption Service, which are delivered in accordance with adoption legislation and regulatory frameworks including:

- Children and Adoption Act 2006
- The Adoption and Children Act 2002 (revised 2011)
- The Adoption Minimum Standards 2014.
- Adopters Charter 2011
- The Adoption Agencies (Panel and Consequential Amendments) Regulations 2012
- Action Plan for Adoption Tackling Delay 2012.
- Statutory Guidance on Adoption 2013
- Children and Families Act 2014.

This document will be made available upon request for inspection by:

- Any person working for the purposes of the Adoption Service
- Children who may be adopted, their birth parents and guardians
- Person wishing to adopt a child
- Adopted persons, their parents, natural parents and former guardians.

The Statement of Purpose will be reviewed at least annually and amended as necessary. It will also be updated to accommodate changes in legislation, practice, policies and priorities as required.

Within 28 days of any amendment the Adoption Statement of Purpose must be sent to the Chief Inspector of OFSTED (Office for Standards in Education) and published on the provider's website.

Adoption Policy Statement

In Cumbria we believe that all children and young people have the right to be healthy, happy, and safe; to be loved, valued and respected; and to have high aspirations for their future.

In Cumbria we want all children to have loving, secure relationships with family, friends and carers, be eager, excited, curious and engaged in learning, have self confidence, be able to co-operate and communicate socially and have the best possible health and development.

We believe children should remain with their birth family wherever possible when this is in the best interests of the child and where all of their needs will be consistently met in a safe and caring home. However, we recognize that sometimes that is not possible for a number of reasons. We believe that all children need a permanent home and family. (Cumbria Permanence Policy)

The Adoption Service is one of a range of services provided for children that help to achieve this vision. More information about children's services in Cumbria can be found on the Cumbria County Council website at www.cumbria.gov.uk/adoption

Adoption provides permanence for many children, along with a sense of belonging, having their own family who care for them and meet their needs.

Cumbria's Adoption Service is child-centered and recognises the lifelong nature of adoption through the following services:

- Work in partnership to deliver the “hub and spoke” model for the Adopt Coast to Coast Regional Adoption Agency through collaboration in respect of its statutory adoption functions.
- Information, advice and counselling for parents who wish to choose adoption for their child
- Care planning for children where their parents or extended family members are unable to care for them
- Recruitment and commissioning of sufficient adopters to enable a realistic choice of a family for Cumbrian children
- Preparation, training, assessment and approval of adoptive applicants
- Family finding for children
- Matching and linking of children to families
- Support for the introduction, and placement of children with adopters
- Assessment of the support needs of those impacted by adoption, specifically the adopted child, the adoptive parent and their family, birth parents, birth relatives and adopted adults
- Provision of information about the range of services available to those impacted by adoption
- Provision of services to support those impacted by adoption
- A counselling service for adopted adults who wish to have access to information about their birth family, and their adoption records
- Intermediary Service for birth relatives who wish to seek information about their adopted child or relative
- Inter-country adoption. Those wishing to apply to adopt a child from overseas will be referred to The Inter Country Adoption Centre who are contracted to provide this service for us.
- Independent counselling is provided to birth parents and relatives where a plan for adoption is made for a looked after child through our Affected by Adoption Service.
- Create strong partnership working with Local Authorities, the Voluntary Adoption Agencies and universal services
- Offer a service which is high-quality and provides good value for money

Values and Principles

Cumbria County Council's Adoption Service is committed to maintaining the values and principles in accordance with the Adoption Minimum Standards 2014.

There is commitment to work as partners in a single Regional Adoption Agency across the geographical area proposed, to achieve:

- A culture of early permanence planning in order to identify suitable adopters for children at the earliest possible stage during the care planning process to ensure the timeliness of the child moving in with their adoptive family.
- Marketing activity and recruitment of prospective adoptive families to meet the needs of the range of children, including sibling groups.
- Assessment and training of prospective adopters to a consistently high standard.
- Development of services across the range of adoption functions in the RAA through the capturing of stakeholder views and best regional and national practice.
- Matching, linking and adoption support that enables children to live in supportive and safe placements with their adoptive families.
- Pre and Post Adoption support tailored to meet the needs of the children and adoptive families and to deliver this as a consistent package of support across the RAA area.
- Effective and easily accessible Birth Family support.
- Access to consistent and responsive Intermediary Services.

Children

Providing child-centred services through:

- Placing the child at the centre throughout their adoption journey and into adulthood.
- Securing early permanence to prevent delay and achieve the best possible outcomes.
- Responding to the child's voice in permanence planning and ensuring communication is effective to enable them to understand their life narrative.
- Creating a sense of belonging for the child, in a secure permanent family and in the wider adoption community.
- Ensuring access to support at the level and time that it is needed.
- Ensuring sufficient adopters to promote the best possible match for the child.

Giving a high-quality accessible service to adopters and potential adopters through:

- Ensuring applicants receive a sensitive, flexible and welcoming service.
- Responding to enquiries from potential adopters in a timely manner.
- Giving prospective adopters clear, realistic and timely feedback at all stages of their enquiry and application.
- Ensuring that adopters fully contribute to an evidence-based assessment, approval and matching process.
- Providing consistent quality of adoption support that is relevant to individual adopter family's needs.
- Identifying and progressing potential matches at the earliest possible stage.
- Providing qualified, skilled and experienced staff to support and guide adopters throughout their journey.
- Offering consistent, high quality, up to date training throughout, to enable adopters to understand the lifelong impact of adoption.

Providing an accessible independent service for birth families and others affected by adoption which will include:

- Support for birth family members whose children have a plan of adoption and enabling them, at any point, to contribute to the child's understanding of their life story.
- Intermediary services to birth family members and adopted adults.
- A letterbox service to facilitate ongoing positive contact between birth families and children.
- Facilitation of direct contact where this meets the child's needs.

As part of Adopt Coast to Coast, Cumbria County Council's Adoption Service is committed to reflecting the spirit and intentions of the Adopters Charter 2011.



2. Aims and Objectives

Cumbria County Council's Adoption Service has the following aims and objectives:

The central purpose of the Adoption Service is to provide secure and loving homes for Cumbrian children, who for any reason, cannot be cared for permanently by their parents or other relatives under another legal order, and to provide and develop services for all those affected by adoption, by consultation/participation/joint working with adopted adults, adopters and their children. This extends to the children in the wider RAA partnership through our shared services.

Objective A

- To maximise the contribution adoption can make in promoting permanent families for looked after children.
- To promote the long-term welfare of all children in Cumbria who may need adoption, seeking best outcomes for them through excellent health and social care, education and therapeutic services.
- To promote a positive sense of identity by respecting their heritage, providing relevant information and helping them to understand their history.

Objective B

- To ensure that all the Adoption National Minimum Standards are met within the adoption service.

Objective C

- To recruit, prepare, assess and approve prospective adopters (including foster carers wishing to adopt a child in their care) who have the potential to adopt children in Cumbria, within the RAA, or elsewhere who need to be adopted.
- To match children who need adoption carefully with families who are able to meet all their needs, into adulthood and beyond.

Objective D

- To support adopters to help them provide a family for life.
- To provide support services to all adoptive families (including inter-country adoption) to enable the children's placements to last into adulthood and beyond.
- To prevent adoption breakdowns.
- To respond sensitively to the short and long-term needs of parents and other birth relatives of children who may be or have been adopted.
- To provide information and advice on adoption issues to all those with an interest in the subject.
- To advise adopted adults seeking information about their history or wishing to trace birth family members.
- To assist people searching for or seeking information about a relative who has been adopted.
- To seek continuously to improve adoption services in the county within available resources.

Objective E

- To provide an Adoption Service that is timely, fair and transparent to all who have an interest in the adoption service.
- To promote a service committed to equality and diversity to all those affected by adoption by having regard to the ethnicity, faith, sexuality or disability of applicants and children requiring adoption.

Objective F

- To maintain a qualified, experienced and skilled staff to satisfy the objectives of the service.

Service aims 2022/23

In addition to the above the Adoption Service is working with the wider Children's Service and the Regional Adoption Agency partner agencies:

- To achieve the County target in adoption that the average timescale for children from Placement order to match will be in line with the national figure of 121 days.
- To recruit at least 25 new adoptive families who can offer a home to the children waiting for placement, including Fostering for Adoption, and brothers and sisters together.
- To strengthen safeguards for children in the multi-agency checks and updated checks at key points.
- To purchase suitable adoptive placements from other agencies where the RAA cannot meet the needs of children in a timely way with in-house adopters.
- To provide early permanence placements for children on a fostering for adoption basis where appropriate for the child.
- To strengthen the mobilisation of family networks to support adoptive families.
- To seek the views of all those affected by adoption on the further development of the service and the Regional Adoption Agency by providing feedback forms and consultation opportunities to all service users.
- To increase the availability of therapeutic services to adopted children and families in the County, including referrals to the Adoption Support Fund.
- To provide a Child Appreciation Day for all children over 3 years old with a plan for adoption once a match is identified.
- To work with the District teams to ensure effective co-working for the benefit of children.
- To contribute to early permanence planning via legal panel and planning meetings.
- To contribute service knowledge and expertise to the plans for delivery of adoption services from 1st April 2023 in two new authorities.



3. Structure and Personnel

Introduction

3.1 Cumbria County Council Adoption Service is part of Children's Services and is managed by the Adoption Service Manager, who is in turn matrix managed by the Senior Manager Children Looked After provider services(Cumbria County Council) and the Head of Service (RAA)

- There is a Team Manager for Recruitment and Assessment of adopters and a Team Manager for Adoption Support Services.
- There is a Team Manager Panels and Permanence, who is Panel Adviser to Adoption Panels, and also manages the Adoption Family Finders. The post holder carries out a quality assurance role in relation to Panel business, manages panel members' activity and training. The post holder quality assures reports and provides advice in respect of obtaining the agency decision where the plan for the child is adoption. This post is also responsible for leading on tracking, matching and family finding.
- There is a Team Manager for the Children's Adoption team.
- There are 3.8 FTE Recruitment and Assessment Team Social Workers with a target of providing 25 new adoptive families this year.
- There are 7.2 FTE Adoption Support Social Workers who support adoptive families from the point of approval onwards, including Letterbox exchange service, support for ongoing direct contact, and a 0.5 Social Worker post providing independent services for birth parents whose children are in Court proceedings or have been adopted. The team includes provision of specialist therapeutic services to children with a plan of adoption, adopted children and their families via individual work, groupwork and training.
- There are 2 experienced Social Workers who lead on Family Finding and timely progression of adoption matches.
- 4.8 FTE Social Workers and 2.5 FTE Child and Family Workers are employed in the Children's Adoption team to work with children from the point of adoption being the potential permanence plan.
- Social Workers in the service work closely with colleagues in the Children's Teams, and in partnership with all those involved in achieving adoption for children.

The Cumbria Adoption service works county wide with staff based in three office locations and also links with RAA colleagues for the Hub and other spokes.



Qualifications and Experience

The Service Manager is a qualified Social Worker with over 35 years' experience of Child Care Social Work and Adoption. Her qualifications include; BA (Hons) English and Psychology, CQSW and PG Diploma in Social Work, PG Diploma in Child Protection, CCETSW Practice Teacher's Award, NVQ5 in Operational Management and MSc in Professional Practice (Senior Leadership).

Managers within the service are experienced and registered with Social Work England and have completed managerial training courses. There are clear job descriptions and person specifications for all posts within the service, and these were updated in the reshaping of the service in 2018. All social workers are suitably qualified and registered with Social Work England, undergo regular training in their specialist fields and have access to post qualification training and award schemes.

Details of the staff in the service are given below:

Adoption Recruitment and Assessment Team

1 Team Manager
3.8 FTE Social Workers
0.5 FTE Adoption Support Worker

Adoption Support Team

1 Team Manager
1 Advanced Practitioner
7.2 FTE Social workers
1 FTE Adoption Support Worker

Panels and Permanence Team

0.8 FTE Team Manager
2 Family Finder Social Workers

Children's Adoption Team

1 Team Manager
0.5 FTE Advanced Practitioner
4.8 FTE Social Workers
2.5 FTE Child and Family Workers

Plus Central Support and Business Support staff

The Emotional Health and Wellbeing team is managed within the Adoption Service, providing a service across the county for children on the edge of care and Children Looked After.



Adoption Panels

Cumbria County Council has two Adoption Panels, one in the North and one in the South of the county. Panel Members and Chairs are on a central list and can operate across both Panels.

The Cumbria County Council Adoption Panel is the primary mechanism for the placement of children. The membership is reviewed regularly to ensure the broad range of interests in adoption matters is fully represented and currently comprises:

- An Independent Chair
- A Medical Adviser
- A pool of members available to ensure Panel is quorate, this is made up from a central list of Panel members which include:
 - Social work representatives from Children's Services
 - Independent Members who have personal or professional experience of adoption

The Adoption Panel also has 2 advisers who are not members but are present at the Panel meetings to give advice when required:

- A Legal Adviser
- The Agency Adviser

The Adoption Panel makes recommendations to the Agency. Decisions are then made by the Agency Decision Maker for Cumbria County Council; this role being currently carried out by a Senior Manager employed specifically to the role.



4. Monitoring, Evaluation and Management of Service

The performance of the Cumbria Adoption Service is monitored to measure how well we are doing, and this contributes to the evaluation of Cumbria County Council's performance as a whole. Overall responsibility for Children's Services rests with the Lead Member for Children's Services, and the links between the service and the executive are important in ensuring effective service delivery. The Adoption Service is an important part of delivering the Children and Young People Quality and Development Plan to provide security, care and stability for children at risk. The Adoption Service as a partner in Adopt Coast to Coast is committed to achieving best outcomes through the continual development and delivery of a range of high-quality services as part of the Regional Adoption Agency. The Adoption service continues to operate at a local "spoke" level, under the RAA co-ordination of the Head of Service to implement the agreed joint plans, policies and strategies as approved by the RAA Governance Board

The Children's and Young People Quality and Development Plan was updated in June 2022. Performance is reported and monitored monthly. Adopter and child data is reported monthly to the RAA Hub. We report quarterly and annually to the Adoption Leadership Board and receive the comparator results at authority, RAA, regional and national levels.

Reports on the business activity of the Adoption Service are presented twice yearly by the Service Manager to the Quality and Development Board and to Corporate Parenting Board as required. The report includes details of how standards have been met and other aspects of quality assurance. The Independent Panel Chair raises any matters of concern with the Panel Advisor, Service Manager and Agency Decision Maker. The Senior Manager, Children Looked After is responsible, on behalf of the Directorate Management Team, for leading the inspections of the service, agreeing and monitoring the improvement plan to meet any requirements and recommendations made by the Inspectors of the service

Performance Indicators for the Service's Aims and Objectives

Specific performance indicators have been identified for each of the Service's Aims and Objectives. These will be supplemented by RAA indicators. The indicators are as follows:

Objective A - To maximise the contribution adoption can make in promoting permanent families for looked after children etc.

Where it has been agreed that adoption is in the best interests of a looked after child, Cumbria's Adoption Service aims to secure a suitable permanent family for that child without unnecessary delay and to support families in providing a placement for life.

Measures of Success / Performance Indicators

The average timescale from Placement Order to match for children will be in line with the national figure of 121 days. (note- in 2022/23 this timescale will be negatively impacted by the delays in progressing plans from January-April caused by the Somerset judgment)

Objective B - To ensure that all the Adoption National Minimum Standards are met within the Adoption Service and Cumbria County Council.

Cumbria County Council's Adoption Service is inspected by OFSTED against the Adoption National Minimum Standards. The 2017 Inspection Report published in January 2018 is available on the OFSTED website. It is the Adoption Service's aim to meet all the required standards and to work in partnership with regional groups and other adoption agencies to achieve this.

Measures of Success / Performance Indicators

Copies of the annual and bi-annual reports are presented to the Assistant Director, Quality and Development Board and also the Corporate Parenting Board as required, to ensure that minimum standards are met.

Objective C - To recruit sufficient adopters to enable a realistic choice of family for Cumbria and RAA children.

The number and range of children and young people with a potential and confirmed plan of adoption and for whom the Court has made a Placement Order is carefully monitored by the Team Manager, Panels and Permanence. Cumbria Adoption Service as part of Adopt Coast to Coast aims to target recruitment of adopters to those who fit the profile of the families needed by the children and young people waiting for adoption across the RAA. This enables resources to be concentrated on finding the right families for Cumbria's Looked After children.

Measures of Success / Performance Indicators

To complete the assessment and approval of 25 new adoptive families in 2022/23

Cumbria's Adoption Service aims to recruit and approve adopters who can provide a family for life and the service will strive to work with and support those families to enable this to happen.

Measures of Success / Performance Indicators

The numbers of disruptions of adoption placements in Cumbria is monitored annually.

Cumbria experiences low rates of disruption. A disruption meeting is held for all disruptions to identify learning for service improvement.

Objective D - To support adopters to help them provide a family for life

It is recognised that by adopting children and young people, families need continuing support. We aim to create a culture of available support to families throughout the lifetime of the adoption and by working in partnership with adopters and other agencies to ensure that families feel supported and able to ask for assistance at any point.

Measures of Success / Performance Indicators

The Adoption Support Team provides a service to an increasing number of families each year due to the number of children placed and the complexity of children's needs. The need/demand is managed by offering different levels of service to meet the varied needs.

The team offers a wide range of services including therapeutic work and training from assessment stage onwards to promote attachments and understand challenging behavior as well as running training and workshops, support groups, consultation clinics and specific groups across the County. The support available in addition to individual work is detailed in the annual calendar of events and updated in a monthly newsletter.

The team works closely with Cumbria's Virtual School team to provide extra help to those children who require support to settle into the school environment. The team will support our families throughout their "lifelong" adoption journey and vary the support provided to reflect this.

We also commission services for families giving access to Psychological assessments and support 2 days a week and a Family Therapy service 3 days per month. Applications are made to the Adoption Support Fund to provide additional therapeutic support for children and young people where required.

For those in need of an assessment for adoption support, the adoption support team offer a consultation session to complete an initial assessment, informing the level of intervention needed. These are run monthly across the County.

The team requests feedback from adopters, children and other agencies about the quality and impact of all support services provided and uses this to shape service provision.

Objective E - To provide an Adoption Service that is timely, fair and transparent to all.

Cumbria's Adoption Service will provide clear information to all stakeholders on what services can be provided and what cannot. All stakeholders will be treated equally and fairly and will always be given the opportunity to raise any concerns about the service.

Measures of Success / Performance Indicators

To record the percentage of adopters' assessments completed within 2 months at stage 1, and 4 months at stage 2, after making a formal application.

To report on the number and outcome of any complaints by adopters or anyone else receiving a service from the Adoption Service.

To carry out consultation with children, adoptive families and young people to evaluate their satisfaction with the services, measured via feedback, both formal and informal.

Through file audit, ensure that all adopters receive a working agreement, whenever an assessment is undertaken.

Through feedback forms from those receiving a service.

To provide a service that promotes equality and diversity.

To reflect the Cumbria Equality and Diversity Policy document in place for all services. The matching process is rigorous and efficient.

Objective F - To maintain a qualified, experienced and skilled staff group to satisfy the objectives of the Adoption Service.

Cumbria's Adoption Service aims to provide good quality services with a sufficient number of well-trained staff. The service aims to ensure that all staff are trained and vacancies are kept to a minimum to ensure that the aims and objectives are consistently achieved.

Measures of Success / Performance Indicators

To ensure that all staff complete sufficient training days for their continued registration with Social Work England.

To recruit and retain staff in the service to meet service needs.

To ensure that minimum time is taken to fill staff vacancies and reduce the amount of working time which is lost due to vacancies.

5. Recruitment, Preparation, Assessment and Support to Prospective Adopters

Cumbria County Council's Adoption Service is committed to recruitment of adopters to meet the needs of children with plans for adoption, including those who need an Early Permanence placement through Fostering for Adoption.

- Enquires of interest about adoption are received by the RAA Hub through a dedicated telephone number or the web page. These are passed to the Recruitment and Assessment Team and the duty worker contacts the enquirer and takes the Initial Enquiry. Information is provided at this point about the overall profile of RAA children in need of adoption and the adoption process.
- In line with the findings of the Ombudsman in the Wolverhampton case, if there is no legal bar, the enquirer will be offered an Initial visit. At this visit the enquirer will be provided with more detail about the process towards becoming an adopter and the service offered.
- Prospective adopters will be invited to formally "Register their Interest" in adopting with Cumbria County Council. Within 5 working days, Cumbria County Council will make a decision on acceptance of the "Registration of Interest" and if agreed the adopters will enter the Stage One process.
- **Stage 1** - an agreement with the prospective adopters will be completed which requires the following checks to be completed within 2 months:- Statutory checks and medical information, DSB checks are taken up on any other person in the prospective adopters' household aged 18 years and over and all applicants undertake pre-approval training; "Preparing to Adopt" – which is a three day course. All applicants are requested to complete a Stage 1 Workbook.
- **Stage 2** - an agreement with the prospective adopters will be completed which requires the formal assessment process to take 4 months from this point until an Agency Decision is made following the report being presented to the Adoption Panel. A 2 day Introduction to therapeutic parenting training plus any other agreed training will be provided in stage 2. Any issues that extend the assessment process will be recorded and agreed by a Manager. This includes any request from the applicants for further time for reflection or other reasons.
- Assessments are undertaken in accordance with Adoption Agency Regulations 2005 and 2011 and are completed by a qualified Social Worker.
- Selected prospective adopters receive an Attachment Style Interview (ASI) as part of their assessment where this will assist future matching. This can take place in either Stage 1 or 2.
- All adoptive applications are considered by the Adoption Panel, which makes a recommendation to the Agency Decision Maker about their approval. The Agency Decision Maker will make a decision within 7 working days of receipt of the Panel minutes/recommendation.
- Applicants are invited to attend Panel when their suitability to adopt is considered.
- All prospective adopters have an allocated Social Worker throughout their assessment and approval. A Social Worker from the Adoption Support Team is allocated following approval and works with the family through the matching process and during the placement of a child.
- A matching plan is completed with adopters following their approval, setting out responsibilities and expectations as well as the agreed training and development plan.
- Approved adopters are invited to attend Panel when the suitability of a match with them is being considered.
- Prior to any placement of a child, both the adoptive family's and the child's support needs will be assessed. Support plans are agreed with the adopters along with the Placement report and plans are reviewed regularly up until the time an Adoption Order is made and afterwards as needed.



6. Adoption Support Services to Adopters and Their Families

The Cumbria Adoption Service is committed to supporting everyone affected by adoption as needed throughout their life. A range of Support Services is provided by the Adoption Support Team in Cumbria:

- Telephone, postal advice and email information and signposting service.
- A consultation service
- Assessment of those in need of an Adoption Support service.
- Short-term specialist interventions, e.g. revisiting life-story work, contact, attachment issues, challenging behaviour.
- Psychological and Therapeutic Services (details section 4)
- Assistance with Letterbox contact system as appropriate. This may include administrative support, recording and monitoring, advice on writing letters and mediation on contact arrangements and a review of those arrangements.
- Counselling in preparation for tracing, intermediary services, reunion and post-reunion support.
- Access to support groups and workshops for members of adoptive families, adopted children and young people and adult adoptees and birth parents.
- Access to information about resources including videos and books and a monthly newsletter for adoptive families.
- Opportunities for networking with other adoptive families including the annual adoption 'Fun Day'.
- Referral to specialist local resources e.g. Child and Adolescent Mental Health Teams, commissioned therapeutic services, Multi Professional support teams, Education Specialists.
- Applications to the Adoption Support Fund in relation to therapeutic needs where appropriate.



7. Complaints

Cumbria County Council has a complaints procedure which is made available to all those in receipt of services via the Cumbria County Council web page.

Stage 1: Any complaint will initially be looked at by a member of staff, usually the Team Manager, who will contact the service user to see if things can be resolved. Once investigations are complete, the Manager will then write to explain what they have found and what action they propose to take. If the service user is not happy that the problem has been resolved they can ask for their complaint to move to stage 2. Intervention by the Service Manager may be offered prior to stage 2 to attempt resolution without further escalation.

Stage 2: A formal investigation led by an Independent Complaints Officer. If the person making the complaint is still dissatisfied they can ask for the complaint to be heard at

Stage 3: A Review Panel. This Panel will consist of three people, two who are independent of Children's Social Care and a third who is a Senior Manager from the department but who has not been involved in previous stages. The Corporate Director of Children's Services will send a letter to advise the person making the complaint of the outcome of this stage.

Children and young people

There is a Children's Guide to adoption detailing Cumbria County Council's complaints procedure, which is made available for children for whom adoption planning is taken forward or who are placed with adopters. The Complaints Manager, alongside a representative of the National Youth Advocacy Service, with whom we have a service level agreement, deals with complaints from young people.

The Guide also includes National Helplines available to all Young people.

All complaints and compliments made to the service are the subject of a monitoring procedure. This assists service development and development of good practice.

The outcomes of complaints are regularly reviewed so that lessons can be learnt by the service.

Adopters and adopted children are also able to make complaints to OFSTED who are responsible for the inspection and registration of the Adoption Service. An inspector from the Commission can be contacted at:

Ofsted
Royal Exchange Buildings,
St. Anns Square,
Manchester,
Lancashire
M2 7EF
Tel: 0845 6404040

Feedback

We would welcome feedback about the contents of this statement. If you would like to share your views, comments, or concerns please contact:

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