information for adopter(s)

Welcome to the Adoption Register!

This leaflet explains what the Adoption Register is and how it can help children needing adoption to be matched with the right family for them.

ADDENDUM 2

Why do we need an Adoption Register?

There are currently about 4,000 children waiting to be placed in adoptive families. There are also many people approved as prospective adopters who are waiting to be matched with the "right" child for them. Adoption agencies do not have detailed information about all the children and families outside their own region, so the Adoption Register will work with adoption agencies and adoption consortia to make sure that all children and families have the best chance of finding a suitable match.

What is the Adoption Register?

The Adoption Register has two major elements.

There is a computer database that stores details of children awaiting adoption where their own agency has not been able to find the right adoptive family, and details of approved adopters awaiting a placement where their own agency has not been able to match them with appropriate children.

There is also a staff team of experienced database operators and family placement social workers who will look at the information on the database to see whether they can suggest possible "matches" between children and prospective adopters.

How will the Adoption Register work?

Children

Agencies will refer to the Adoption Register those children who have a plan for adoption but where there is not already a link identified locally which is being actively pursued. The children will be referred to the Register at the latest by three months after the agency has formally decided that adoption is in the child's best interest and either a full Care Order with a plan for adoption has been made, or there is an Interim Care Order and all the required consents, including that of the Court, have been obtained, or the child is accommodated and the consent of those with parental responsibility has been obtained.

Once a child's details have been recorded on the Adoption Register database, a search will be undertaken to identify potential adopters for

Photograph by John Birdsall Photography

him/her. Brief details of the families identified and of their adoption agency will be sent to the child's social worker who will consider the proposed link further.

Families

Agencies can refer prospective adopters to the Adoption Register as soon as they have been "approved" by the agency and will usually do this if it seems unlikely that the adopters will be matched quickly with a suitable child in their own region. Agencies must refer prospective adopters to the Adoption Register three months after they have been approved if there is not a match with an identified child being actively pursued.

Agencies who are referring families to the Adoption Register must certify that they have the families' consent to referral. You can decide that you do not wish to give your consent to referral to the Adoption Register but this will, of course, reduce the opportunity for you to be matched with an appropriate child.

Self-referral

If your agency has not already sent your details to the Adoption Register, you will be able to refer yourself to the Register. You must wait to do this until at least three months after the date on which your agency approved you as an adopter.

Register Self-referral Form (AD 02)

If you wish to refer yourself to the Adoption Register, please complete a self-referral form, which is available in paper form from your adoption agency or can be downloaded from the website: www.adoptionregister.org.uk, and forward it to the Adoption Register for England and Wales, Unit 4, Pavilion Business Park, Wortley, Leeds, LS12 6AJ. When Adoption Register staff receive your self-referral form, they will contact your agency and ask for your details to be sent to the Adoption Register.

Matching children with adoptive families

Once your details have been recorded on the Register database, a search will be undertaken to identify child(ren) who match your approval profile. Relevant details of your family, including a written description (profile), and details of your approving agency will be sent to the child(ren)'s social worker who will consider the proposed link further.

Information about your family can initially be sent out up to five times to different social workers for consideration with children. At this point your register entry will be put "on hold" whilst the social workers are given time to pursue possible links with any of the children. If none of the suggested links is pursued, your details on the Adoption Register database will again be made available to enable further searches and links to be made with other children.

Telephone helpline: 0870 750 2176

As a prospective adopter, you will be able to contact the Register direct on the above telephone number. Once we have checked your identity, we will confirm your details have been referred to the Register, give you information about the number of times your details have been sent out to social workers for consideration, and give you general advice. If your details have been sent out for consideration but a link is not being pursued, you can contact your social worker and ask about the reasons given by the child's social worker for not pursuing the link.

How do I know information about me will be kept safe?

* Information about you will be entered on the database only when we have your agency's confirmation that you have given your consent.

* Access to the database is by means of restricted passwords.

* Adoption Register staff have all been subject to a Criminal Records Bureau police check and have signed confidentiality agreements.

* Information about you will be sent only to other approved adoption agencies and only for the purpose of a possible match with a child.

We hope you find this information useful, and we look forward to working with you.

Adoption Register Contact Details

Adoption Register for England and Wales
Unit 4, Pavilion Business Park
Royds Hall Road, Wortley
LEEDS LS12 6AJ

Tel: 0870 750 2173
Fax: 0870 750 2174
Adopters' Helpline: 0870 750 2176
E-mail: mail@adoptionregister.org.uk
Website: www.adoptionregister.org.uk

www.adoptionregister.org.uk