

ADOPTION NCH YORKSHIRE

ADOPTION AGENCY STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

1. THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE AGENCY

As one of the largest national Children's Charities, NCH's aim is to help those children in greatest need. We do this by providing a wide and innovative range of services and by influencing change at local and national level. Currently we run more than 500 projects and help over 100,000 children and families a year across the four nations of the UK. We are also proud to continue to contribute to the development and delivery of childcare in the countries in the Eastern Caribbean and Zimbabwe.

Dr. Thomas Bowman Stephenson, a Methodist Minister, founded NCH in 1869. Since then, the charity has developed and grown in response to the changing needs of children, young people and families and in line with the best practice of the day.

Although NCH continues to benefit from the support of the Methodist Church, we positively welcome staff and volunteers from a wide range of backgrounds, cultures and religions who share Stephenson's vision of serving the most vulnerable children, whoever they may be. We acknowledge and celebrate this diversity.

NCH has been an approved Adoption Agency since 1926; the Adoption Agency's Statement of Purpose is to meet the needs of the most vulnerable children, through the practice of finding adoption placements and providing support to adoptive families. At Adoption NCH we have 5 established adoption projects throughout the country including a project in London specifically to meet the needs of Black children.

Nationally, the children who are referred to us are likely to be those whom Local Authorities find more difficult to place. These will include black children of all ages, from African, African/Caribbean, Asian and mixed heritage background, brother and sister groups, children with a range of disabilities, and children of school age as well as younger children whose parents have mental health problems or who abuse drugs/alcohol.

We seek to recruit the widest range of adopters to meet the varied needs of the children waiting, welcoming applications from all members of society, including married and unmarried couples, single applicants, gay and lesbian applicants either as couples or single and applicants with disabilities. The key criteria being that people are able and willing to make a lifelong commitment to meet the physical and emotional needs of the children we are seeking to place in an environment which will ensure they can grow up with safety and stability.

The Agency also fulfils requirements under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 to provide adoption support. NCH Adoption Agency provides services for adults who were placed for adoption and birth parents who placed children for adoption with NCH. NCH also offers a full range of Adoption support services to both children in placement and adoptive parents. We also provide training for adopters both pre and post placement and offer informal and formal support networks.

Adoption NCH works within the framework of Adoption legislation, guidance and best practice. The strategic priorities of the Adoption Agency are the same as the strategic priorities for the whole of NCH. We have a well respected and highly skilled workforce who all have considerable experience in adoption and who are constantly striving to maintain the high standards of work which NCH is noted for.

ADOPTION NCH YORKSHIRE (NE)

Adoption NCH Yorkshire (North East) is based in Leeds and covers Yorkshire and the North East, Humber, Middlesbrough and the North East Lincolnshire region of England. Recruitment is targeted at those who are able to meet the needs of children over 4 years, sibling groups, and black, Asian, and mixed parentage children of all ages. The team operates a same race placement policy. The team also actively seeks those with the skills and experience to adopt disabled children and those with complex health needs. Staff provide a prompt and informative response to all enquirers, three to four preparation courses a year and a thorough and full assessment process. Approved adopters receive high levels of support and are encouraged to attend an ongoing support and training programme and at least two social events per year.

The aim of Adoption Yorkshire is:

- To provide children who are unable to remain in their families of origin with high quality adoptive families who can meet their assessed needs and help improve their life chances.
- To provide appropriate support services to the children, substitute families and families of origin.
- To provide both post adoption and adoption record counselling to people adopted through NCH in the past.
- To provide help with access of records and counselling to people previously receiving a service from NCH.

2. NAME AND ADDRESS OF THE REGISTERED PROVIDER, THE RESPONSIBLE INDIVIDUAL, THE MANAGER AND THE BRANCH MANAGERS

- Registered Provider: NCH, 85 Highbury Park, London N5 1UD
- Responsible Individual: Nigel Harper, NCH NE Regional Office, 12 Granby Road, Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG1 4ST.
- Agency Manager: Susan Cotton, NCH NE Regional Office, 12 Granby Road, Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG1 4ST.
- Branch Managers: Donal Mullally 11 Queen Square, Leeds LS2 8AQ.
- Carol Buckley, 158 Crawley Road, Roffey, Horsham RH12 4EU
- Jean Smith, Unit 12 A Hackford Walk, Hackford Road, London SW9 0QT
- Sally Heaven-Richards, 141 Wood End Lane, Birmingham B24 8BD
- Mary Jones (Acting), Weir House, 93 Whitby Road, St. Phillips, Bristol BS4 4AR.

3. THE CONDITIONS IN FORCE IN RELATION TO THE REGISTRANTION OF THE REGISTERED PROVIDER UNDER PART 11 OF THE ACT are as follows:

- The category of registration is – Domestic and InterCountry Adoption Services. (CSCI service number 0000049065, certificate number F570002105).
- The agency must only operate from the branches named (Birmingham, Leeds, Horsham, London and Bristol).
- The Agency is registered as an Adoption Support Agency under the requirements of the Adoption and Children Act 2002.

4. THE RELEVANT QUALIFICATION OF THE MANAGER AND THE BRANCH MANAGERS ARE SHOWN BELOW:

Agency Manager: Susan Cotton – BA (Hons), MA Social Work, CQSW, DMS, MBA

Branch Managers: Donal Mullally – CQSW, BA Hons Social Studies
 Carol Buckley – CQSW
 Jean Smith – DipSW
 Sally Heaven-Richards – CSS
 Mary Jones – CQSW

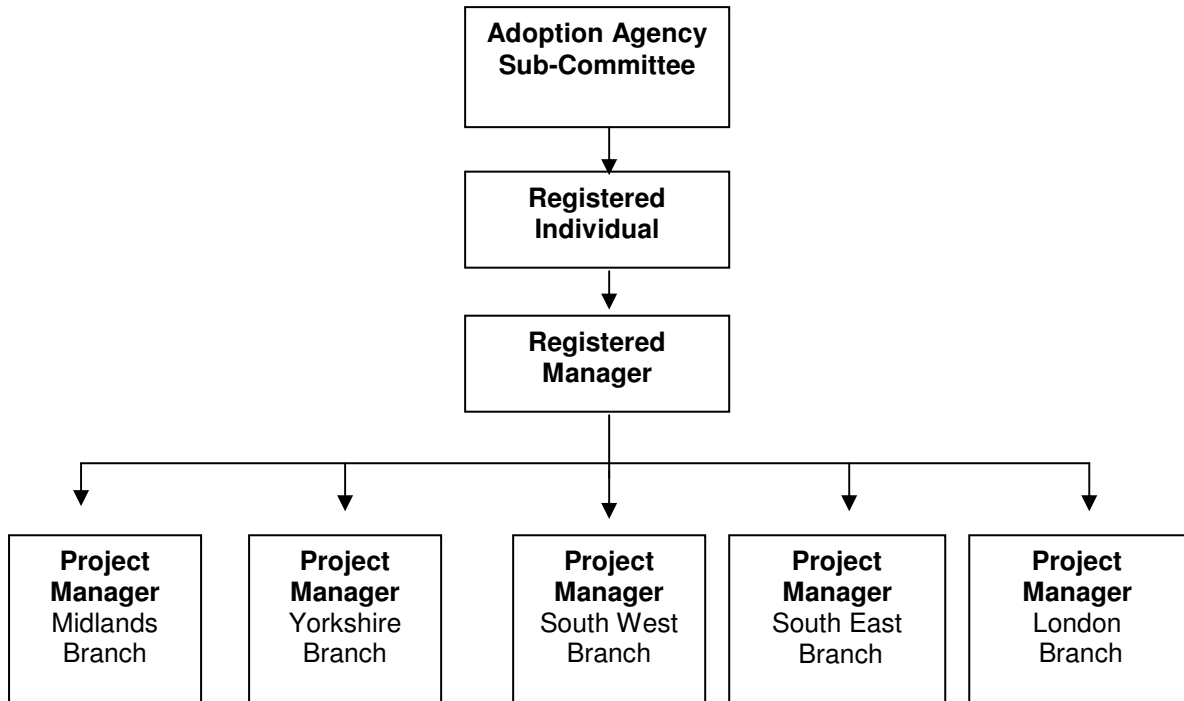
5. THE NUMBER, RELEVANT QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE OF THE STAFF WORKING FOR THE PURPOSES OF THE AGENCY ARE SHOWN IN THE TABLES BELOW:

NAME OF PROJECT: Adoption NCH Yorkshire

DETAILS CORRECT AS AT: 1ST OCTOBER 2006

Name of Staff Member	Professional Qualification Eg CQSW (please detail)	No. of years employed by NCH	No. of years experience in Adoption and Fostering	Date of last CRB check
Donal Mullally	CQSW	Started 2/10/06	10	September 06
Phil Batt	CQSW, Diploma in Psychodynamic Counselling.	5	13	July 2003 (update in progress)
Mary Slaymaker	MA, CQSW, PSW	16	16	June 2003 (update in progress)
Pat Kenny	DipSW	4 ½	4 ½	Aug 2005
Jyotsna Karsan	DipSW	4	10	June 2005
Nicky Avery	CQSW	7½	18	July 2003 (update in progress)
Mary Jarrett	CQSW	6 ½	20	Aug 2005
Lesley Ryan	CQSW, Dip Ch For Psych + Law Pra. Teach PQ Full Child Care Award.	3 ¼	3 ¼	June 2006
Christine Gunter	CQSW	2 years 8 months	18	March 2004

MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE OF AGENCY



The Adoption Agency is part of the wider NCH organisational structure. The agency became a Business Management Unit in April 2005. Full line-management responsibility for all the adoption projects lies with the registered manager. The Responsible Individual, Registered Manager and all Branch Managers meet regularly as the Adoption Managers Meeting. This group actively works to develop and review the Adoption Agency's Business and Marketing plans, monitors the financial performance of the Adoption Agency, considers new developments both internally and externally and monitors and reviews NCH Adoption Standards to ensure consistency and high quality. The group also explores and reviews current practice within the projects and continually seeks to improve practice locally and nationally. Accountability is to the Adoption Agency Sub-Committee. The Committee is made up of NCH Trustees and Officer representatives and an organisational chart is available if required.

6. MONITORING & EVALUATION OF THE ADOPTION AGENCY WORK

The Adoption Agency has been continually monitored by external Inspections, formerly carried out by the Social Services Inspectorate (SSI), every three years. This function has now transferred to CSCI. Copies of previous Inspection Reports are available on request. The most recent inspection was completed in 2004, and the Adoption Agency is currently working through an action plan of recommendations from that.

The Adoption Sub-Committee provides the accountable link between the Agency and NCH trustees, reporting business to the Children's Services Committee on a quarterly basis.

Adoption NCH has an agency Business Plan, as does each Branch with objectives and targets set. These are available through individual projects. Each plan is reviewed annually. The Adoption Agency is kept under constant review by the Adoption Business Management Group and Adoption Sub-Committee.

At Branch level, each individual manager receives regular supervision from the Adoption Business Manager and all staff members receive regular supervision and appraisal. There is an Agency Standard for recording this supervision.

Each Branch also ensures quality in service delivery by implementation of the NCH Quality Assurance system and the NCH Adoption Standards.

Adoption NCH have always recognised the importance of involving adopters at all stages of the process and were one of the first Adoption agencies to invite adopters to attend panel in 1995.

The Adoption Agency collects comprehensive management information on activities in the Adoption process, eg., number of enquiries from prospective adopters, time taken to complete an assessment, characteristics of the

Adoption Panel and of children placed in order to monitor and target more effectively the families we need to recruit to meet the needs of children, and the services we provide to adopters. Consumer satisfaction forms are also collected from adopters and Local Authority partners which also help us to be informed about the quality of our services and any adjustments we may need to make to improve them.

7. THE PROCEDURES FOR RECRUITING, PREPARING, ASSESSING, APPROVING AND SUPPORTING PRESPECTIVE ADOPTERS

The project recruits, assesses and prepares for adoption appropriate families from local communities. Recruitment is mainly via our website, Yellow pages and targeted local newspapers. Adoptive families also help with recruitment via their workplace/community newsletters and by participating in media interviews.

Families come from a variety of backgrounds and bring to the task a myriad of skills and experiences. Applicants undergo a vigorous assessment programme both through the home study process and through attendance at preparations groups and training workshops. The usual statutory checks are carried out, eg., police and health checks, families provide the names of three referees, one of whom is a family member. All referees are interviewed by the Project Social Worker.

Assessments are normally carried out within a six month target time and are based on work carried out by the social worker assigned to the family and the family themselves, who participate fully in the completion of the Form F (BAAF). A visit, just prior to the panel date, is carried out by the social worker's line manager and is written up in report form to become part of the assessment. The adoption panel recommends approval, rejection or deferment of the family, and the final decision is made by the agency decision maker – the Deputy Director of Social Work for the North East.

Upon approval, the assigned social worker supports the family through the process of identifying a child, introductions, placement and adoption of the child.

The family are further supported by the post adoption service. These services include: regular newsletters; formal and informal meetings; additional training and support; guidance and advocacy to access LA or other specialist services.

Full details of these can be found in our comprehensive Adopters' Information Pack which is available from individual projects and on our website (www.nch.org.uk/adoption). Branch Managers are happy to speak to any enquirers and provide them with additional information.

NCH Adoption Standards also contain full details of our procedures.

8. SUMMARY OF THE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

We want to hear what you have to say about NCH Adoption services as your comments can help us provide a better service. There are a number of people who can be contacted if there is a problem with the service offered including the project staff, managers or the Complaints Manager.

The project or local manager will look into the complaint fully and provide a written response. If the issue is not resolved this way, an independent investigation can be arranged and will be undertaken by someone who does not work for NCH. We aim to deal with any complaints within 28 days.

If the complaint is made by child or young person, an 'advocate', someone who will help and support with the complaint can be provided.

A complaints leaflet is available which provides full details of the complaints procedure.

9. THE REGISTRATION AUTHORITY IS:

Commission for Social Care Inspection
11th Floor
West Point
501 Chester Road
Old Trafford
MANCHESTER
M16 9HU

Tel: 0161 8762400

**DONAL MULLALLY
PROJECT MANAGER**

**SUSAN COTTON
AGENCY MANAGER
NOVEMBER 2005**