



One
Adoption
Agency
WEST YORKSHIRE

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WEST YORKSHIRE ADOPTION JOINT COMMITTEE

**Meeting to be held in Civic Hall, Leeds on
Friday, 6th July, 2018 at 1.00 pm**

MEMBERSHIP

Val Slater	City of Bradford MDC
Megan Swift	Calderdale MBC
Erin Hill	Kirklees MBC
Lisa Mulherin(Chair)	Leeds City Council
R Forster	City of Wakefield MDC

A G E N D A

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
1			<p>APPEALS AGAINST REFUSAL OF INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS</p> <p>To consider any appeals in accordance with Procedure Rule 15.2 of the Access to Information Rules (in the event of an Appeal the press and public will be excluded)</p> <p>(In accordance with Procedure Rule 15.2, written notice of an appeal must be received by the Head of Governance Services at least 24 hours before the meeting)</p>	
2			<p>EXEMPT INFORMATION - POSSIBLE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC</p> <p>1 To highlight reports or appendices which officers have identified as containing exempt information, and where officers consider that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons outlined in the report.</p> <p>2 To consider whether or not to accept the officers recommendation in respect of the above information.</p> <p>3 If so, to formally pass the following resolution:-</p> <p>RESOLVED – That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following parts of the agenda designated as containing exempt information on the grounds that it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information, as follows:-</p>	

3

LATE ITEMS

To identify items which have been admitted to the agenda by the Chair for consideration

(The special circumstances shall be specified in the minutes)

4

DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

To disclose or draw attention to any disclosable pecuniary interests for the purposes of Section 31 of the Localism Act 2011 and paragraphs 13-16 of the Members' Code of Conduct.

5

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive apologies for absence (If any)

6

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

1 - 6

To confirm as a correct record, the minutes of the previous meeting held on 12th January 2018.

(Copy attached)

7

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

To consider any matters arising from the Minutes (If any)

8

10.4(3, 6a)

HEAD OF SERVICE REPORT

7 - 18

To consider a report by the Director of Children's Services which provides a summary from the Head of Service of the developments within One Adoption West Yorkshire since the last report in January 2018.

(Please note that Appendix No.2 contains exempt information and should not be shared with third parties)

(Report attached)

9		<p>PERFORMANCE REPORT</p> <p>To consider a report by the Director of Children’s Services which sets out the fourth quarterly performance of the regional agency providing the reconciled adoption figures over the period of the year.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p>	19 - 38
10		<p>ANNUAL AGENCY ADOPTION REPORT & STATEMENT OF PURPOSE</p> <p>To consider a report by the Director of Children’s Services which presents the annual report of the One Adoption West Yorkshire (OAWY), as detailed in Appendix A of the submitted report, as required by the National Minimum Standards 2011.</p> <p>The Joint Committee are also requested to note the revised statement of purpose for OAWY attached at appendix B of the submitted report. The Statement of Purpose is required as part of the national minimum standard in order to be able to provide those services.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p>	39 - 108
11		<p>DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>Date and time of next meeting to be determined</p>	

Third Party Recording

Recording of this meeting is allowed to enable those not present to see or hear the proceedings either as they take place (or later) and to enable the reporting of those proceedings. A copy of the recording protocol is available from the contacts named on the front of this agenda.

Use of Recordings by Third Parties– code of practice

- a) Any published recording should be accompanied by a statement of when and where the recording was made, the context of the discussion that took place, and a clear identification of the main speakers and their role or title.
- b) Those making recordings must not edit the recording in a way that could lead to misinterpretation or misrepresentation of the proceedings or comments made by attendees. In particular there should be no internal editing of published extracts; recordings may start at any point and end at any point but the material between those points must be complete.

WEST YORKSHIRE ADOPTION JOINT COMMITTEE

FRIDAY, 12TH JANUARY, 2018

Present: Councillor L Mulherin (Leeds) – Chair
and Councillor O Rowley (City of Wakefield MDC)

Councillor H Hayden (LCC)

In Attendance: S Johal (LCC), H Lovelady (LCC), M Prout (LCC),
R Stevenson (LCC), J Jenkins (Calderdale MBC) and J Grieve (LCC)

24 APPEALS AGAINST REFUSAL OF INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS

There were no appeals against refusal of inspection of documents.

25 EXEMPT INFORMATION - POSSIBLE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were no items identified where it was considered necessary to exclude the press or public from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be considered.

26 LATE ITEMS

There were no late items

27 DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests made at the meeting.

28 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from: Councillor E Hill (Kirklees MBC), Councillor M Swift (Calderdale MBC) and Councillor V Slater (City of Bradford MBC)

29 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 4th October 2017 were agreed as a true and correct record.

30 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Head of Services Report (Minute No.20 referred) – Reference was made to the Adoption Support Fund and the different criteria regarding the levels of financial support in adoption across different local authority areas.

In responding the Head of Service reported that an item dealing with this issue appeared elsewhere on the agenda

31 HEAD OF SERVICE REPORT

The Director of Children's Services submitted a report and provided an update on the following:

- Staffing
- Relocation of staff
- Information Management and Technology
- Children Planning & Family Finding
- Adoption Support
- Adoption Support Fund
- Centre of Excellence
- Recruitment & Assessment
- Operational Leads Group

It was noted that the last of the recruitment activity for business support and social workers had now been completed. The structure was now fully established, with staff due to start in January.

Members were informed that meetings had taken place with Trade Unions and staff regarding those staff wishing to move over to Leeds terms and conditions (market supplements). The majority of staff had opted to move over to Leeds with implementation taking place on the 1st December 2017.

It was reported that IT issues were improving and the move to all staff having a Leeds laptops was completed at the end of November. The difficulties for staff working across offices had also generally improved although access to the other local authority systems remained an issue and work was in progress to address this.

Members were informed that the Family Finding service were developing more creative and streamlined processes for finding families for the children in West Yorkshire with a confirmed adoption plan. This had included the further development of the Regional Placement Group to look at children and families in the assessment process at an earlier stage.

It was reported that the adoption support teams were almost fully staffed and waiting times for assessments had reduced. However, there was still a waiting list for adoption support assessments between 6-8 weeks across the region

On the issue of the Adoption Support Fund the Head of Service reported that the matter was the subject of a separate report elsewhere on the agenda

It was noted that the Centre of Excellence grant had now been agreed and recruitment of the project team had been completed (An adoption manager and an education specialist plus a business support officer). They would be in post in January and would work with officers who are working across the adoption support fund and Centre of Excellence across the region.

Recruitment & Assessment was the subject of a separate report elsewhere on the agenda

Referring to the operational lead group Members noted the group had met on three occasions with discussions centred around the arrangements regarding Shopba decisions, Family Finding templates, discussions about the Adoption Support Fund & Adoption allowances; medical Advisors, adoption panels and access to records and archiving arrangements.

In summing up the Chair said that the transition continued to progress.

RESOLVED –

- (i) To note and welcome the progress of the agency
- (ii) To support the further progression of these arrangements

32 Regionalisation of the Adoption Support Fund Pilot Report

The Director of Children's Services submitted a report which set out details for piloting the regionalisation of the Adoption Support Fund Pilot.

Appended to the report was a copy of a letter from Robert Goodwill MP, Minister of State for Children and Families, which provided details about the Adoption Support Fund (Appendix A referred)

The Head of Service presented the report and explained that the main aims through piloting the regionalisation of the ASF were to improve adoption support across the region by:

- Regional commissioning of the ASF
- Engaging users in the development and testing of regionalised support services
- Improving the speed and quality of adoption support assessments and

- Developing the adoption support market across the regional agency
- Improving links with other services such as health, education and Centres of Excellence
- To test out how the ASF could be managed in a regionalised structure including how human and financial resources for adoption support would be deployed
- To inform future national policy and delivery of ASF and share emerging practice with other regional adoption agencies.

Members were informed that the regionalisation of the Adoption Support Fund was being piloted in three areas: West Yorkshire, Greater Manchester & Cheshire and Summerset & the South West. The pilots would run from September to March 2018 but it was understood that that a six month extension was being sought.

It was reported that one of the main tasks would be to draw up a protocol which would include a criteria to receive grant, ensuring that requests for support assessment were dealt with in a timely manner.

In offering comment the Chair suggested that it was important that the pilot be extended.

RESOLVED –

- (i) That details of the Adoption Support Fund Pilot be noted
- (ii) To support the continued development of this work

33 Practice Focus- Recruitment and Assessment Report

The Director of Children’s Services submitted a report which set out details of the recruitment and assessment strategy and action plan for One Adoption West Yorkshire.

Addressing the report the Head of Service reported that it was a requirement of the partnership agreement that One Adoption West Yorkshire would be responsible for the recruitment and assessment of adopters.

Mandy Prout, Service Delivery Manager, Children & Families said that One Adoption West Yorkshire (the agency) would recruit, assess and prepare sufficient numbers of adoptive families who could go on to meet the varying needs and backgrounds of the children across West Yorkshire who had a plan for adoption. The Service would provide a responsive, friendly, and

supportive service to prospective adoptive families that was underpinned by a clearly defined, open and fair process.

Members were informed that a series of five themed videos had been produced to assist in the recruitment process and provide more in depth information to adoptive families.

The Committee went on to view one of the videos "Finding Families for Older Children".

In the discussion that followed Members became more aware of the challenges potential adoptive families may encounter when seeking to adopt older children. It was accepted that teenagers were more likely to try to contact their birth parents and this was made easier by the use of social media. Unless such issues had been discussed previously by the child and adoptive parents it may become problematic later on.

The Head of Service suggested that there was a need to encourage the adoption of older children and that potential adopters need to be clear about having as much information as possible about the impact of early trauma and videos gave good information from people who had themselves adopted.

RESOLVED –

- (i) To note the strategy and action plan
- (ii) To support the continued development of this work
- (iii) That further information can be obtained from <https://www.oneadoption.co.uk/west-yorkshire/about-one-adoption-west-yorkshire>

34 PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Director of Children's Services submitted a report which set out the second quarterly performance report of the new regional agency.

Addressing the report the Head of Service reported that Work had been undertaken to establish the key performance criteria which would form the basis for practice improvement for the agency and this had been built upon since the first quarter report.

Members were informed that Adoption Support was one area that required more detailed consideration. It was reported that there were a number of discussions nationally about the data requirements that would assist in measuring performance and the adopter voice forum was working closely with

officers from One Adoption in developing this. This work had been delayed at a national level and work was ongoing. One Adoption were set to pilot a new dataset from July 2018 to take this forward.

RESOLVED –

- (i) To note the proposed performance report format and information
- (ii) To support the continued development of this work

35 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED – That the next meeting be arranged for mid July 2018, exact date and time to be confirmed at a later date.



Report author: Sarah Johal

Tel: 0113 2783623

Report of Director of Children and Families

Report to West Yorkshire Adoption Joint Committee

Date: 6th July 2018

Subject: Head of Service Report

Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	X No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, access to information procedure rule number: Appendix number: 2 (10.4 (3) and (10.4 (6a)	X Yes

Summary of main issues

1. Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees and Wakefield adoption functions as specified in the partnership agreement were delegated on the 1st April 2017 to Leeds City Council and One Adoption West Yorkshire formally opened.
2. This report provides a summary from the Head of Service on the developments of the service since the last report to the committee in January 2018.

Recommendations

1. The Joint Committee is requested to:
 - a) Note the progress of the agency; and
 - b) support the progression of these arrangements.

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report sets out the developments within One Adoption West Yorkshire since the last report in January 2018.

2. Background information

- 2.1 Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees and Wakefield adoption functions as specified in the partnership agreement were delegated on the 1st April 2017 to Leeds City Council. One Adoption West Yorkshire formally opened on this date.

3. Main issues

Use of Resources

3.1 Staffing & HR

Staffing remains relatively stable and some recent recruitment to posts will assist in covering the work left by vacancies. There remains a number of staff who are on sick leave and we are working closely with the managing attendance team and occupational health to address ill health in the service.

- 3.2 The waiting list in adoption support has again increased recently due to 3 staff leaving and a member of staff on long term sick and stands at around 80 cases. Recruitment to the posts has been undertaken but adoption support work also remains in the recruitment and assessment teams that needs to be transferred. The teams are supporting 680 families and the managers are struggling to maintain good quality oversight of the work over different Local authority areas.

- 3.3 We are currently looking at management capacity overall with two managers off sick with stress related illness. We have agreed a half time additional manager post across family finding from September to provide additional management oversight of work to assist with the Wakefield and Bradford areas and are discussing at a similar approach regarding adoption support with managers.

Accommodation and Service Delivery

- 3.4 Staff are currently in 5 bases across the region and staff are experiencing excessive travelling across the region. Discussions earlier in the year took place regarding the concerns of staff and coincidentally a potential office space became available at the West Yorkshire Joint Services (WYJS) in Gildersome. We have explored in detail the options regarding accommodation to ensure that the service is maximising the use of resources given the annual lost time and travelling costs associated with the current working arrangements. As a conservative estimate these are as follows:

1,164 lost hrs due to travel time (cost of £24,556.92);

£18,480.09 mileage;

£3,425.30 parking.

3.5 The senior leadership team has been considering 3 options:

- Remain in the current arrangements
- Look at moving from 5 bases to 3 bases so that the three teams in each area could be located together (as in Leeds office at Kernel House)
- Move to one central office location for everyone but for staff to have touch down space in each LA area to maintain relationships with LA staff.

3.6 Team Managers were asked to seek views from staff on the proposed options and a workshop was held with managers to explore the proposed options and consider any alternative options that may have been suggested and this has assisted the senior leadership team in thinking through the issues from different perspectives.

3.7 Following two site meetings to look at the accommodation at WYJS in detail it has become clear that the facility was not large enough to accommodate all the staff within the agency and provide accessible car parking on the premises or the surrounding area. There was also little public transport to this location and was a drawback.

3.8 The longer term aspiration is to find a building for all the staff with touch down space in each local authority area to provide an integrated and joined up service that enables a more flexible use of resources across the region.

3.9 In the meantime there are plans to move from five office bases to three office bases with the Halifax team moving to Huddersfield and the Wakefield recruitment and assessment team moving to Bradford, although touch down space in both locations will remain. Discussions are underway with asset management in each local authority to explore this further and this will not take place until the autumn.

3.10 Alongside these issues, discussions are currently underway to address the issues of service delivery across the Wakefield area from the Bradford office. We are now working towards sharing this work across the Leeds and Bradford teams with some staff being based in Leeds as well as Bradford in adoption support and family finding with a view to using our resources more flexibly.

3.11 These planned interim arrangements will give time to see how the new arrangements fit with the developing use of technology to allow for telephone conference meetings, as well as implementing proposed changes to the duty system with the roll out of enterprise voice, where duty will take place by rotation across the 3 office bases. This will reduce staff travelling to Kernel House to cover duty in the future and reducing travel time and costs. Initial discussions have taken place with the trade unions regarding the moves of accommodation for those staff affected and individual discussions will take place to discuss specific arrangements.

IT

- 3.12 The work regarding accessing the local authority systems from a portal on the Leeds laptop remains problematic and is difficult to implement due to different systems in place and priorities in each local authority. Currently, this poses issues for some staff having to rely on two or three computers to access information and this has yet to be fully resolved in Wakefield, Bradford and Kirklees for a variety of reasons.
- 3.13 The IT project team is working with the teams on developing business processes and integrating forms into the mosaic workflow as well as developing the reporting from the system. The family finding activity and tracking form is the current focus of work as this is the principal tool for data reporting on the Family Finding activity in the agency.

Partnership working

Operational leads group

- 3.14 Child Permanence Report training for social workers across the region has been agreed and has been commissioned by One Adoption West Yorkshire. In addition training regarding sibling assessments is also being commissioned to improve practice in these areas.
- 3.15 An update regarding the work around Early Permanence in the region was discussed and all relevant staff within OAWY have had training. Work with Voluntary alliance and the practice improvement grant continues and a regional meeting with service managers and leads for fostering and placements teams were held to ensure a joined up understanding and approach regarding these issues. The first session with partner local authorities took place in Bradford in April. 22 people attended: contact managers, social workers, practice supervisors.
- 3.16 The next session will take place in June and will cover the Leeds/Wakefield border. The event is open for anyone to attend. The third event will be held in Kirkless/Calderdale area.

Centre of Excellence

- 3.17 The sector specialists for education and social care have started and the project is well supported by project manager and project administrative resources. The deployment of the sector specialist has been delayed, but we have commissioned expertise from mental health sector to support in the development of the multi-disciplinary adoptions support assessment and support model. We have established excellent working relationships with voluntary sector colleagues to ensure all the practice improvement projects in the Yorkshire and Humber region work towards a shared goal. Our adopter community is involved in the project both on an informal and formal levels.
- 3.18 We have commenced the analysis of as-is state of the adoption support assessment and created an on-line tool, which allows us both to baseline the current

skills and knowledge levels and to measure change after the improvements have been implemented. Simultaneously we have engaged with other adoption agencies to learn what assessment methods and tools are used outside our region.

- 3.19 The drafting of the improved assessment framework and toolbox is progressing, and whilst there has been a slight delay in delivering this objective, we have made changes to the project plan to minimise the impact of the overall project.
- 3.20 To start developing the multidisciplinary assessment and support model, we have built relationships with our colleagues across the education and mental health sectors. Due to the relatively recent publication of new regulation regarding the role of Virtual Schools in supporting the adopted children, our engagement with the Virtual Heads in the region commences at a very early stage for the schools and education community.
- 3.21 Following further discussions with the Dfe regarding extending the ASF pilot this is now not progressing and a verbal update will be provided at the meeting.
- 3.22 Meetings with medical advisors
- 3.23 Recent meetings with medical advisors and OAWY have taken place and templates have been agreed across the region for medical reports on children and what these should consider.

Performance Management

- 3.24 The final quarter and annual reconciled figures are available in the separate performance report for the committee.

Management oversight of practice and quality

- 3.25 All staff have regular supervision and managers are underway with the annual appraisals of staff.
- 3.26 A Case file audit framework has been developed with tools for adopters and children's files with feedback from adopters and children and young people, where appropriate. This was discussed at the operational leads group (overview attached at Appendix 1). This will be piloted and tested in the next three months with a view to full implementation in September. For children's cases we have agreed to trial a joint approach picking out three cases in each LA to see how this works out in the next few months.
- 3.27 An adopters' survey is in development and will be sent out to adopters across the region to look at their feedback over the last year. Work is being undertaken to modernise and digitalise feedback from adopters to influence and shape service development and delivery moving forward. The report card in the annual report is a tool that we intend to use twice a year to capture qualitative feedback from adopters and young people initially.

3.28 The service has been conducting a review of letterbox exchange work across the region. In each LA this task was undertaken by business support staff with staff on different grades. An options paper was presented to the senior leadership team about whether this function be part of the social work team or remain part of business support and the outcome is that letterbox will be a function within business support but will have access to professional advice and support with clear referral routes for those families requiring social work support.

Continuous Professional Development and Service Development

3.29 A restorative leadership programme of training has been completed with the senior leadership team, team manager group and advanced practitioners and senior business support officers and has really helped in building relationships across the region. An evaluation of the programme is currently being undertaken and will inform the roll out of further training for teams around restorative practice.

3.30 Staff have accessed a range of training individually to progress their own development. However, family finding and recruitment and assessment staff have had training in Early Permanence across the agency. Training regarding adoption support has also been provided regarding the new portal for the Adoption Support fund and ensuring that staff are up to date with the range of core provision across the agency and with independent providers, although there is further work required in this area.

3.31 A 3 year plan has been devised and is referred to in a separate item presented to this meeting. A service improvement plan sits behind the 3 year plan and is currently being finalised with service managers. A first year celebration event was held on the 13th June for the first year of the agency with staff reflecting on key achievements, presented by staff across the region and areas of practice.

4. Corporate considerations

4.1 Consultation and engagement

4.1.1 There has been ongoing consultation and engagement with staff who have transferred in to the agency as well as formal consultation with the trade unions regarding accommodation. Consultation with service users is ongoing to inform the development of the service design and delivery of the agency.

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

4.2.1 There are no implications for this report. An Equality Impact assessment has been completed and is attached to the annual report being addressed by a separate report within the meeting.

4.3 Resources and value for money

4.3.1 At the end of period two the staffing budget remains on target, although there are capacity issues in adoption support in terms of being able to meet the demands within the budget. The current spend on interagency placement is also on target however further analysis is currently underway regarding the changes in the fee arrangements which are discussed in Appendix 2 to this report. The management board have agreed to meet in the summer to have further discussions about the budget given the potential issues regarding inter agency fees and adoption support.

4.4 Legal implications and access to information

4.4.1 There are no implications for this report.

4.5 Risk management

4.5.1 There are potential financial risks with regards to the budget and the inter agency spend and demands within adoption support. Regular financial monitoring is in place and the management board are meeting in the next two months to discuss budgetary issues further.

5. Recommendations

5.1 The Joint Committee is requested to:
a) Note the progress of the agency; and
b) Support the progression of these arrangements.

Background documents¹

None

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.

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Interactive Learning Audit Framework – Overview

This Interactive Learning Audit framework has been developed where auditors sit alongside social workers and complete the audit together.

One of our aims is that this framework is beneficial in terms of learning and improving outcomes for children, young people and their families; for practitioners and managers and the organisation as a whole. The aim is that it serves the purpose of being outcome focussed, interactive, restorative and above all promotes reflection and learning.

The Interactive Learning Audit will form a part of One Adoptions' audit and quality assurance framework in terms of identifying key areas for development, celebrating good practice and feeding back into service planning all issues identified and actions taken.

The Interactive Learning Audit forms part of the practitioner's annual Continuous Professional Development (CPD) offer which also comprises: practice observation; monthly individual supervision; the knowledge and skills self-assessment; the annual appraisal and review, in addition to access to training courses, conferences, research events and the academic lectures programme.

The audit involves a manager and worker undertaking the audit together side by side, agreeing areas of good practice and areas for development, and following up action undertaken at a review. Learning from audits will be fed back to strategic management forums to ensure this learning is incorporated within future service planning.

The methodology will run along the lines of: practice experience, reflection on outcomes, analysis for improvement, action for learning, and evaluation and review.



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Report author: Sarah Johal

Tel: 0113 2783623

Report of Director of Children's Services

Report to West Yorkshire Adoption Joint Committee

Date: 6th July 2018

Subject: Performance Report

Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, access to information procedure rule number:		
Appendix number:		

Summary of main issues

1. This report sets out the fourth quarterly performance report of the regional agency providing the reconciled adoption figures over the period of the year.

Recommendations

2. The Joint Committee is requested to:
 - a) note the proposed performance information; and
 - b) support the development of this work.

1. Purpose of this report

1.1 This report sets out the final quarterly performance report of the regional agency.

2. Background information

2.1 Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees and Wakefield adoption functions as specified in the partnership agreement were delegated on the 1st April 2017 to Leeds City Council. One Adoption West Yorkshire formally opened.

2.2 The partnership agreement is clear that One Adoption West Yorkshire will develop a performance management framework and will comply with the key performance indicators set and report upon performance in relation to these to the Management Board of the Regional Adoption Agency (RAA), the Adoption Leadership board and any other statutory body as required.

2.3 This is the format of the quarterly report and the second quarter performance information.

3. Main issues

3.1 Work has been undertaken to establish the key performance criteria which will form the basis for practice improvement for the agency and this has been built upon over the period of the year.

3.2 Adoption Support is one area that requires more detailed consideration. There are a number of discussions nationally about the data requirements that will assist in measuring performance and the adopter voice forum is working closely with us in developing this. This work has been delayed at a national level and we are currently aiming to trial some basic information during 18/19.

4. Corporate considerations

4.1 Consultation and engagement

4.1.1 There has been ongoing consultation and engagement with other local authorities and with adoptive parents about the performance measures and information and this continues to be work in progress.

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

4.2.1 There are no implications for this report.

4.3 Resources and value for money

4.3.1 There are no implications for this report.

4.4 Legal implications and access to information

4.4.1 There are no implications for this report.

4.5 Risk management

4.5.1 There are no implications for this report.

5. Recommendations

5.1 The Joint Committee is requested to:

- a) note the proposed performance information; and
- b) support the development of this work.

6. Background documents¹

6.1 None

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.

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One Adoption West Yorkshire quarterly performance report

January to March 2018

Introduction/summary

This is the final quarterly report, providing an update on One Adoption West Yorkshire.

This report is based in the premise of how much work has been undertaken in the period, how well and what difference has it made. The report is a simple and concise report, with detailed tables in the appendix. The report contains a number of tables and charts (when trends allow).

Children

This section of the report provides headline figures relating to children and young people at various stages of the adoption process within West Yorkshire. The figures in bold are for Quarter 4 and those in brackets are for the previous quarter. **N.B. The previous quarter figures have been amended to reflect reconciliation at year end.**

How much did we do?

During the quarter

- **319** (232) children left care, **40** (34) were adopted
During 2016/17 177 children were adopted, average 45 per quarter (14.9%)
- **28** (48) children had an ADM decision made
During 2016/17 211 children had ADM decision made, average 52 per quarter
- **24** (50) placement orders were granted
During 2016/17 200 placement orders were granted, average 50 per quarter
- **37** (45) children were matched to an adoptive family – **15** (13) inter agency placements
41% (29%)
During 2016/17 210 children were matched, average 52 per quarter
- **37** (42) children were placed with an adoptive family
During 2016/17 204 children were placed, average 51 per quarter
- **5** (4) children in new EPP
During 2016/17 7 children were in new EPP, average 2 per quarter
- XX Children added to tracking (we are not able to report on this at the present time)
- **13** (7) Children had a change of plan away from adoption
- **2** (2) Children had an adoption disruption

How well did we do it?

- **13%** (15%) of children leaving care were adopted, (England average is 14%).
- The number of children placed on EPP arrangements this year has gradually increased throughout the year which is encouraging.

Scorecard Data

For the **40** (34) children who were adopted during quarter 4 2017/18, it took an average of:

- **353** (426) days between a child entering care and moving in with their adoptive family (National Indicator is 426 days) (England Average is 593)
- **117** (124) days between a local authority receiving court authority to place a child and the local authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family (National indicator is 121 days) (England average is 223)
- **33** (20) were placed within 426 days of entering care, this is **83%** (59%).
- **23** (19) were matched within 121 days, this is **58%** (56%)

For the **37** (42) children who were placed during quarter 4 2017/18, it took an average of:

- **384** (332) days between a child entering care and moving in with their adopter family
- **170** (128) days between a local authority receiving court authority to place a child and the local authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family
- **27** (31) were placed within 426 days of entering care, this is **73%** (74%)
- **13** (24) were matched within 121 days, this is **35%** (57%)

For the **37** (45) children matched with an adoptive family during the quarter it took an average of **180** (130) days from placement order and **409** (322) days from entering care

How much did we do?***At the end of the quarter***

- **133** (145) children have an ADM decision but not yet matched
- **143** (163) children have an ADM decision but are not yet placed
- **110** (92) children have a placement order but are not yet placed. Of these, **67** (40) have been waiting for at least 18 months since entering care. **77** (57) children have been waiting more than 121 days since the placement order was made
- **6** (6) children with an ADM decision have a potential match identified

How well did we do it?

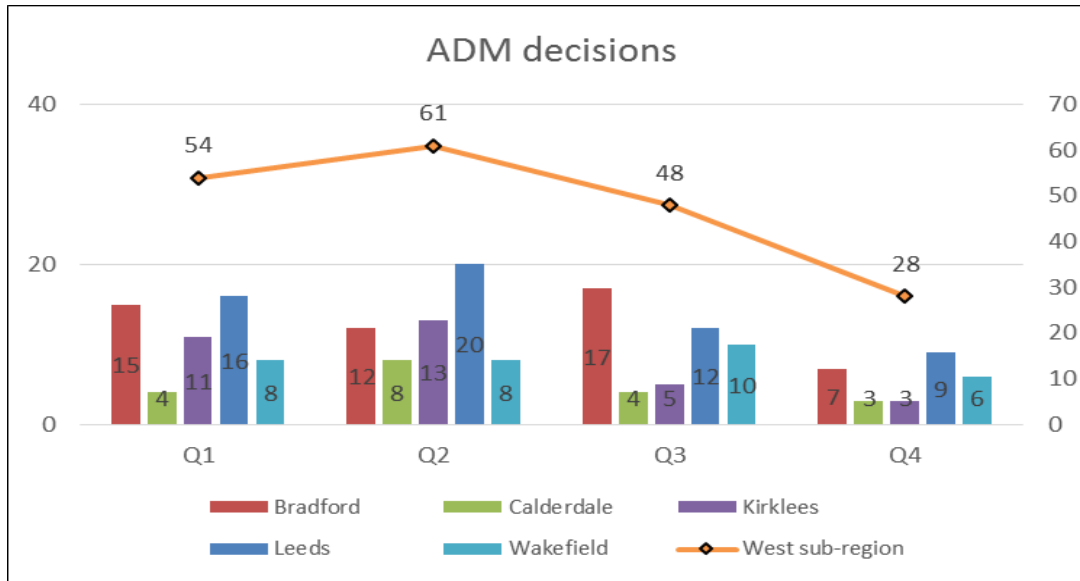
- For children adopted, the timeliness from entering care to moving in with their adoptive family has reduced further this quarter
- For children adopted timeliness between a local authority receiving court authority to place a child and the local authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family has also for the first time dropped below the national indicator at 117 (National indicator is 121 days) (England average is 223)

What would we like to do better?

The accuracy of reporting in each Local Authority regarding Early Permanence Placements appears to be an issue as we are aware of other EPP placements not appearing on the ALB returns. This will be investigated further with a view to resolving for the first quarter of 18/19.

What difference did we make?

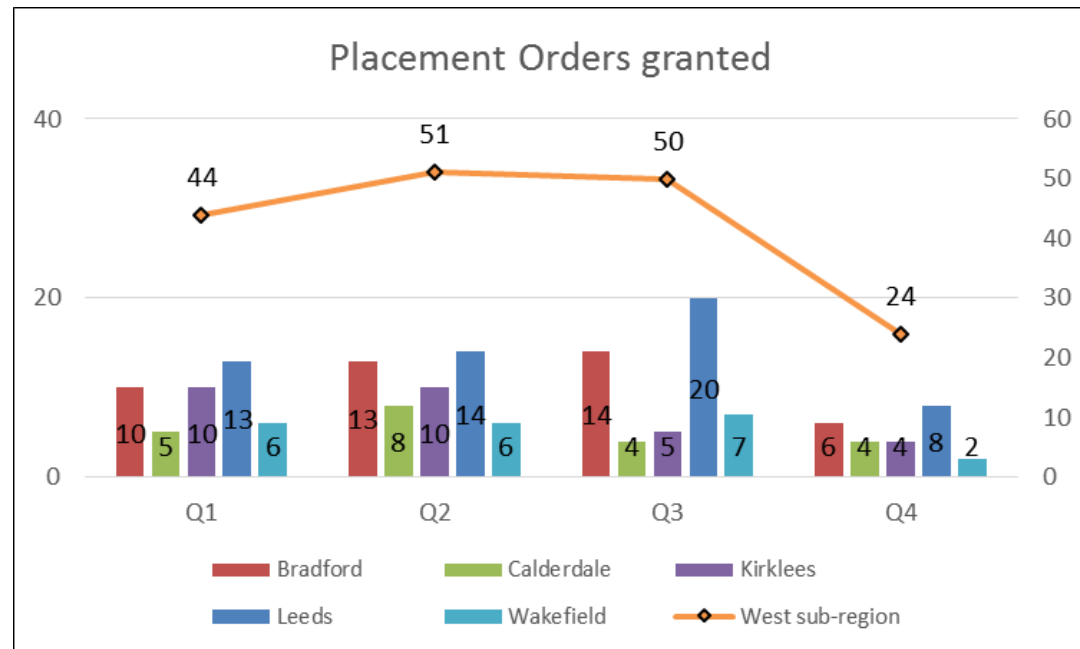
- More children reached their permanent home at the end of the year through early permanence arrangements.
- Of the children matched for adoption there are a number of older children with more complex needs matched where it has taken longer to find a family for them. However, for these children it has been essential that once a family has been identified to ensure that the child and family is well prepared and supported for the transition and these factors have contributed to the delay.



Commentary

This graph shows numbers of children who had an ADM decision in Quarters 1 to 4.

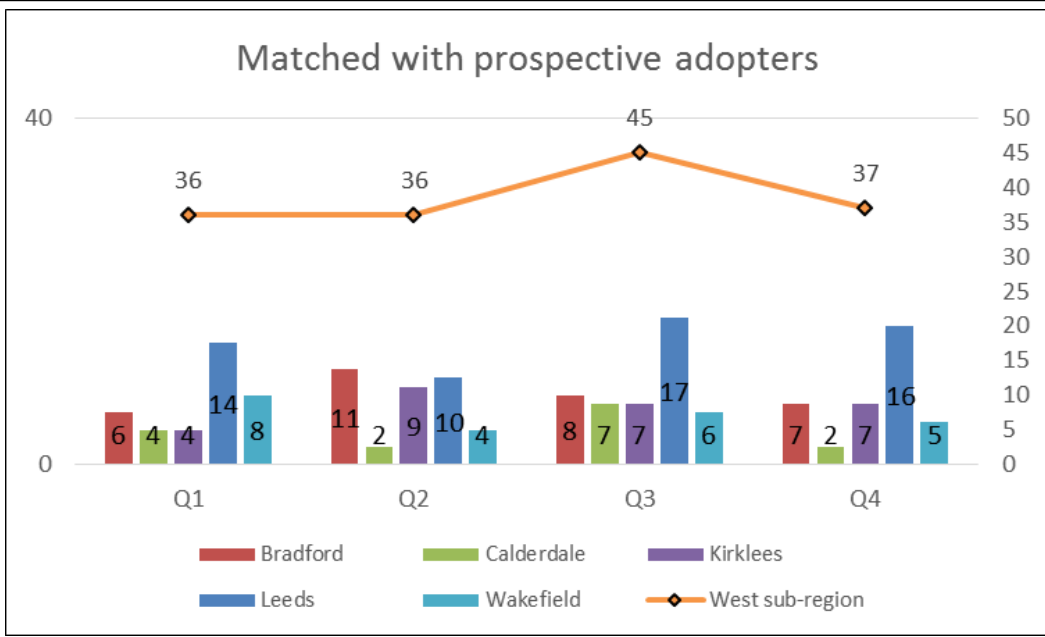
Decisions have drastically reduced this quarter to the lowest level seen for some considerable time and some discussion and analysis of the reasons for this need to be further understood.



Commentary

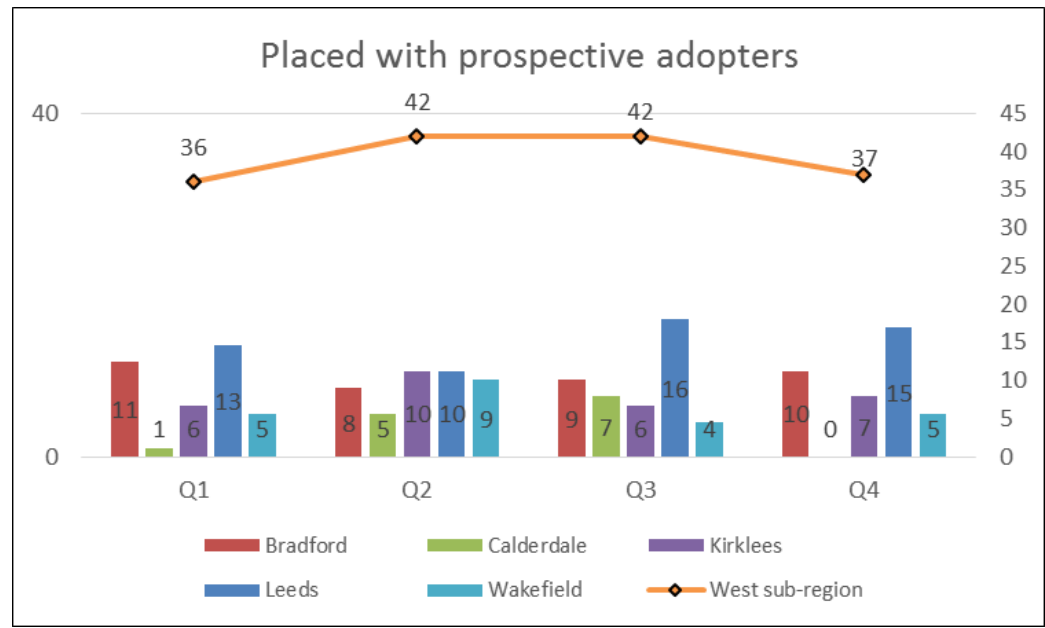
This graph shows the number of placement orders obtained in Quarters 1 to 4.

This has also reflected a significant drop and may well be related to the reductions in ADM decisions above. However, there is usually a gap between the impact of ADM decisions to placement orders in the following quarter, rather than the same quarter.



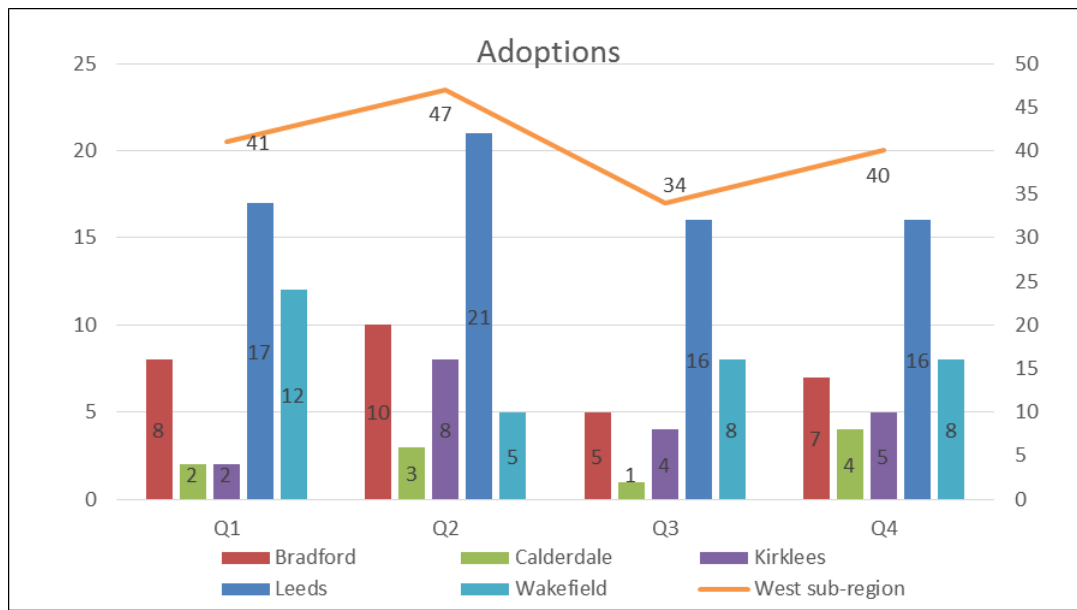
Commentary

This graph shows numbers of children who were matched in each Quarter. All these figures have been reconciled against the end of year data.



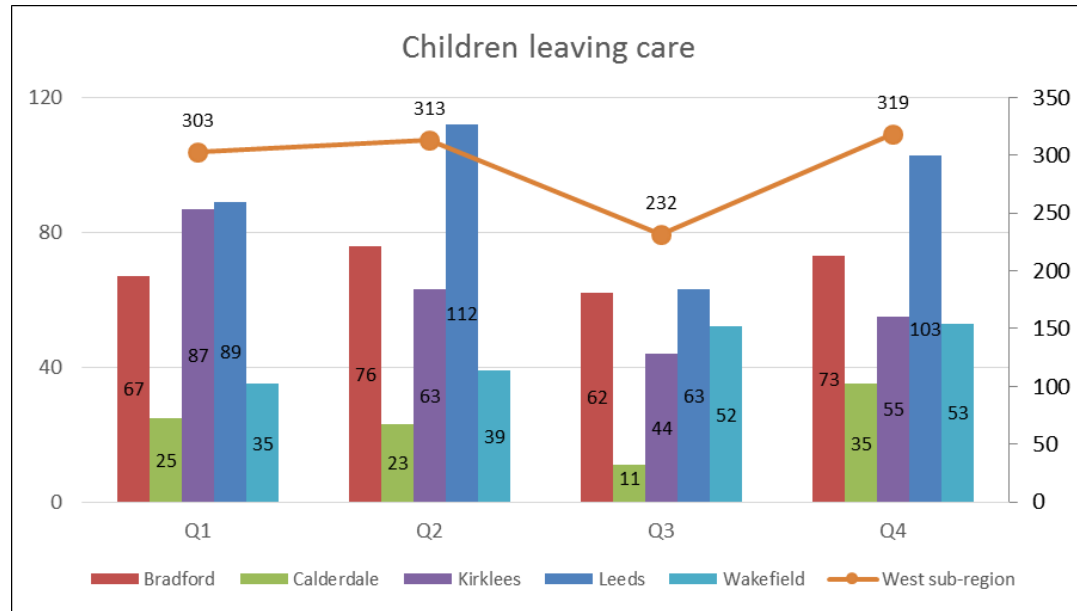
Commentary

This graph shows the number of children placed in each Quarter. All these figures have been reconciled against the end of year data.



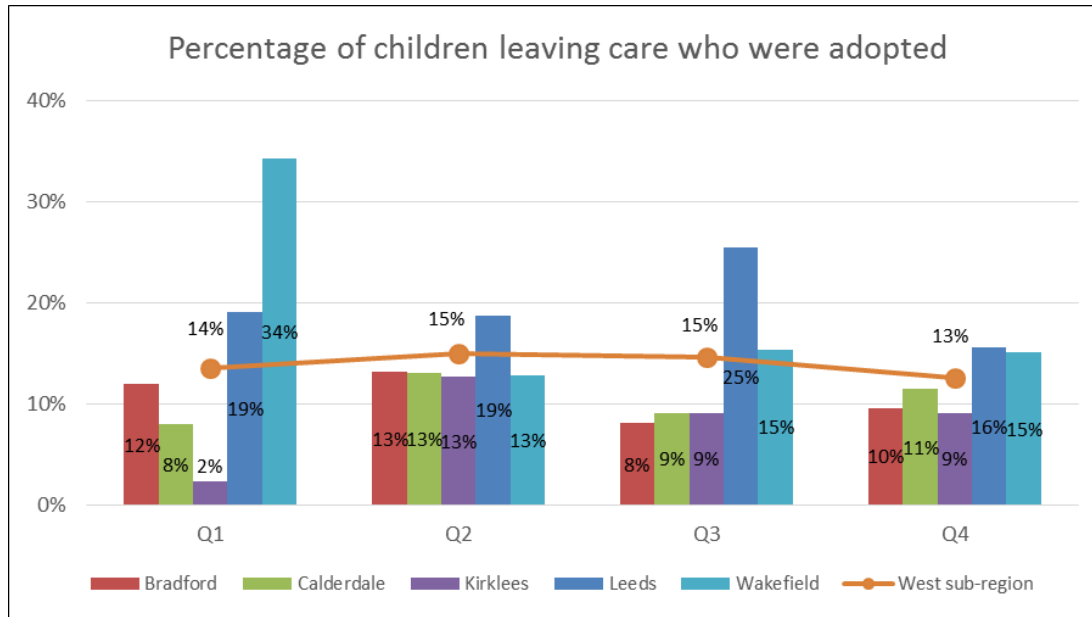
Commentary

This graph shows numbers of children who were adopted in each Quarter. All these figures have been reconciled against the end of year data



Commentary

This graph shows the number of children leaving care in Quarters 1 to 4. All these figures have been reconciled against the end of year data



Commentary

This graph shows the percentage of children leaving care who were adopted in Quarters 1 to 4. All these figures have been reconciled against the end of year data

Adopters

This section of the report provides headline figures relating to prospective and approved adopters at various stages of the adoption process in One Adoption. Appendix 1 contains figures for the year-to-date.

<p>How much did we do?</p> <p><i>During the quarter</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 123 (81) prospective adoptive households attended information sessions• 27 (36) Families started Stage 1• XX (20) prospective adoptive families attended preparation training• 32 (25) Families started Stage 2• 18 (17) prospective adoptive families were approved, of these, 2 families were Foster Carer Adopters• 19 (30) prospective adoptive families were matched, of these, 1 (1) families were matched with children outside the RAA and 18 (29) were matched with children from within the RAA• 21 (27) prospective adoptive families had a child(ren) placed, of these, 2 (1) families had children placed from outside RAA and 19 (26) had children placed from within the RAA• 24 (25) adoptive families adopted a child/young person• 5 (9) Families withdrew from the process	<p>How well did we do it?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Of those prospective adoptive families who ended Stage 1 in the quarter, they were in Stage 1 for an average of 2 (3) months<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ 50% (46%) were within timescales (Lowest was 0 (0) month, highest was 4 (5) months)○ Those still in Stage 1 at the end of the quarter have been in Stage 1 for an average of 2 (1) months○ 63% (43%) are within timescales• Of those prospective adoptive families who ended Stage 2 in the quarter, they were in Stage 2 for an average of 4 (3) months<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ 74% (87%) were within timescales (Lowest was 0 (0) months, highest was 8 (12) months)○ Those still in Stage 2 at the end of the quarter have been in Stage 2 for an average of 2 (3) months○ 84% (28%) are within timescales <p>Of those approved 8 (8) months was the average time between registration of interest and approval.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 10 (8) adoptive families were matched within three months of their approval; 9 (22) were matched after three months of their approval• The average time taken from approval to matching was 7 (7) months
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How much did we do?***At the end of the quarter***

- Of the **59** (67) individual approved adopters, **33** (32) are female and **26** (35) are male. **10**, **17%** (11,16%) are from a BME background
- **78** (70) prospective adoptive families are not yet approved
- **33** (43) prospective adoptive families are in stage one; **45** (27) are in stage two
- **32** (37) approved adoptive families are yet to be matched
 - **4** (5) of these families have been waiting more than six months
 - **4** (10) of these families have a matching panel booked
 - **6** (2) of these families have a match identified but no panel date booked
- 8** (7) prospective adoptive families are on hold

How well did we do it?

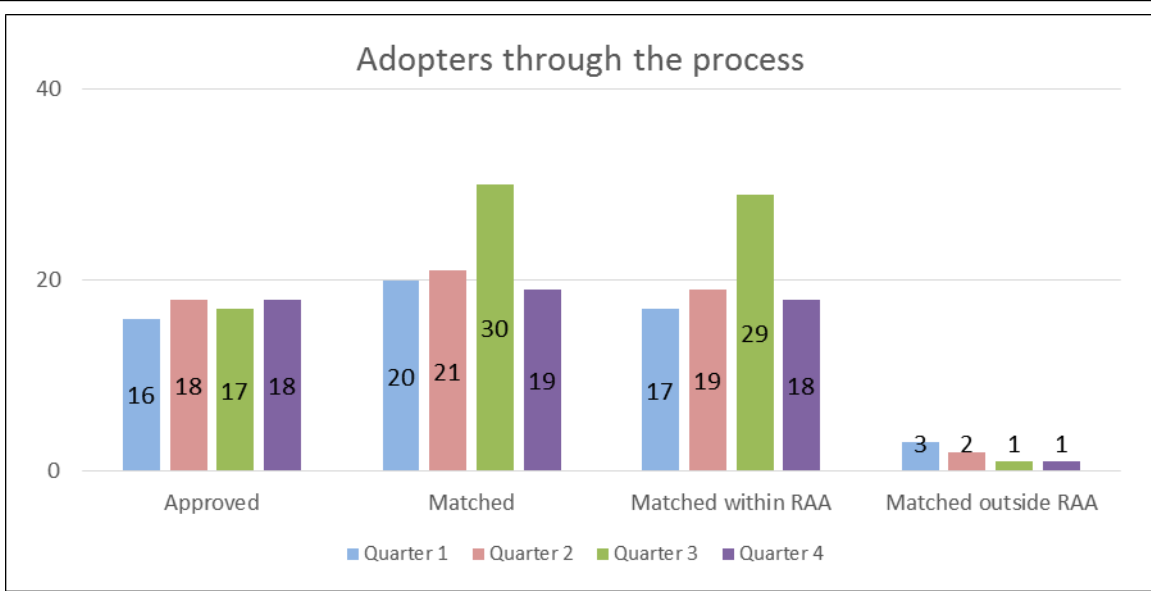
- There is an improvement in the timeliness of adopters spent in each stage of the process which provides evidence of an improved system.
- We have improved the percentage of BME adopters approved.

What would we like to do better?

Continue to improve the timescales in the assessment process.

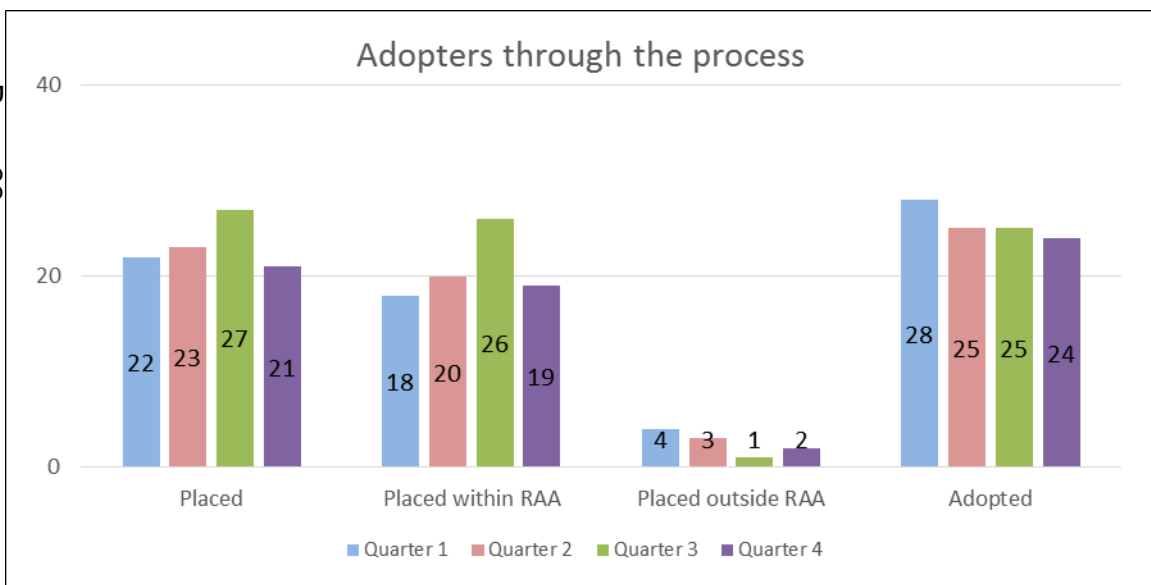
What difference did we make?

More families were matched this quarter than last quarter with a child(ren); and families that had been waiting longer than three months were matched with a child.



Commentary

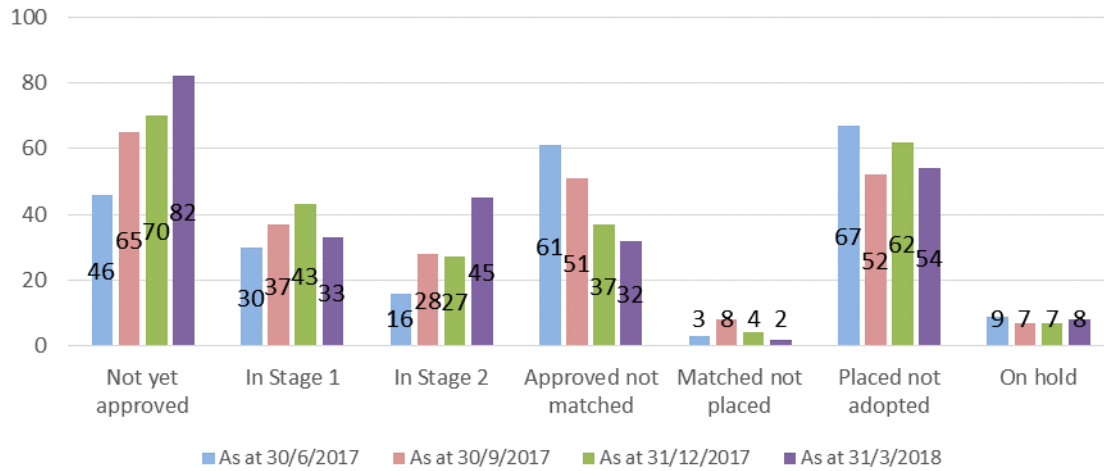
This graph shows numbers of adopters going through the process in Quarters 1 to 4, in particular those approved, matched and whether they were matched with a child from within the RAA or outside the RAA. Figures have been reconciled for Q1, Q2 and Q3 according to the end of year data.



Commentary

This graph shows numbers of adopters going through the process in Quarters 1 to 4, in particular those placed, whether they were placed with a child from within the RAA or outside the RAA and those who have adopted. Figures have been reconciled for Q1, Q2 and Q3 according to the end of year data.

Position at end of Quarter

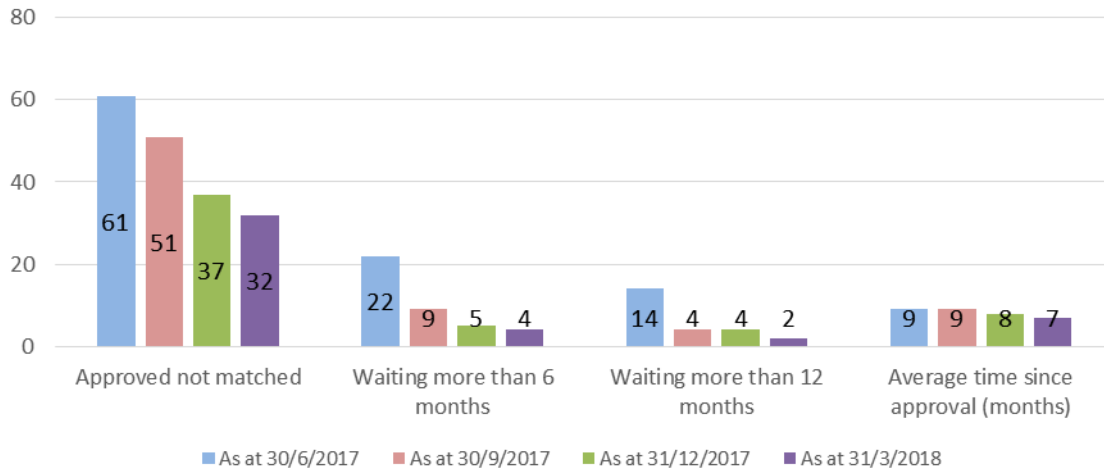


Commentary

This graph shows the number of adopters at various stages in the process at the end of each quarter. As we move forward we will see the change in position at the end of each Quarter as comparisons. Figures have been reconciled for Q1, Q2 and Q3 according to the end of year data.

The numbers of adopters not yet approved continues to increase and the number of approved adopters not matched is decreasing providing evidence that we are matching adopters with children from within the region.

Position at end of Quarter



Commentary

This graph shows the number of adopters waiting to be matched and the average time they have been waiting (in months). Figures have been reconciled for Q1, Q2 and Q3 according to the end of year data.

There is a significant decrease in adopters waiting for more than 6 and 12 months for a placement.

Snapshot Figures

This section of the report looks at characteristics of prospective adopters who are approved but not yet matched and those characteristics of children still waiting to be matched as at the end of the quarter. **This section is work in progress and requires further development.**

Characteristics of those adopters who are approved and not yet matched

Ethnicity	Number of individuals
White and Asian	1
White and Black Caribbean	2
White British	48
Any Other White Background	1
Pakistani	6
Any Other Asian Background	1
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	59
TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS	32

Religion	Number of individuals
Christian	24
Muslim	4
None	14
Other	2
Not Available	15
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	59
TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS	32

Characteristics of children who have a decision but not yet matched (131), of these, 110 have a Placement Order

Ethnicity	Number of children
African	2
Any other Black background	4
Any other ethnic group	10
Any other Mixed background	4
Any other White background	7
Gypsy/Roma	2
Information not yet obtained	16
Pakistani	1
White and Asian	3
White and Black African	2
White and Black Caribbean	4
White British	76
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	131

Children who wait longer (more than one characteristic)	Number of children
Part of a Sibling Group	59
With a Disability	0
BME	32
Aged 5 years +	25
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	116

28 Children have 2 of above characteristics

4 Children have 3 of above characteristics

Of those above

ADOPTERS

Certain characteristics specified	Number of Households
Potential Match	10
Not specified any age group	27
Specified 0-4 years (incl 0-2 years)	5
Specified 0-2 years	4
Sibling groups	5
Specific Gender	1
Open to EPP	3

Adoption Support

This section is work in progress and requires further development.

Non Agency Adoption

This section is work in progress and requires further development

Appendix one

This appendix contains a range of measures related to prospective adopters progressing through the approval and adoption process.

Table A9: individuals and families progressing through the approval and adoption processes

	Enquiries		Progress through the adoption process (Families)					
	Individuals	Families	Start Stage 1	Start Stage 2	Approved	Matched	Placed	Adopted
Quarter 1	69	38	12	9	15	15	18	15
Quarter 2	79	42	25	20	18	20	18	24
Quarter 3	77	41	32	20	18	29	27	21
Quarter 4	110	61	30	32	18	17	20	24
Full Year	335	182	99	81	69	81	83	84

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Table A10: snapshot numbers of prospective adopters at different stages of the approval process

	Prospective adoptive families				Approved adoptive families waiting		
	Prospective adoptive families not yet approved	In Stage 1	In Stage 2	On hold	Approved adoptive families waiting to be matched	Approved adoptive families waiting to be matched for more than 6 months	Average time since approval (months)
As at 30/6/2017	46	30	16	9	61	22	9
As at 30/9/2017	65	37	28	7	51	9	9
As at 31/12/2017	70	43	27	7	37	5	8
As at 31/3/2018	82	37	45	8	34	4	7



Report author: Sarah Johal
 Tel: 0113 2783623

Report of Director of Children and Families

Report to West Yorkshire Adoption Joint Committee

Date: 6th July 2018

Subject: Annual Agency Report and revised statement of purpose

Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, access to information procedure rule number:	
Appendix number:	

Summary of main issues

1. Elected Members across West Yorkshire recognise the importance of adoption and want to be updated about the management and outcomes of the adoption service in the region. The report provides an overview of adoption service activity from April 2017 to March 2018. The report is attached at Appendix A.

The report also provides an update of the revised Statement of Purpose for One Adoption West Yorkshire and the Statement of Purpose for the service is attached at Appendix B. The Statement of Purpose is required as part of the national minimum standards in order to be able to provide those services.

Recommendations

1. It is recommended that the Joint Committee note the minor amendments to the Statement of Purpose and the annual adoption report and continues to support the work of One Adoption West Yorkshire to ensure children receive the best possible support.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report asks the Joint Committee to consider the annual report of the One Adoption West Yorkshire (OAWY), as detailed in Appendix A of this report, as required by the National Minimum Standards 2011.
- 1.2 This report seeks the committee to note the revised statement of purpose for OAWY attached at appendix B. The Statement of Purpose is required as part of the national minimum standard in order to be able to provide those services.

2 Background information

- 2.1 It is a requirement of the National Minimum Standards for Adoption Services, that each adoption service produces a statement of purpose, including its aims and objectives, a description of the service it provides and the facilities that are provided. This Statement of Purpose gives an outline of those requirements and also how the service is managed and its fitness to provide a comprehensive adoption service.
- 2.2 Children's service adoption services are inspected against these standards by Ofsted. The Statement of Purpose attached give an outline of those requirements and also how the service is managed and its fitness to provide adoption service. It shows the policy and performance framework that underpins the work and shows how the welfare of children will be met. It also demonstrates the systems which we have set in place to recruit, assess, prepare and support adopters and to family find for children with a plan for adoption.
- 2.3 The background issues in relation to the adoption annual report are addressed in detail in the report itself at Appendix A.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 The statement of purpose is updated annually was last updated in July 2017. The main issues of the annual report are contained within the report itself at Appendix A.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 One Adoption West Yorkshire has good mechanisms to consult with and engage adopters and young people in order to develop and deliver service.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 OAWY completed a full Equality Impact Assessment in 2018 and is an appendix to the annual report.

4.3 Council policies and Best Council Plan

- 4.3.1 This report contributes to the delivery of the Best Council Plan outcome for everyone in Leeds to 'be safe and feel safe'. In addition, the Children and Young Peoples Plan identifies Looked After Children as one of the three priority

'Obsessions'. OAWY is integral to these plans to provide stable and secure placements for looked after children.

4.4 Resources and value for money

4.4.1 One Adoption West Yorkshire is resourced through a joint pooled budget and underpinned by a partnership agreement. This is discussed more fully in the main body of the annual report at appendix A.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 There are no implications in this report.

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.1 Not applicable

5 Conclusions

5.1 This report seeks that the Joint Committee notes the annual report, as outlined in Appendix A, and continues to support the work of OAWY to ensure children receive the best possible support.

5.2 This report also seeks the Joint Committee to note the revised statement of purpose for One Adoption West Yorkshire. The Statement of Purpose for the service is attached at appendix B. The Statement of Purpose is required as part of the national minimum standards in order to be able to provide those services.

6 Recommendations

6.1 It is recommended that the Joint Committee note the Statement of Purpose for One Adoption West Yorkshire. It is also recommended that the Joint Committee notes the annual adoption report and continues to support the work of OAWY to ensure children receive the best possible support.

7 Background documents¹

7.1 None

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.

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Report author: Sarah Johal

Tel: 0113 2783623

Report of Director of Children and Families

Report to West Yorkshire Adoption Joint Committee

Date: 5th July 2018

Subject: Annual Agency Adoption Report

Summary

1. Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees and Wakefield adoption functions as specified in the partnership agreement were delegated on the 1st April 2017 to Leeds City Council and One Adoption West Yorkshire (OAWY) formally opened. OAWY was the first Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) to open in the country.
2. This report provides a summary on the developments of the service since the opening on the 1st April 2017 to March 2018 and is the first annual report of the RAA.

Recommendations

1. That the Joint Committee note the information in this annual report and continue to support the work of One adoption West Yorkshire to ensure our adopted children receive the best possible outcomes and support.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report sets out the developments within One Adoption West Yorkshire since April 2017.

2 Background information

- 2.1 Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees and Wakefield adoption functions as specified in the partnership agreement were delegated on the 1st April 2017 to Leeds City Council. One Adoption West Yorkshire formally opened on this date.
- 2.2 The government continues to drive forward with the structural reform programme regarding regionalising adoption and 141 authorities are either in a live RAA or working towards one. The government have noted the significant progress in cutting the time children waiting to be placed with their adoptive parents and this is a positive outcome for children. However, both the number of registrations of interest and approved adopters nationally, regionally and locally within the West Yorkshire area have fallen in recent years. This occurred at the same time as West Yorkshire planned a move to a regionalised arrangement and therefore has to be taken into account when looking at mismatch between the children requiring adoption and adopter sufficiency in the region since becoming a regional adoption agency.

3 Main issues

3.1 Use of Resources

Staffing

- 3.1.1 The senior leadership team and team managers came into position at the opening of the new agency and all the staff were Tupeed across to Leeds City Council from the 4 other local authorities. The majority of staff moved onto the Leeds City Council terms and conditions on the 1st December 2017.
- 3.1.2 Work has been undertaken with the senior leadership team, the management team and with all staff to establish the vision and values of One Adoption West Yorkshire “to be a flagship Adoption Agency that develops & promotes best practice, improving adoption standards nationally.” Ongoing development work continues with all staff regarding the importance of relationships as we build the One Adoption West Yorkshire identity with the teams, working in a culture of high support and high challenge.
- 3.1.3 During the first year of operation the agency started off with a high number of vacancies particularly across business support and some other key roles however the staffing structure is now fully in place. A number of staff have retired over the year and there is a high level of maternity leave and some long term sickness, with additional social work staff recruited in some key areas of the service to ensure that the needs of the service can be met.

- 3.1.4 Working across a wide geographical area has presented challenges for staff with office bases remaining in each local authority area. There has been a need for staff to come together for meetings to develop practice and to ensure that there is good communication between local authorities and the different parts of the service to provide a joined up approach. The amount of time taken travelling and the costs of mileage remain an issue and the service is exploring the alternative options regarding accommodation and structure of the organisation to enable a more efficient and effective use of resources as the service develops.
- 3.1.5 The use of Information Technology to support the staff and the service has been problematic in the first year due to a number of complex and technical reasons. However, these have improved with all staff now having use of a Leeds laptop and mobile phone. The difficulties for staff working across offices regarding connectivity has also improved although access to the other local authority systems remains an issue with work ongoing to progress access to these via a portal from the Leeds laptops. Staff are now able to print in their office locations.
- 3.1.6 The migration of casework data onto Mosaic and the Leeds networks is almost complete and this has been a time consuming and manual task. The target to move all records has largely been achieved with a small number of cases requiring documents uploading on to the system before closing down the local authority file. Once the work is migrated the requirement for access to the local authority systems will be read only and this will ease the burden for staff needing to use more than one system.
- 3.1.7 Mosaic has been developed to support the case recording of all of the work the agency undertake. The family finding workflow is in the early stages of implementation and work is being developed to support the letterbox work and improve reporting and management information over the next 9 months.

Duty System

- 3.1.8 A central duty system was implemented in July. This has been very effective and this service operates from 10am- 4pm each day (3.30pm on Friday). The majority of calls on duty relate to adoption support, enquiries from professionals about staff across the region and recruitment enquiries. There are qualified social workers, adoption advisors and business support staff operating duty with a team manager and service manager on a rota basis to ensure the service is effective.

Business Support

- 3.1.9 The business support functions of One Adoption West Yorkshire have now been agreed and progress has been made in setting up systems to support the work of the agency with key processes around the panel work, children's planning and children's tracking and administering the adoption support fund developing well. Business support is a key integrated part of the agency and aims to ensure an effective and efficient service can be provided.

Adoption Panel

- 3.1.10 Prior to OAWY there were 11 monthly panels held across the West Yorkshire and this has reduced to 7 per month. Despite initial difficulties in merging the panels the panel members have come together and worked well with an increasing number of members made up of adopted adults, adopters and birth parents. There are 9 medical advisers that sit as panel members with 2 independent chairs to provide consistency across the seven panels. The panel work is now electronic throughout the region creating efficiencies and data security in this area of work.
- 3.1.11 Six monthly meetings continue to be held between the agency and panel chairs with the aim of ensuring good communication regarding the development of the service. Panel chairs are encouraged to raise any issues as they arise and panel chairs also have the opportunity of an annual appraisal with the agency decision maker. Future details regarding the use of resources is addressed in section 4.4.

3.2 Partnership working

- 3.2.1 The links with the local authority are key in the development and delivery of services. The management board, made up of assistant directors of each local authority meet quarterly to oversee the work of the agency and the Joint Committee of elected members also meet regularly to receive reports and scrutinise the work of the agency.
- 3.2.2 An operational leads group was also set up in the first quarter of the year between the responsible officers in each Local Authority for adoption and the senior leadership team within OAWY. This is particularly to discuss the interface between the local authority and one adoption regarding children's planning and family finding and adoption support and provide peer support and challenge in developing good practice across the region.
- 3.2.3 There are close partnerships between team managers within OAWY and the local authority providing advice and support regarding adoption practice and care planning with workshops, briefings and surgeries for social workers in the region.
- 3.2.4 Discussions with health commissioners and providers in each local authority are ongoing regarding improving the quality of the written information provided by medical advisors. The development of quality standards are underway with the aim to achieve consistency of practice across the region. Work with CAMHS commissioners and providers in each area and the Adoption Support Fund continues to be developed to ensure that children in adoptive families are able to access effective support.
- 3.2.5 The Voluntary Adoption Agencies and Adoption Support Agencies in the region have come together as a body working collectively in the region to develop and deliver services as an alliance. OAWY work closely with the Voluntary Agency Alliance (VAA) in order to identify placements for children and we also have links with Adoption Match (previously the Adoption Register)

and Link Maker to achieve a more effective regional view of all the children and families across the region. The Voluntary Adoption Alliance have been successful with receiving a practice improvement bid from the Department of Education (DfE) to develop early permanence placements across the Yorkshire & Humber region and to look at a fostering to permanence concurrency service within the West Yorkshire area. This will help us improve our ability to place children earlier for permanence.

- 3.2.6 Regular meetings with virtual heads across the region have continued and we are working in partnership to develop and support the new duties of the virtual school and designated teachers for children who cease to be looked after across the region in September.
- 3.2.7 The Yorkshire Adoption Agency provides expert inter-country services to all adopters on behalf of the Local Authority consortium agencies. This value for money contract saves OAWY time and money as inter-country work is very specialist, complex and time consuming.
- 3.2.8 We are working in partnership with colleagues across the wider Yorkshire and Humber region regarding the re-commissioning of independent adoption support services for birth parents, adoptive families and adopted adults, and young people with a view to a new contract being in place for October 2018.

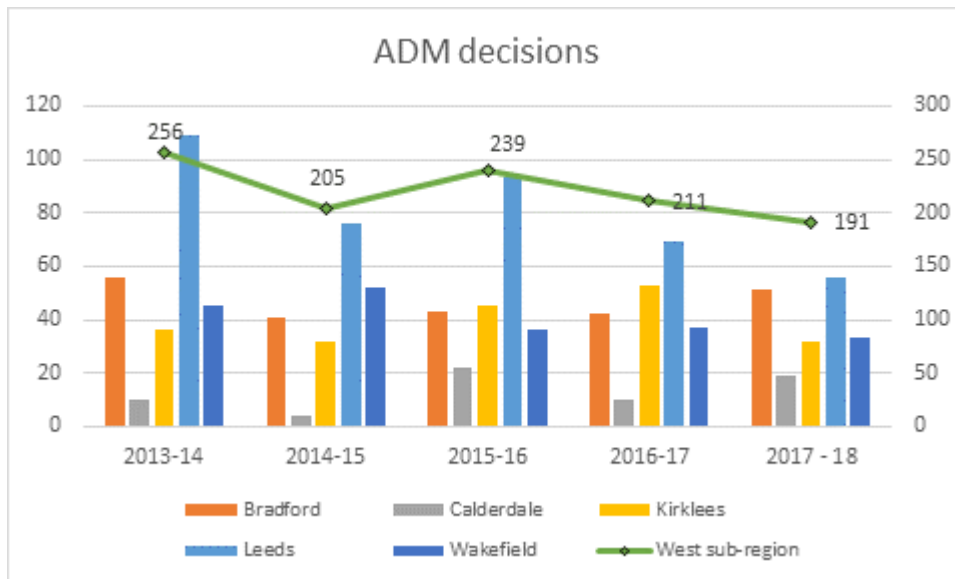
3.3 Performance Management

- 3.3.1 During the first quarter of the year the agency developed a practice improvement framework and provides quarterly reports to the management board. This data has developed over the year and range of data is gathered to ensure that performance is captured to ensure that we are aware of how much work is undertaken, how well was it undertaken and is anyone better off?

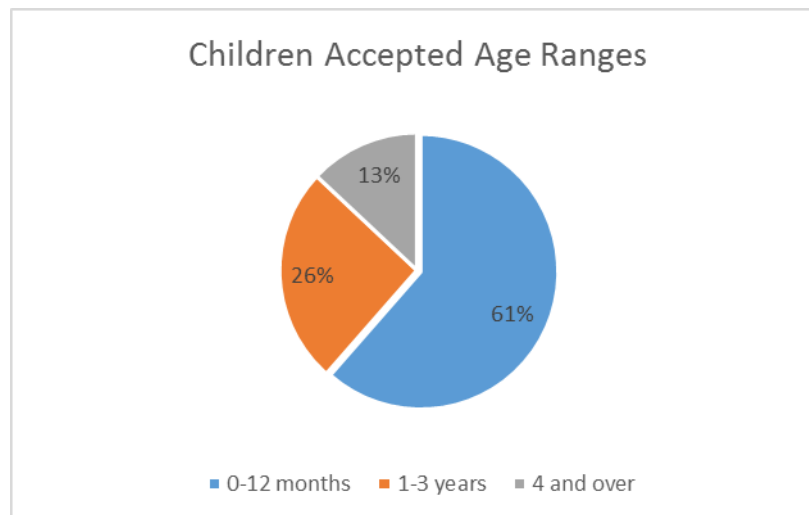
a) Sufficiency: Are enough of the right kind of adopters being recruited and approved to meet the needs of the children waiting:

The children with a plan for adoption during 2017/18

- 3.3.2 Between April 2017 and March 2018, 191 children had a plan for adoption ratified by the 5 West Yorkshire local authorities Agency Decision Makers. Of the 191 children with a plan for adoption, there were 79 female and 112 male children.
- 3.3.3 In total, this is a 9% decrease on the last year's full year figure of 211 children from across the 5 West Yorkshire local authorities. This picture is also reflected as a national level.



Age profile



Ethnicity

3.3.4 Of the 191 children with a plan for adoption this year, 124 (65%) children were from white British backgrounds and 67 children (35%) were from Black and Minority Ethnic groups, including children from eastern European, Gypsy Roma, Black African and Black Caribbean backgrounds.

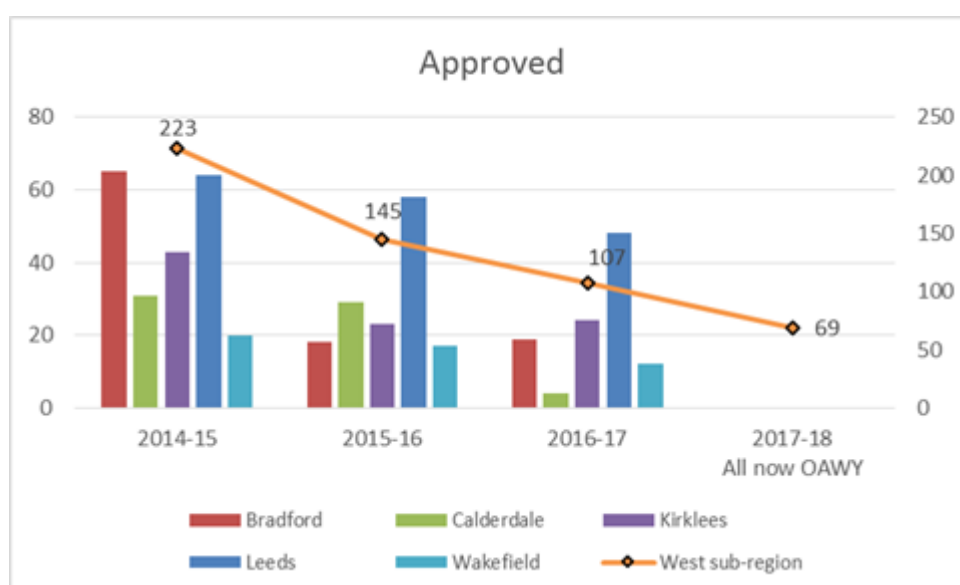
Placement with Siblings

3.3.5 As a general principle, siblings will be placed together; however, due to the individual needs of children, this is not always appropriate and cannot always be achieved. It is essential that sibling assessments are carried out to ensure good quality decision making and support plans are evidence based if children are placed together or apart. The numbers of children requiring adoption in sibling groups during the year is 93 children (this includes those with a match and/ or placement). Of the 29 children placed from this cohort during the year

none of these were placed apart. A breakdown of the size of the sibling groups is not available as some LAs do not provide a unique reference number for this. This will be captured on Mosaic for 2018/19.

Adopter recruitment

3.3.6 69 adoptive households were approved during the year and you will note from the table below that the numbers of adopters has declined locally, regionally and nationally over the last four years and since 2014/15 there has been a 70% decrease in adopter approvals. This is a complex picture and is partly due to agencies responding to a reduction in the children with a plan for adoption during that period with agencies undertaking more targeted recruitment for specific children and sibling groups. It is likely that the last year this has also been exacerbated by staff vacancies leading up to regionalisation.



3.3.7 Although adopters are approved as suitable to adopt OAWY has the ability to capture the preferences of adopters in terms of age range, gender and number of children to be considered. However, this is not available for the full year of operation and will be provided as a summary for next year's report.

3.3.8 Within the 69 households, 131 individuals were approved throughout 2017/18. Of these 11 (8%) are from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) backgrounds. We need to improve our percentage of BME carers and keep a focus on ensuring that we approve a full range of adoptive families to meet the range of children requiring placement, while at the same time not relying on matching children with regard to ethnic identity as an overriding factor.

Children with an adoption plan, currently waiting

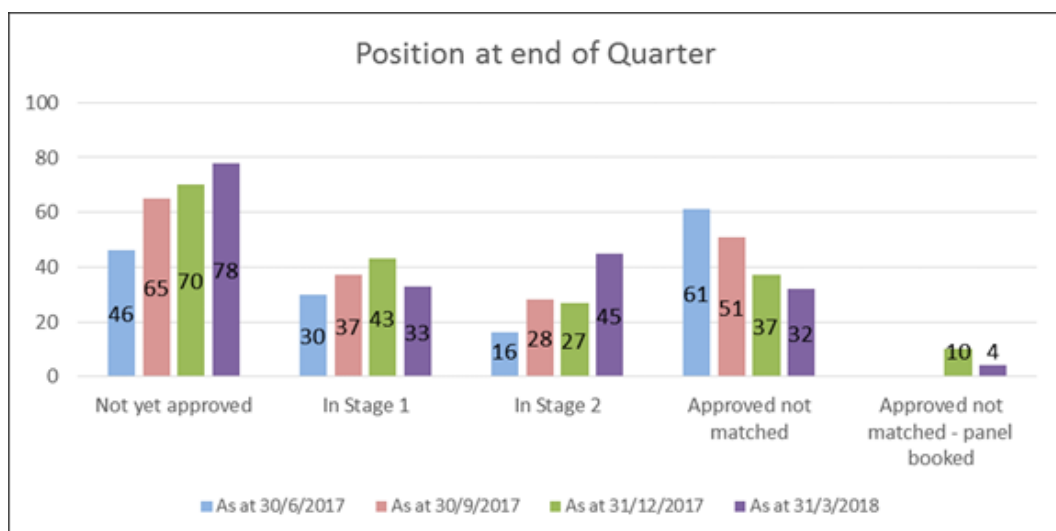
3.3.9 As of end of March 2018 there are 143 children with a plan for adoption from the 5 west Yorkshire local authorities not currently placed and requiring adopters.

3.3.10 38 children out of the 143 are 0-1yrs, 70 are between 1 and 4yrs and 35 children are over 4 years of age. 15 children have potential “matches” identified and 27 of these have a date booked at adoption panel for the “match” to be formally considered.

3.3.11 From the children waiting for a placement there are 66 girls and 77 boys, and 43 per cent are children from BME backgrounds. There are 22 sibling groups of 2 and 2 sibling groups of 3. The plans for these children are actively reviewed with clear monitoring and tracking systems to understand the range of family finding activity going on for these children and whether adoption remains the right plan for each child. The delays for these children are related primarily to the needs of the children; the need to place siblings together, the age of the children or their particular special needs or complexity.

Adopters available

3.3.12 As of the end of March 2018, there are 32 approved adoptive households. 22 are available to consider placements, 4 have a panel date booked for a match and 6 are considering potential matches. There is a mismatch between the 100 children without a potential link and the number of prospective adopters available. The children’s minister highlighted this issue with local authorities and the plan with OAWY is to recruit 120 households in the coming year to meet the needs of many of the children requiring adoption.

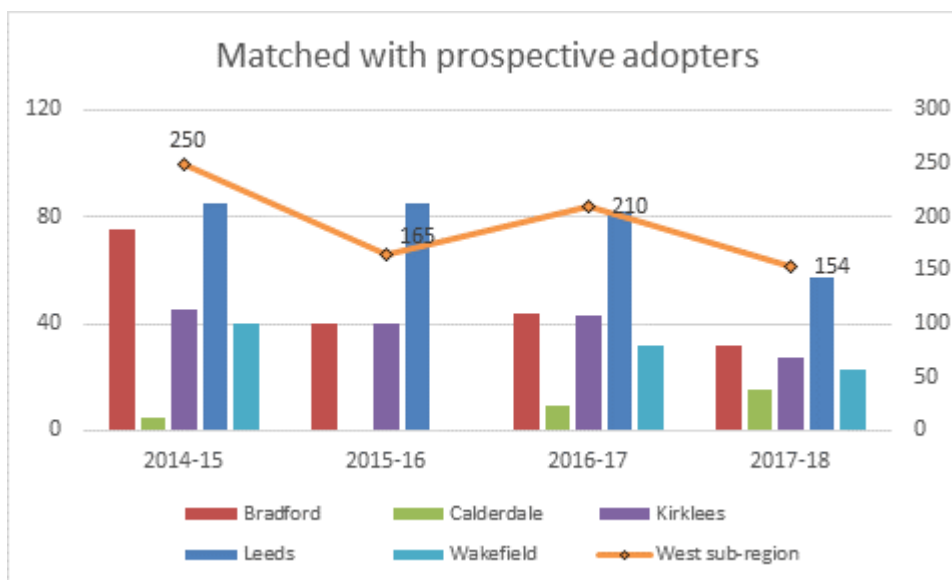


3.3.13 On the 31st March 2018 78 adopters are in the process of assessment although these will take a number of months to become approved. However, the signs are encouraging as the numbers are increasing each quarter as the brand becomes more familiar. Alongside the families we recruit within the region we also access approved adopters from other agencies and the search for prospective adopters regularly extends across the country using the National Adoption Register and at National Exchange days across the country. Family finding work is time consuming and social workers spend time travelling across the country to locate potential families once links have been made and to offer support post-placement. It is therefore important to continue to ensure that there are no delays in progressing the assessments of adopters who have applied to adopt with OAWY within the region and this will remain under close scrutiny.

b) **Timeliness:** Are children being matched and placed without delay including those children who wait longer?

Children matched in the year for adoption

3.3.14 Between April 2017 and March 2018, 154 children from the 5 West Yorkshire local authorities were matched with families at adoption panels; this is a 27% decrease on the number of children matched between April 2016 and March 2017 from across the 5 West Yorkshire local authorities.



3.3.15 From April 2017 to March 2018, 25% of the children matched were from black and minority ethnic (BME) communities. This is higher than the national average and can be seen as a positive for children from BME communities who often take longer to place for adoption.

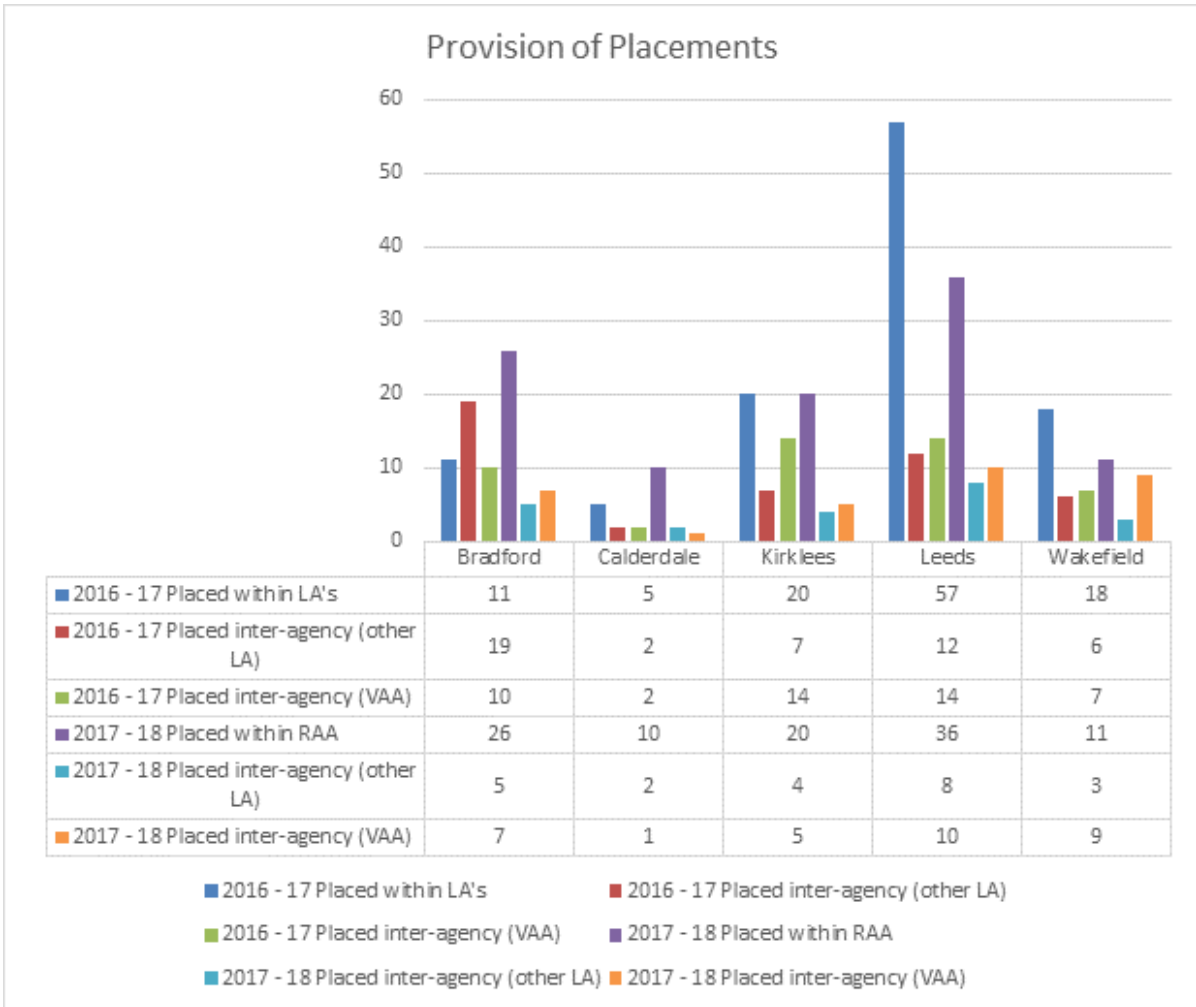
- 81 of the children matched were babies (up to 12 months);
- 60 children were of pre-school age (13 months to 4 years);
- 13 children were aged over 4 years;
- 42 children were part of a sibling group (of the 154 matched);
- 37 children were placed who are part of a sibling group of which 6 were placed apart; as part of a plan due to their individual needs;
- 24 children were placed in EPP of which 7 have since been adopted.

Provision of Placements

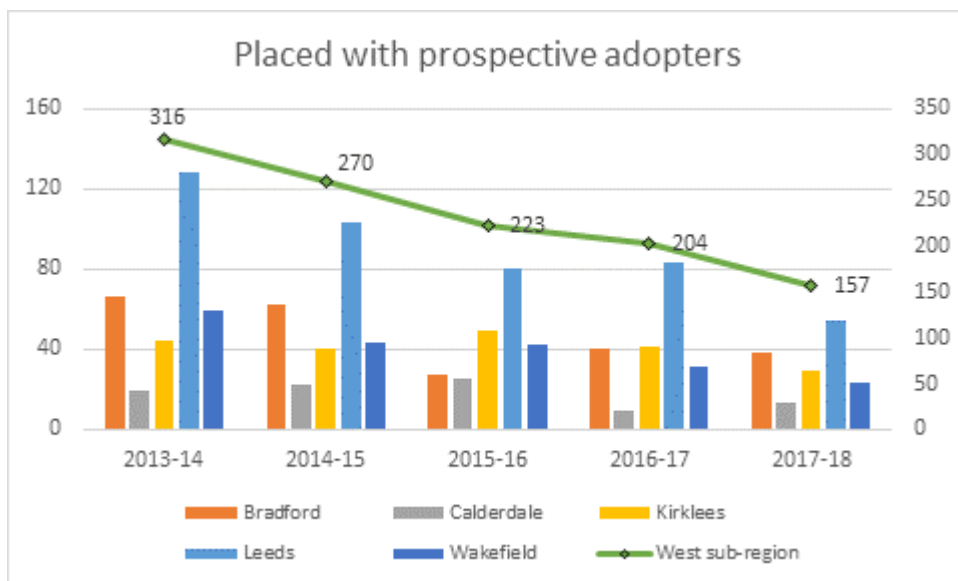
3.3.16 The number of placements provided in-house within the region has increased this year.

- 103 children within RAA;
- 22 children with other local authorities;
- 32 children with VAA.

The percentage this year was 66% in house and 34% interagency. Last year it was 54% in house and 46% interagency. This provides good evidence of the value in pooling adopters across a wide area to provide placements. It is likely with the sufficiency issue that there will be an increase in interagency placements in the next year.



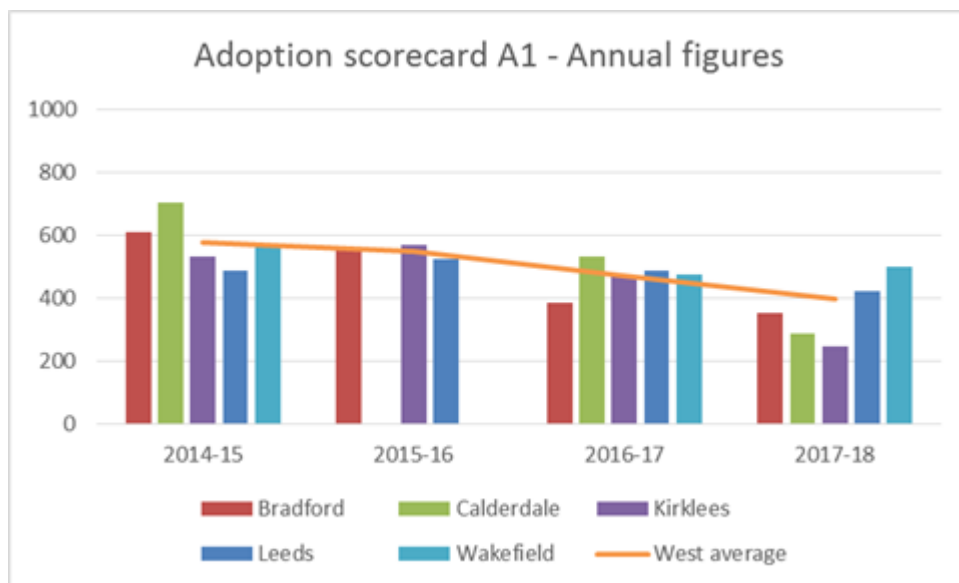
The following children were placed with adopters in the year. This is a slightly different figure from those matched as there is always a gap to allow time for preparation and introductions to the new family.



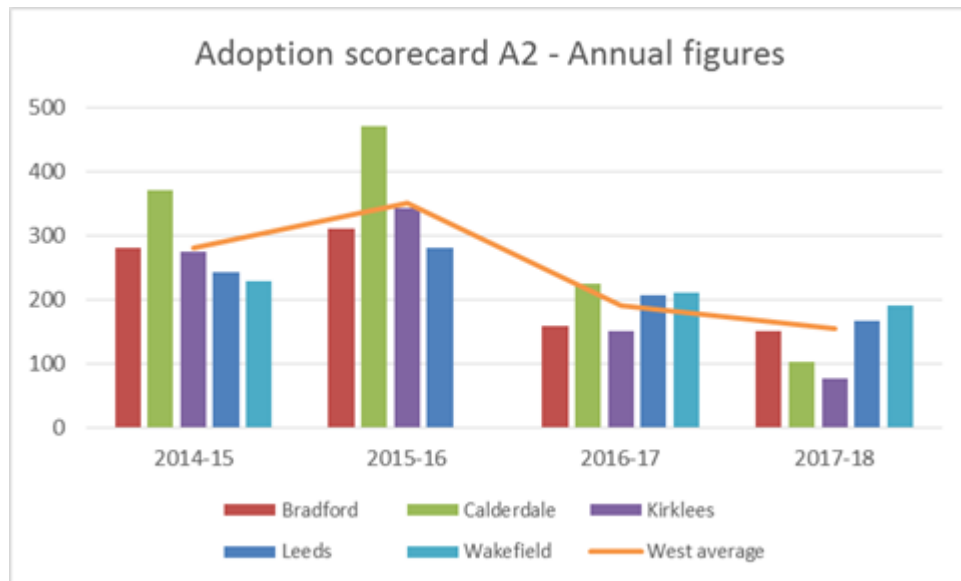
3.3.17 We can see from the data above that children in the region, including those children who often wait longer due to their individual needs, age or ethnicity or being part of a sibling group are being found families to meet their needs. Despite the falling numbers in the last few years. The data below looks at how timely these placements are being made.

Adoption Scorecards

3.3.18 The average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family (indicator A1) for children in West Yorkshire is 397 days, gradually declining which is better for children in reducing delay (National Indicator is 426 days) (England Average is 593).

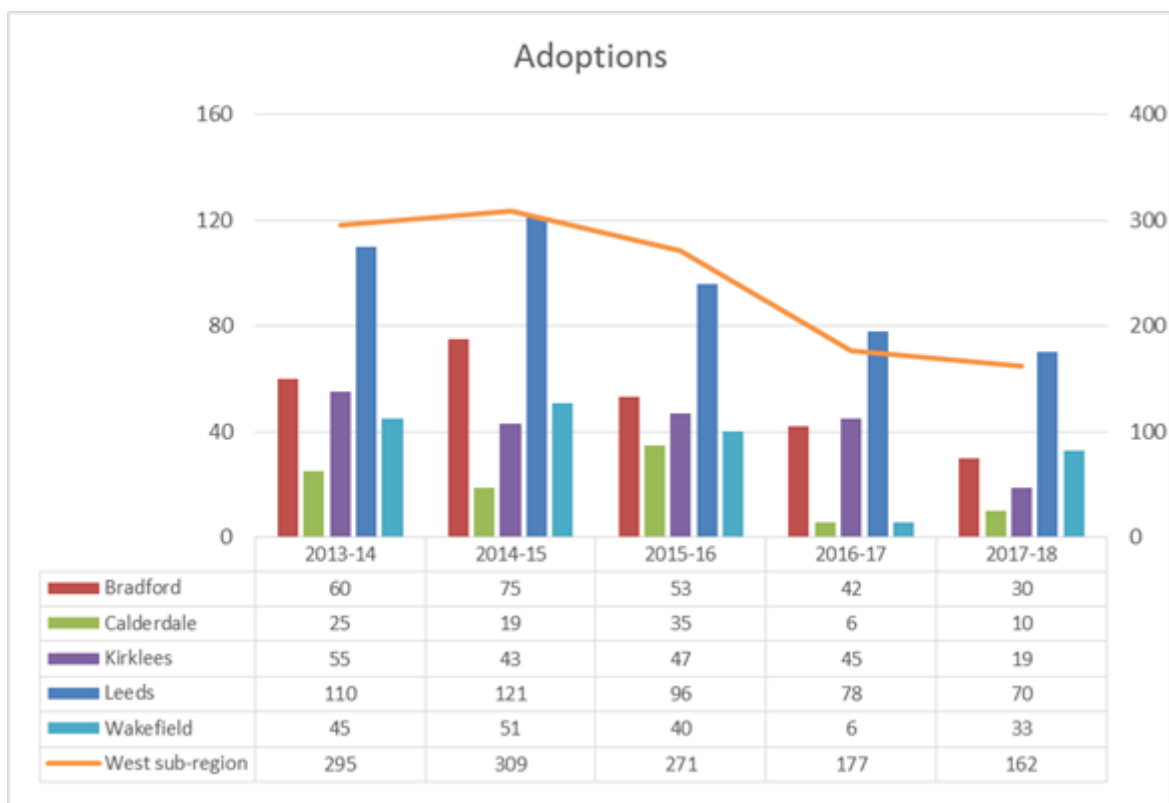


3.3.19 The average time between a local authority receiving court authority to place a child and the local authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family (Indicator A2) for children in West Yorkshire is 154 days, gradually declining which is better for children in reducing delay (National indicator is 121 days) (England average is 223), This is still above the national indicator but it is important to note that a number of older children and sibling groups who generally wait longer have successfully been placed for adoption and it has been key to ensure that the preparation and planning required has taken place to ensure a positive match can be agreed.



Children adopted from care

3.3.20 Although the number of children who have been adopted has fallen 14% of children leaving care are adopted. This is in line with the national average.



3.4 Practice, quality of provision and management oversight

Recruitment and Assessment

3.4.1 The One Adoption brand and website was launched on the 1st April 2017. Adopter recruitment marketing has faced a challenging year as prior to

regionalisation a number of agencies had reduced their marketing and recruitment activity. Additionally the move to a regional approach meant launching a new brand into the market place and having to establish that brand at pace across the region. Despite these challenges over 175,000 people visited our website throughout the year, leading to over 750 people completing the online form requesting more information and 378 households attending 24 information events in West Yorkshire. The information meetings continue to be held in alternating venues across the West Yorkshire region with the aim of increasing accessibility for prospective adoptive families.

- 3.4.2 The 3 recruitment and assessment teams have made real progress in agreeing the practice across the service and we now have standardised information sessions & pre-approval training; a clear stage one process with all new applications; agreed criteria for recruitment of adopters, templates agreed for case work and a system for the allocation of assessments with booklets produced for adopters. Further twilight training sessions are being planned to expand the preparation for adopters regarding supporting children's identity needs regarding relationships with birth families and exploring more practical parenting regarding babies' brains and bonding.
- 3.4.3 A new Peer Mentoring scheme has been launched with our adoptive parents with 38 potential peer mentors identified and training due to take place in the coming months. The team have also signed up to a National Pilot Project, using Virtual Realty technology in adopter recruitment, training and assessment. Both these developments are in partnership with the Cornerstone Partnership, an organisation set up and delivered by adoptive parents.

Family Finding

- 3.4.4 The 3 family finding teams work closely with the local authority children's teams and identified a significant number of children requiring placements at the outset of the agency and a great deal of activity has been focussed on ensuring effective plans are in place for each child waiting for adoption.
- 3.4.5 One adoption attends the legal gateway meetings in each local authority and provides support to the agency decision making (ADM) process regarding adoption plans for children. This is to ensure that children are identified as early as possible for adoption in order to avoid delay in their care planning and to identify possible early placements of children where appropriate.
- 3.4.6 In November 2017 OAWY held the first Children's Profiling Event, inviting adoptive families from across the Yorkshire and Humberside and the North West to consider a selection of children awaiting adoption who were featured with high quality photos, DVDs and personalised displays. This was repeated in March and has been very successful in finding families for children. These are booked for the year ahead.
- 3.4.7 The use of Adoption Match and Linkmaker are embedded in practice. The Agency is continuing to look at maximising opportunities to find families for the

children coming through and are actively involved in the full range of activities including national exchange Days, Activity Days etc. to support this.

- 3.4.8 There are a significant group of children who wait longer for adoption because of the complexity of their needs and the Agency is exploring with local the VAA a more bespoke model of family finding to try to increase the opportunities for these children to find adoptive families. In addition, the team are exploring working with CoramBAAF to pilot their new tool aimed at making the most of families available through a “collective matching” approach.
- 3.4.9 A number of working groups are ongoing looking at further development of the Family Finding role and the development of the interface between OAWY and the 5 Local Authorities it works with to ensure greater consistency in practice but which acknowledges local differences.

Adoption Support

- a) **Adoption support:** Do children and families have timely access to high quality support services?
- 3.4.10 Adoption Support continues to remain an area of considerable growth and considerable need within the service. The Adoption Support Fund has increased expectations of adopters and consequently added a layer of complexity to the work undertaken by the team, including the administrative burden that the process brings.
- 3.4.11 The nature of support requested varies, but frequently includes requests from adoptive parents for advice on strategies for integrating children into families, managing challenging behaviour and support with telling difficult life story information, as well as requests for professional advice and help for children in school where early developmental trauma has led to difficulties. There have been 410 referrals for adoption support into the service this year, including new families and families who have previously received services.
- 3.4.12 OAWY is working to develop a core and consistent adoption support offer across the region ensuring that a range of services are available to everyone. These include a range of regional groups that have been expanded to support adopters, children and young people across the region, now available and accessible in all parts of west Yorkshire. These including stay and play groups, adopter support groups, family activity days and young people’s groups.
- 3.4.13 The OAWY’s newsletter lists all the groups and developments occurring in the West Yorkshire region including a rolling programme of workshops and training for adoptive parents. Topics such as brain based parenting, foetal alcohol syndrome, foundations for attachment, non-violent resistance, therapy, Safe Base and ADOPT training meeting the needs of parents who have children with differing needs and are also available to all adopters in West Yorkshire improving the support to adopters.
- 3.4.14 At the end of March 2018 the OAWY had 701 open cases with a waiting list of 91 children requiring allocation for adoption support assessments. At the

opening of the agency there was a waiting list of 65 cases. This waiting list did reduce during the year but has increased again as the year has progressed resulting in adoptive families not accessing therapeutic support in a timely manner. We have a prioritisation system in place and are trialling a triage system offering an initial visit to see if this assists in addressing concerns at an early stage and signposting where appropriate. Staff numbers in two of the adoption support teams are high and staff across the service have high caseloads in this area of work. The ability of the managers to provide effective management oversight of the work is currently under review given the volume and complexity of the work.

Practice Improvement Grants

3.4.15 One Adoption West Yorkshire has received funding to pilot a regional adoption support fund. The Adoption Support Fund was set up in 2015 to reduce the gap between adoptive children needing therapeutic services and receiving them, ultimately to improve outcomes for young people and families. The aim of the pilot is to improve adoption support across an RAA by: regional commissioning of the ASF and engaging users in the development and testing of regionalised support services; test out how the ASF could be managed in a regionalised structure including how human and financial resources for adoption support will be deployed and to inform future national policy and delivery of ASF and share emerging practice with other Regional Adoption Agencies. From August 2017 One Adoption West Yorkshire received over £656,525.51 from the adoption support fund to support adoptive families in west Yorkshire. This work is ongoing.

3.4.16 One Adoption West Yorkshire also received funding from the DFE to develop a Centre of excellence for Adoption Support with a view to rolling this out across the wider Yorkshire & Humber region. The objectives of this are to look at a framework for assessment of support needs; to develop multi- disciplinary support for adoptive families and to develop a training and development programme for professionals in the sector. This work is developing and 3 sector specialists across health, education and social care are working with the service partners to shape and develop this work.

Disruptions

3.4.17 In the last year, 6 adoption placements have disrupted prior to the adoption order being made. Disruption is a cause for concern and OAWY is working closely with the local authorities to ensure that a full understanding of the issues leading to the breakdown are fully understood to inform future planning for the child and the adoptive parents as well as themes for learning for future practice.

3.4.18 Quality Assurance

One Adoption West Yorkshire has developed a practice improvement framework and is committed to an improvement culture of learning. The principal sources of feedback are:

- Views of Children and Families: The views and experiences of children & young people, adoptive parents, birth parents, adopted adults.
- Performance Data: Any statistical data that helps us judge the quality and effectiveness of our professional practice.
- Practice Wisdom and Knowledge: The practice wisdom of those staff who work with children young people and families, adoption panels & learning from disruptions.
- The findings of external and internal inspections, audits and evaluations of our practice.

3.4.19 The work to ensure this framework is fully established is well underway with further developments over the next year regarding case file audits, adoption support performance data and service user feedback mechanisms awaiting completion.

3.4.20 A Quality Assurance (QA) mechanism for panel work is used as a matter of course and all the feedback since June has been generally positive. The quality assurance process found that the majority of prospective adopter reports (PARS) were of a good standard (78% 'good, 15% 'satisfactory' and 7% requiring improvement) and with Child Permanence Reports provided by local authority social workers over half were considered good. (56%, 22% 'satisfactory' and 22% required improvement). OAWY are working with the 5 LA's to jointly commission training and development work regarding this area of practice.

3.4.21 With regard to feedback from service users at adoption panel, 26 questionnaires were received from attendees at panel who rated the experience at panel out of a possible score of 10:

- 21 (81%) respondents rated the experience at 9 or higher;
- 4 (15%) respondents rated the experience at 8;
- 1(4%) respondent rated the experience at 7.

3.4.22 There were 7 complaints made regarding the Adoption Service during the year. All complaints were resolved at stage one. 1 complaint was upheld, 3 were partially upheld, 2 were not upheld and in the case of 1 complaint we didn't receive a copy of the response. In addition, there were 3 representations: these are requests for information or complaints where they are outside the timeframe where we would accept a complaint.

Voice and Influence of Children, Young People and Adopters

3.4.23 Appendix 1 provides the Voice and Influence of Children, Young People and Adopters report card. This highlights the work undertaken to capture the views of service users to help develop and shape the service.

3.5 Continuous Professional and Service Development

Staff development and support

3.5.1 All of the staff receive regular monthly supervision and have an appraisal. In the first year this fell out of the cycle of the council's appraisal system due to new managers taking over line management responsibility and needing enough time before setting objectives with staff. This is an opportunity for staff to ensure that there is reflection regarding their work and addresses their own personal and professional development and practice.

Training

3.5.2 During the first year of operation all staff have had basic training in the IT systems being used. All recruitment staff have now been trained to use the Attachment Style Interview tool. It will take time to embed the learning from this into the assessment work undertaken but it will assist staff in being clear about how we effectively support adopters moving forward.

3.5.3 The service and team managers, advanced practitioners and senior business support managers have been involved in a programme of learning around developing their leadership role in the organisation within a restorative framework. This has assisted in developing relationships across the service and has given some practical strategies to ensure that managers are equipped for leading the teams through a period of considerable change.

3.5.4 There has been a range of training for all staff around parenting adopted children in terms of adopting a trauma informed approach regarding brain development and sensory integration. In addition there has been training around the adoption support fund and early permanence

3.5.6 Adoption panel training has been undertaken for all panel members across the region.

3.5.7 Each practice area has had development days to share good practice and consider new ways of working in the new arrangements. This will be part of our development as an agency with at least two development days planned in each discipline with business support staff to ensure that opportunities for reflection and involvement in service development are provided for staff.

- 3.5.8 A skills gap analysis is currently underway with staff to assist in developing a workforce development plan over the coming year.

Strategic issues and forward plans

- 3.5.9 The service has spent time considering the OAWY vision, mission, outcomes and priorities for the next 3 years and a plan on a page has been developed (see Appendix 2). This outlines the priorities within the plan and are tracked through the OAWY Service Improvement Plan.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 There has been ongoing engagement with staff over the year who transferred in to the agency as well as formal consultation with the trade unions regarding the changes. Consultation with adopters, birth parents and adopted young people is ongoing to inform the development of the service design and delivery of the agency.

4.2 Equality and Diversity/ Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 OAWY completed an equality Impact assessment this year and a clear action plan has emerged from this to ensure that we are able to provide a comprehensive service to all communities. The Equality & Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Impact assessment is attached as Appendix 3.

4.3 Council Policies and Best Council Plan

- 4.3.1 The activities in this report contribute to the Best Council Plan outcome for everyone in Leeds to have Safe, Strong Communities with specific priorities to 'keep people safe from harm' and 'support children to have the best start in life'. In addition, the supporting Children and Young People's Plan identifies Looked after Children as one of three priority 'obsessions'. The adoption service is integral to our plan to safely and appropriately reduce the numbers of Children Looked After through ensuring all our children are placed in a permanent family outside the care system as soon as possible.

4.4 Resources and value for money

- 4.4.1 The Budget for One Adoption West Yorkshire is set by the 5 local authorities in line with the partnership agreement. The budget has been agreed for the coming year. The final overall outturn position for OAWY was a small underspend this first year. The overall staffing budget was slightly overspent although initially there were a high number of vacancies against the budgeted structure. However, due to increased demands in adoption support and the impact of the pay harmonisation these contributed to the financial pressure in this area of the budget. The interagency budget was slightly underspent this

year, even though 64 placements were paid for during the year. However, the income target in this area was not fully achieved. Efficiencies were made across the running costs elements of the budget around adoption panels and savings achieved through streamlining business processes which helped mitigate against the pressures in staffing.”

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information Call In

4.5.1 There are no legal implications for this report.

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.1 The report is linked to the corporate risk on Safeguarding Children.

5 Conclusions

5.1 The Regionalisation of Adoption Services is part of a structural reform programme set out by the government. One Adoption West Yorkshire was the first regional agency in the country to be set up and has had the opportunity to help shape and develop adoption practice locally, regionally and nationally. The first year of operation has been challenging for all the staff and the scale and complexities of some of the practicalities of such a change cannot be underestimated. However, the commitment, dedication and motivation of the staff to ensure that children and families have remained their key priority has been impressive in such challenging circumstances. The performance of the service over the last year provides evidence that we have established a firm foundation on which to build a flagship adoption service.

6 Recommendations

6.1 That the Joint Committee note the information in the report and continues to support the work of One Adoption West Yorkshire to ensure adopted children receive the best possible support.

7 Background documents¹

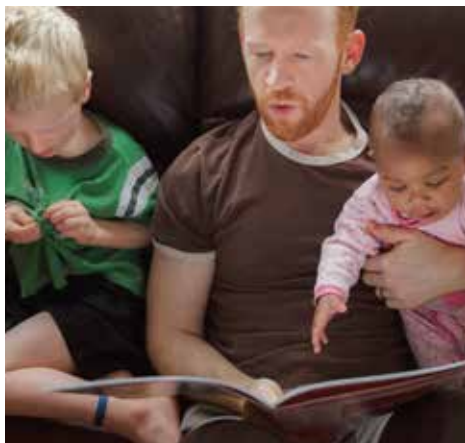
7.1 None

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.



STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

JUNE 2018



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(The wording in this publication can be made available in large formats such as large print of Braille. Please call us on 0113 3783535)

I. INTRODUCTION

It is a requirement of the National Minimum Standards for Adoption Services, that an adoption service produces a statement of purpose, including its aims and objectives, a description of the service it provides and the facilities that it provides. It can be used by children and young people and families as a guide to what they should expect a service to provide and to do.

This document is the Statement of purpose for One Adoption West Yorkshire. One Adoption West Yorkshire came into being on the 3rd April 2017. It is a shared adoption service across the region working on behalf of Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield councils. The Head of Service reports quarterly to a Management Board, made up of Senior Officers from each local authority with representation drawn from Adopters and the Voluntary Adoption Alliance (VAA). The Chair of the Management Board is Julie Jenkins (Head of Safeguarding Calderdale). The service is overseen by a Joint Committee, made up of elected members from the five local authorities chaired by Councillor Lisa Mulherin (Leeds).

The regional agency is operated under the terms of a Partnership Agreement, which confirms the legal and governance arrangements; the budget; staffing and funding contributions for the five local authorities.

The Statement of Purpose has been produced in accordance with:

- Adoption National Minimum Standards 2011;
- Care Planning Regulations 2010;
- Adoption Agency Regulations 2005 (amended 2011);
- Adoption Agencies (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2013;
- Local Authority Regulations 2005;
- Adoption Agencies & Independent Review of Determinations (Amendment) Regulations 2011;
- Adoption Agencies (Panel & Consequential Amendments) Regulations 2012;
- Care Planning, placement and Case and fostering services (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2013;
- Adoption and Children Act 2002;
- Care Standards Act 2000.

Adoption Agencies are inspected against these standards by Ofsted.

2. PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

The requirements of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 and the Children and Families Act 2014 underpin the principles and values of our service:-

Values: Children

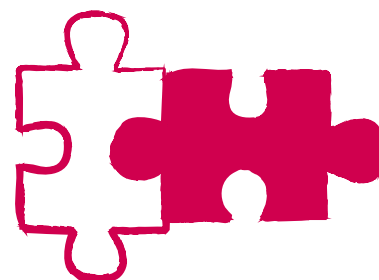
- Children are entitled to grow up as part of a loving family which can meet their needs during childhood and beyond and where possible this should be within their own family
- The Child's welfare, safety and needs will be at the centre of the adoption process
- The Child's wishes and feelings will be taken into account at all stages
- Delays in adoption can have a severe impact on the health and development of children and should be avoided wherever possible

- The child's ethnic origin, cultural background, religion, language and sexuality will be fully recognised, positively valued and promoted when decisions are made
- The particular needs of disabled children will be fully recognised and taken into account when decisions are made
- The role of adoptive parents in offering a permanent family to a child who cannot live with their birth family will be valued and respected.
- Adoption has lifelong implications for all involved and requires lifelong commitment from many organisations, professionals and individuals who have to work together to deliver to meet the needs of the services.
- Birth parents and birth families are entitled to services that recognise the lifelong implications of adoption. They will be treated fairly, openly and offered a support service.

Equal Opportunities

The adoption service abides by equal opportunities legislation and the policies of Leeds City Council. The service works positively and respectfully with all service users and partner agencies regardless of race, colour, religion, language, culture, disability, gender, sexual orientation or age.

Every attempt will be made to secure an adoptive family which meets a child's emotional and developmental needs taking into account their ethnicity, religion, language, culture, gender and disability taking into account the need to avoid undue delay.



3. THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE AGENCY

The agency is committed to fulfilling the requirements of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 and the Children and Families Act 2014 by:

- 1.** Ensuring the provision of a high quality adoption service which guarantees the best possible standards of care, safety and protection for children or young people who are looked after and who need adoptive placements.
- 2.** Ensuring that all those whose lives have been affected by adoption are helped to identify and receive appropriate services.
- 3.** Working in partnership with adoptive families & other agencies ensuring the service is based on statutory requirements & good practice within the principles of value for money for the agency.

Objectives of the agency

- 1.** To recruit, assess and provide adopters that meet the needs of the children to be placed for adoption within the timescales laid down by National Adoption Standards.
- 2.** To provide information on the process to applicants interested in becoming adopters and on the children requiring adoption.
- 3.** To ensure that adopters receive appropriate preparation, training, support and advice to enable them to offer the best possible standards of parenting, safety and protection for children or young people in their care.
- 4.** To minimise delay in family finding, paying attention to the needs of the child at all times.
- 5.** To provide information on the services available to all those affected by adoption recognising

that as adoption has lifelong implications for all those involved, their needs will change over time.

- 6.** To provide a range of adoption support services to birth relatives, adopted adults, adopters and their children in partnership with other agencies.
- 7.** To provide information on the service that is available to those wishing to adopt from abroad
- 8.** To ensure that any decisions are transparent and fair.
- 9.** That concerns about the service are addressed and that information about the complaints procedure is made available.
- 10.** That the organisation regularly reviews the services it provides, consults with, and learns from, those in receipt of their services through comments, compliments and complaints

4. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE & SERVICE USERS

Head of Service, One Adoption West Yorkshire		
Sarah Johal		
Service Delivery Managers		
Julie Chew (Leeds)	Mary Brudenell (Wakefield/ Bradford)	Mandy Prout (Calderdale/Kirklees)
Team Managers – Recruitment and Assessment		
Sheila Wood (Leeds)	Samantha Thomas (Wakefield)	Michelle Rawlings (Huddersfield)
Team Managers – Family Finding		
Nicola Steele (Leeds)	Katie Robinson	Valerie Edwards (Halifax)
Team Managers – Adoption Support and Adoption Support Services Advisors (ASSA's)		
Sarah Ryan (Leeds)	Rhian Beynon (Bradford & Wakefield)	Tony Bryce (Calderdale & Kirklees)
Business Support Manager		
Aretha Hanson		

One Adoption provides an adoption service to:

Children who are in need of an adoptive family

Birth parents

Prospective and approved adopters

Children and adoptive parents who need adoption support services

Adopted adults and members of their birth families



5. THE WORK OF THE ADOPTION SERVICE



The service undertakes the following tasks:

Recruitment of prospective adoptive families

Assessment and preparation of adoptive families, including visits to the home, a home study, taking up references and statutory checks and running preparation training

Family finding for children who need a permanent home through adoption

Support for families waiting for a child to be placed with them

Advice, guidance and support to adoptive families during the matching process and after placement. This includes workshops and training and support groups

Those wishing to adopt are referred to another agency that provide a service under contract for One Adoption.

Non agency adoption work for Calderdale, Kirklees and Wakefield.

The family finding team become involved with every child where adoption may be the plan during the decision making process and takes the lead in family finding at the earliest point possible

Children's social workers and adoption social workers undertake the task of planning for permanence and preparing children for adoption. The responsibility for matching and supporting adoptive families is a shared task until the adoption order.

The adoption letterbox service and access to adoption archives is provided and enables adopted children to maintain contact with their birth families.

Support and signposting to counselling services for adopted adults wishing to find out about their birth families and an Intermediary service are provided. The majority of this work is provided through a contract with other agencies operating in West Yorkshire.

Information about all aspects of the adoption service can be accessed via the One Adoption line 0113 3783535, the website oneadoption.co.uk or via the Facebook page www.facebook.com/oneadoption

All enquirers are followed through by an adoption advisor. An interpreter is available through a three way phone if required. Help is also available through social workers in the service who speak Asian languages. Currently there are social workers who speak Urdu and Punjabi. Approved interpreters will be used if required.

There are nine adoption teams in total:

The 3 **recruitment and assessment** teams are responsible for the recruitment, assessment and approval of adopters (office bases in Leeds, Halifax and Wakefield)

The 3 **family finding** teams have responsibility for the placement of children who have adoption as their plan (office bases in Bradford, Leeds and Huddersfield)

The 3 **adoption support** teams are responsible for providing a variety of adoption support services (office bases in Bradford, Leeds and Huddersfield)

The teams work cooperatively with each other in order to provide a seamless service for children and their adoptive families, ensuring the allocation of work as needed.

The Head office is based at:

Kernel House,
Killingbeck Drive
Leeds

LS14 6UF

Other office bases are:

Bradford	Wakefield	Halifax	Huddersfield
Sir Henry Mitchell House 4 Manchester Road, Bradford BD5 0QL	Queen's House Queen's Row Market Street Wakefield WF1 1DF	Ground Floor Princess Buildings Princess Street Halifax HX1 1T	Civic centre 1 High Street Huddersfield HD1 2NF

6. NUMBERS, QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE OF STAFF

Sarah Johal, Head of Service, has overall responsibility for One Adoption West Yorkshire. Qualifications: CQSW in Social Work 1990; MA Social Work and Social Care 2001; Advanced Award in Social Work 2002; Post Graduate Certificate in Applied Social Work Management 2007. She has over 26 years post qualification experience in child care, including 17 years in Adoption and Fostering. She has been a manager for over 14 years within both statutory child care and adoption and fostering services.

The agency has three Service Delivery Managers. Mandy Prout (Diploma in Social Work 1991) has extensive knowledge and experience in adoption practice and has been a manager in adoption services since 2007. Julie Chew (CQSW 1992 & NVQ Level 4 in management). Julie has worked in a variety of settings in relation to children and families social work and has been an adoption manager since 2007. Mary Brudenell BA (Hons) in Applied Social Studies & CQSW 1986. Mary has twenty-nine years post-qualifying experience in children's services and has been a manager in the adoption service since 2007.

The agency employs 109 staff. There are 58 full time equivalent qualified social workers across the three service areas, 6 of whom are Advanced Practitioners. In addition there are 3 specialist advisors in the adoption support team who have a range of therapeutic qualifications. There are 6 adoption advisors who support the recruitment and family finding service. The agency has a Business Support Manager and 18 full time equivalent administrative staff.

All social workers have a social work qualification and are registered with the HCPC (Health and care Professionals Council) and have relevant experience in children and families service. They have an enhanced DBS check.

7. THE SERVICE TO PROSPECTIVE ADOPTERS

Enquiries and First Contact

Enquirers can access information on adopting with One Adoption West Yorkshire via the Regional Adoption Agency website (<https://www.oneadoption.co.uk/about-one-adoption-west-yorkshire>) or make contact through the dedicated advice line. At first contact, enquirers are given information verbally about the adoption process. Information packs are then sent out within two working days.



Applications for adoptions from overseas

Inter-country adoption is a specialist area of work, as each country has its own rules and regulations regarding adoption. One Adoption West Yorkshire has a contract with another agency to provide this work. Applicants pay a fee for their assessment service, including the home study and then further fees for safeguarding checks etc.

Information Events

Enquirers are invited to attend an information event. Information events are held every three weeks across the West Yorkshire region. Details of these events are available on the One Adoption website. The information event delivers a presentation about adoption and you will have the opportunity to meet adopters and experienced adoption social workers to discuss the different routes to adoption. If enquirers are unable to attend an information event this needs to be discussed and alternative arrangements can be made. If enquiries wish to progress their interest, they request a home visit. A request for a visit form is made available at the end of the information event for enquirers to take away to complete.

Initial Home Visit

The home visit request can be submitted at any point during the twelve month period following the information event being attended. The home visit is undertaken by an adoption social worker and adoption advisor who will provide more information about adoption. The personal circumstances of adopters will be discussed in detail to help them consider if adoption is the right choice for them. The social worker will also start discussions about practical considerations.

On most occasions, enquirer(s) will be given a registration of interest form. A detailed summary of the home visit will be completed and passed to an adoption manager before the registration of interest form is accepted. The adoption manager will make a decision within 5 days about whether it should be accepted.

At this stage, the enquirer becomes known as prospective adopter(s). A letter will be sent to the prospective adopter (s) confirming that their application is proceeding or detailing the reasons why their registration of interest cannot be accepted.



Stage 1 Pre-assessment process

Stage One begins on the day that One Adoption West Yorkshire accepts the registration of interest from the prospective adopter(s) and should normally take 2 months to complete.

The stage one process will include the following:

- All of the statutory references/checks will be completed including the DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check.
- The prospective adopter(s) will complete an adoption medical as soon as possible. This will be considered by the adoption agency medical advisor, who will provide advice about any concerning medical issues.
- The prospective adopter(s) will be expected to attend training /preparation sessions. This will give prospective adopter(s) more detailed information and will allow them to meet experienced adopters who can help answer questions that they have.

- An adoption advisor will be provided to support prospective adopters on completing the stage 1 process and an agreement will be drawn up with prospective adopters detailing expectations.

Preparation sessions

Prospective applicants will be invited to attend preparation sessions in Stage One. The process will be delayed if applicants are unable to attend initial preparation, and a clear indication of their availability will be ascertained. They will also be encouraged to access e-learning components on the First4Adoption website.

Preparation groups for first time adopters usually run approximately 11 times per year based on need. Second or subsequent adopter training is provided at regular intervals across the region, as is foster carer adoption preparation group training.

Stage 2 – the assessment process

The stage two assessment process cannot begin until the stage one assessment has successfully been completed (apart from second time and foster carer adoptions, see next page)

Stage two begins when prospective adopters notify the agency of their wish to continue. The prospective adopter(s) have 6 months from the completion of stage one to provide this notification. From the date of receipt of this notification, the stage two process is a 4 month long process during which a home study assessment is undertaken. This leads to a panel recommendation and an Agency Decision about suitability to adopt.

The prospective adopter(s) will be allocated an adoption social worker to complete their assessment. A Stage Two plan will be drawn up between the social worker and the prospective adopter(s) agreeing arrangements for the assessment process and provisional panel dates.

The assessment will involve a series of home visits utilising a variety of assessment tools and will include additional checks including school, nursery, ex-partner, employers and references. Personal referees will also be visited.

On the basis of the information in the assessment the adoption social worker will write a Prospective Adopters' Report (PAR). This is a very detailed report providing information about the prospective adopter(s) and their background. The report will reach a conclusion about the prospective adopters(s) suitability to adopt and the applicants will have up to 5 working days to comment on their completed assessment before it is presented to the adoption panel.

Once approved, the prospective adopter(s) will be informed about the role of Adoption Match (formally known as the National Adoption Register), and with their permission, referred as soon as possible and no later than three months after approval.

If the agency reaches a decision during the stage 2 process that they cannot recommend approval and /or if the agency decision maker decides not to agree the approval, the prospective adopter(s) will be able to request a review by the Independent Review Mechanism (IRM). The IRM is an independent body that can scrutinize the decisions of adoption agencies.

Adoption by existing foster carers

Foster carers should notify the service in writing of their wish to be considered as adopters for a child or children in their care. If the child/ children's plan is for adoption, this will be acknowledged and a meeting held between workers from the adoption and fostering teams and the child's social worker to consider how this should be progressed and will be discussed with the foster carers, who will also be informed of their legal rights.

A fast track process will be provided for approved foster carers who want to be assessed as adoptive parents. The process will bypass the stage one process and start at the beginning of stage two (as above). They will be offered training.

Second or subsequent adopters

Families who have already been assessed as adopters can apply to adopt again as long as there is a year's gap following their child's adoption order being made and a 2 year age gap between their child and a potential new child. In this case, they would write to express an interest in adopting again and be offered a home visit to discuss their circumstances. If it is appropriate to proceed they would then complete the registration of interest form and start in stage 2. They would be offered training.

If their interest is in respect of a subsequent sibling or half sibling of a child they have already adopted, the timescales and age gap would not necessarily apply. This assessment would be given high priority and the home visit would involve the child's social worker too.

Adoption Panel

The main purpose of the Adoption Panel is to consider and make recommendations to the adoption agency on the following:-

- people to be approved as adoptive parents
- whether an assessment to approve adopters should continue following a brief report to panel
- approval of the match between children and adopters and
- The placement of children for adoption where their birth parents desire adoption to be the plan

One Adoption West Yorkshire holds seven adoption panels per month, three taking place in Leeds, two taking place in Bradford and two taking place in Huddersfield. The panels have an Independent Chair with significant experience of family placement work.

Membership of the panels meets the statutory regulations and takes its members from a central list. Members include those who have personal experience of adoption and others with relevant skills and experience and aim to reflect the diversity of the population of the district.

All applicants are invited to attend the Adoption Panel. The Panel makes recommendations to the Agency Decision Maker who will make their decision following careful consideration of the recommendations and all of the information presented at panel. The Decision Maker must make their decision within 7 working days of the recommendation of the panel. They may make a decision different to that recommended by the panel.

One Adoption West Yorkshire has an agency decision maker to consider the approval of prospective adopters; decision making for children to be placed for adoption is considered by the Agency Decision Maker in the child's home local authority.

Decisions are notified to a child's parent(s), guardian(s) and prospective adopter(s). Social workers will be informed of the agency decision within 2 working days and the decision will be confirmed in writing within 5 working days.



8. BEYOND APPROVAL

Matching and support

Following panel adopters are offered an additional training day to help them prepare for a child coming into their family. Topics covered include introductions, moving children into new families, making good connections and contact. Adoption Social Workers ensure that adopters have access to local support networks and specialist national organisations such as Coram BAAF, Adoption UK and PAC UK. Adopters are provided with one year free subscription to Adoption UK following approval.

There is also a one day training course available for grandparents or other relatives who are supporting the adopter/s and wish to have more in depth information regarding adoption called Related by Adoption.

The adopter(s) social worker will help to identify suitable matches with a child/ren and will provide support and guidance throughout the whole process. All prospective adopters are referred to the regional Hub and the Adoption Match at three months, with their agreement, if no match has been identified locally.

Each child where adoption is a likely plan will have an allocated worker from the family finding team. The family finder works closely with the child's social worker to consider matches for that child.

When a match is being considered adopters are given the Child Permanence Report and all appropriate written information about the child, their background and assessed needs. The report will include details of any proposal for contact, or exchange of information through the letterbox system with the birth family that will operate once the child is adopted.

Adopters meeting with the child's social worker and other professionals relevant for that child; medical advisors; child's foster carers; teachers etc. to enable them to make an informed decision. A life appreciation day will often be arranged depending on the child's age and circumstances to help build as full a picture as possible of the child's experiences.

Details of the level of parental responsibility that will be delegated to the prospective adopters will be outlined and any adoption support, including any financial arrangements will also be discussed. The proposals for the placement will then be set out in the adoption placement report, which will be seen by the prospective adopters before panel and comments and observations will be included in the panel documentation.

Process for the matching of a child

The child's social worker, the prospective adopters and their social worker will attend the Adoption Panel. The process for panel is the same as for approval with recommendations being made to the Agency Decision Maker who will make the decision on whether the adopters are suitable for a particular child.

If a match is agreed an introductions planning meeting is arranged to plan for the introduction and placement of the child. Good practice guidance on placements called "Flying Start" is used to guide the meeting. This meeting will involve the foster carer for the child, the prospective adopters, and the relevant social workers. The meeting will establish that the adoptive family has all the information available about the child and will draw up a timetable and process for the introductions, monitoring and support.



There are some variations to this process if prospective adoptive parent/s are taking the Early Permanency Route to adoption, are second time adopters or foster carers adopting the child they have been fostering. These differences will be carefully explained to prospective adoptive parents from the beginning of their adoption process with us starting with written accounts on the One Adoption West Yorkshire website under "routes to adoption".

Annual Reviews of Prospective adopters

In the event that it is not possible to move to a match within 12 months from approval, the adoption social worker and their manager will conduct an a review of the plans and checks and references may need to be updated. If no placement has been made within two years of approval, an updated report will go to adoption panel for consideration.

Meeting birth parents

Most adopters will meet the child's birth parents either prior to placement, or more usually, once the child is placed and settled. They will be supported by their social workers in a suitable venue. The benefit of meeting birth parents is so adoptive parents can talk to their child about their birth family and aid the exchange of information.

After placement

Visits will be made by both the child's social worker and the family's adoption social worker. These are based on both statutory requirements and the individual needs of the child and prospective adopter(s).

The child remains a 'looked after' child until an Adoption Order is made. The child has to be visited in the first week of placement, followed by weekly visits up to the child's first statutory review at 4 weeks post placement, when the pattern of visiting will be discussed and agreed but will be not less than six weekly. The child's review will determine when an application to adopt may be made and advice will be given by the worker for the prospective adopters. The Annex A report for court will be prepared by both the family's and child's social workers.

Life story material will be provided for the child by the child's social worker and given to the adopters for safe keeping for the child in the future. The child's social worker is responsible for ensuring that a "later life letter" is completed before the Adoption Order is made, which will give an account of the circumstances of the adoption.

Contact and the letterbox service

Support with contact arrangements between adopted children and their birth families are provided by the agency. All contact arrangements will be reached having taken account of what is in the best interests of the child, and will be specified in the Adoption Support Plan before a child is placed. Contact may include letter-box contact or face-to-face meetings between the child and members of his/her family, including parents, siblings, or extended family members.

A letterbox service may be set up between the adoptive parents on behalf of the child and a birth parent or any other relative or with any other person the agency considers relevant. Support and supervision of direct contact may be arranged where necessary and agreed.



9. ADOPTION SUPPORT

One Adoption West Yorkshire has a comprehensive adoption support service for all those affected by adoption. This service is provided in partnership with a number of voluntary agencies & other providers who provide an independent service and other services.

The adopters' social worker will ensure that adopters have access to local support networks and specialist organisations, e.g. Adoption UK, NORCAP, New Family Social and other services and are on the mailing list for any events organised through the adoption service. The adoption service also provides 12 months free membership of Adoption UK to all new adopters.

The agency has 3 specialist adoption support teams across the region who offer a range of adoption support services. They also signpost other services for those affected by adoption:

Adoptive parents

Adopted children and young people, birth parents

Adopted adults

The adoption support service provides adoption support services in line with the "Adoption Passport" according to individual circumstances

For adoptive families:

The adoption support team will undertake an assessment of need with the family and will agree a support package based on the family's identified needs, including consideration of making an application to the Adoption Support Fund.

- Advice line and newsletter
- Support groups including stay and play groups
- Training and Workshops including ADOPT programme, non-violence resistance training & Safebase.
- Therapeutic and filial therapy groups and access to therapy trained workers
- Links with mental health and educational services
- Assistance and review of contact arrangements between adopters and birth relatives
- A annual social event for adoptive families
- Assistance and review of contact arrangements



Adopted children & young people:

- Social groups and activities
- Offering training and advice for schools to help teachers understand adopted children's needs
- Working with children in their adoptive families around understanding their life stories
- Signposting to other organisations designed to help adopted children
- Information about registering a veto

Birth relatives:

- Access to a confidential and independent advice and counselling service via an independent agency.
- Support regarding letterbox and contact arrangements
- Enabling parents to record on their child's file whether or not they wish to have contact with their child from the age of 18

For Adopted Adults:

- Discussion and advice about wishes around contact with and from birth relatives

Information about our Adoption Services can be accessed via our Adoption Advice Line Telephone number 0113 378 3535, website: <https://www.oneadoption.co.uk/about-one-adoption-west-yorkshire> or by email: oneadoptionwy.leeds@gov.uk

10. MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE ADOPTION SERVICE

Adoption staff receive regular supervision and annual appraisals of their performance. Training needs are identified and met through in-house training or through externally commissioned trainers.

A management information system and government score card are in place which ensures reporting of accurate information about adoption.

Adoption Agencies are monitored by external inspections carried out by Ofsted.

There is regular adoption panel training to ensure that panel members keep up to date with current issues. Panel members also have annual appraisals.

Regular feedback is received from the Adoption Panels and twice yearly meetings are held between the Management team, Panel Chairs and Agency Decision Maker.

The Head of Service submits a quarterly report to the Management Board and provides an annual review and plan for the Joint Committee by 30th June in any year. His can also be taken to individual local authority scrutiny boards or Executives by 30 September in any year.

A robust quality assurance framework is in place with regular auditing of files, plus evaluation feedback from adoptive parents and other service users. This is held centrally and is undertaken at key points in the adoption process.



II. CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS

All prospective adopters engaging with the Agency and all birth parents of child for whom the Agency is planning adoption are provided with written information about Complaints Procedures, including contact details for the Complaints Officer. All young people, for whom there is an adoption plan and who are of an appropriate age and understanding are likewise informed of the Complaints Procedures and also informed of the role of the Children's Rights Service.

Freepost
PO Box 657
Leeds LS1 9BS
Tel: 01132224405
Email: feedback.children@leeds.gov.uk

Details of the Registration Authority

OFSTED CONTACT DETAILS

Ofsted National Business Unit
Piccadilly Gate Store Street,
Manchester,
M1 2WD

Telephone: 0300 123 1231
Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
Web: www.ofsted.gov.uk





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Voice and Influence of Children, Young People and Adopters Report Card April 2017 to March 2018

Outcome: Children and adoptive families to have an influence over decisions affecting their families' lives and the services we provide.

Best ideas - what has worked?

adoptervoice

We provide a range of different opportunities and levels of involvement to enable adoptive parents to have a voice and influence in OAWY. Opportunities range from a paid role in the organisation to volunteering at events. We also pay an hourly rate for adoptive parents to deliver training. We have established an Adopter Voice Forum and work with Adoption UK to employ an Adopter coordinator.

The Adopter coordinator is an adopter themselves and their role is to capture the voice of adopters and use them to influence the development of adoption services. So far they have helped shape:

- information events – we now co deliver;
- assessment – peer mentoring will be introduced;
- prep training – co delivery and content influenced;
- support – development of a website, support menu.

An Adoption Charter has been produced by Adopter Voice. This outlines partnership working with One Adoption to ensure 'the best possible future for families across the region'. The aims of this charter have been added to the OAWY 2018/19 Service Improvement Plan to ensure a partnership approach to delivering service improvements.

Members of Adopter Voice have been involved in the recruitment of all managers, staff and panel chairs within OAWY.

AT-iD



AT-iD (Adopted Teens Identity) is a project set up by the Yorkshire & Humber adoption consortium with a vision of offering adopted teenagers a space they can call their own. West Yorkshire teens are well represented in this group we have; 33/ 61 project members, 9/ 22 chat forum members and 7/ 14 Youth Council members. 7 activity days have been held with 46 young people attending from our region.

A 20 minute short film 'Voices' which talks about young people's experiences and feelings on adoption was created by AT-iD. This film is used by OAWY when training prospective adopters.

Young people from this group have also been involved in the recruitment process for staff at OAWY.

Feedback following an activity day from AT-ID members:

How has AT-iD made a difference to you?

- *Attending AT-iD activity days has made me more confident;*
- *AT-iD activity day made me feel stronger;*
- *I like meeting different people at AT-iD activity days;*
- *I have made friends with new people;*
- *I had fun;*
- *I pushed myself;*
- *I had fun and met new people;*
- *I made 2 new friends;*
- *It was fun and got me out of the house.*

Feedback from Youth Council Members

- *AT-iD has been life changing and it has changed my life for the better;*
- *AT-iD has made me a lot happier and I now have long term friends;*
- *I felt such a sense of belonging after going to my first AT-iD activity day. I carried on attending them and I met one of my best friends there, we have developed a special bond;*
- *I really enjoy AT-iD, I have done since it started. I find talking to others online stress relieving too and I enjoy the fact that everyone understands what it feels like to be adopted and that they can relate;*
- *AT-iD is my family;*
- *AT ID has been important to me and I have loved meeting other adopted people with similar experiences and I have found it very helpful. Also the fun days doing stuff. Also sharing my thoughts and opinions;*
- *My life has been transformed. AT-iD is my family. It's like soaring through happiness. Express yourself and let go;*
- *AT-iD is very important as it gives me somewhere that I belong and other people understand me in a way that others don't.*

Young people have also been involved in recruitment of all managers in OAWY.

A Survey of Adoptive Families: Following up Children Adopted in the Yorkshire and Humberside Region

The above mentioned survey was delivered in our region by a project team from the University of East Anglia and the University Loughborough. Information was gathered from a range of Adopters via an anonymous, on-line survey about how they and their child were getting on. 319 adoptive parents filled in the survey but only 2017 completed it all. 79% of parents stated that their adoption was 'going really well' or they were 'managing', with 21% were experiencing difficulties or struggling to manage.



Parents of older children experienced more problems: 70% with a child under 6 years old stated the adoption was going really well compared to 31% with a 6-9 years old and 24% of adopters with children aged 12-17. Key recommendations from the findings included; the need for ongoing support, preparing adoptive parents with full and detailed information, careful planning of the transition from foster to adoptive families and a proactive approach to birth family contact.



Foundations for Attachment

Written by Kim S. Golding: Foundations for Attachment 8 week course is a programme to help adopters to nurture attachments with their child. The course is aimed at adoptive families who are experiencing difficulties due to their child's early life experiences.

This course has been delivered by OAWY to 15 adoptive families. Feedback from the programme has been very positive, see comments from adopters below:

- *Didn't really understand any alternative to traditional parenting but after this course appreciate the benefits of PACE and putting myself in my child's shoes;*
- *Really makes me think about why some behaviours are present & that issues are common, good to feel not alone;*
- *This course has made me realise I am not going 'Bonkers';*
- *Really useful & some life changing moments for me as a parent;*
- *Should be part of the Adoption Process;*
- *It's got to be a way of life and not just a technique.*

The next Foundations for Attachment programme will be run again in the Autumn.

OAWY Non-Violent Resistance (NVR)

Child (or adolescent) to parent violence is becoming an increasing concern within the adoption community. OAWY ran a 12 week course with adoptive parents to address violent, destructive and harmful behaviours. NVR helps parents to break the silence, regain their parental presence and make positive changes to their family life.

Below are examples of feedback from parents about the programme we ran in the Autumn 2017 for 12 families:

- *As parents we communicate better/work together more, approaching situations from same page. This has created a calmer atmosphere at home. The future is not as daunting even though we will have tough times.”*
- *“NVR made me realise what we had been doing was not working and there are ways to change the way we do parenting which will improve all our lives”*
- *“Our previous parenting approach was making matters worse and not working with our son. We had to do something to break the cycle of his controlling and destructive behaviour. NVR has been a godsend we were told that it is life changing and it certainly is. We have become stronger as a team and NVR is making a big difference to the atmosphere and happiness within our home.”*

How NVR has helped your family?

- *“To become stronger, clearer and more concise. Kids responding brilliantly when we do it well. Calmer, more relaxed, less aggressive.”*
- *“As always, it is very helpful to be able to hear from and talk to others in a similar situation - not only do we learn from each other, we feel comforted that we are not alone in our experiences.”*



Our family is unrecognisable to how it was 12 weeks ago. The changes are remarkable. I still realise we still have a long way to go and we will continue to work hard improving our family life.”

This is a targeted and specific training and was well received and will be run again later in the year.



Safe Base is a therapeutic parenting programme for adoptive parents that One Adoption West Yorkshire commissions from After Adoption.

24 families have attended this course in the last year. It creates a strong foundation for loving and lasting relationships within the family, giving children the confidence to feel safe and secure with their parents or carers.

SafeBase provides a bespoke family session and feedback as part of the programme and is effective in:

- Providing practical strategies tailored to the family
- Strengthening family wellbeing and hope for the future
- Putting attachment and child development into context for the family
- Explaining the impact of early adversity on brain development
- Building secure attachments

Safebase has given us some invaluable information, which has already worked well in many situations and made an immediate, positive difference. Feeling much more positive, reassured and confident. (August 2017)

I feel more confident with techniques to help my children feel secure in our family. I feel more confident of my understanding of my children's behaviours and why they behave in certain ways. I am more accepting of my children's behaviours. (August 2017)

Safebase has made a huge difference in how I regard parenting and the mindset of my child. (October 2017)

Extremely helpful, relevant and useful - giving an easy to understand explanation of early trauma and attachment issues with real strategies in a supportive environment. (November 2017)

Lots of great techniques to use at home, better understanding of issues and attachment relating to my son. (Feb 2018)

Really good course. The teachers were very good and made it enjoyable and fun. A great way to learn for all of us. (May 2017)

Safe base is to be run again in August following positive feedback from adopters

Profiling Events

.The 2 profiling events held in 2017/18 have resulted in 5 matches and 1 still being explored. Approved and stage 2 adopters from OAWY and other agencies across the North of England were invited .The success of these events and the positive feedback from those who attended has resulted in plans for 4 profiling event to be held each year.

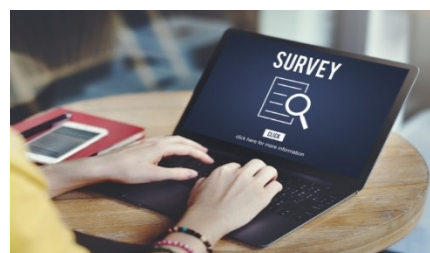
Feedback from those who attended has been positive, see comments below:

- *We were very happy with the event. We had very good discussions with social workers about specific cases and had very good advice and suggestions. As a result of this event we have expressed interest in 2 children;*
- *It has reminded us of what we are doing this for;*
- *We were considering a very young baby but seeing items of a slightly older child has reminded us that they are still very small;*
- *The displays were very informative and having items from the children and letters and paintings they'd made was very engaging;*
- *We did find the morning emotional, but hopefully it's set us on the road to find our child. Everyone was so lovely, we really appreciated it.*
- *Loved it was on a weekend so we could both attend. Staff/S/W all very approachable and shared appropriate info;*
- *Everyone was very welcoming and helped to put me at my ease. Found it emotional but very useful;*

Best ideas - what next?

Adopter Survey

An on-line survey to all OAWY adopters will be sent out in May 2018. The aim is to capture views on the services we provide so we can identify areas that may require improvement. Additional, more specific, on-line surveys will also be produced to gather feedback on areas such as interventions, adopter preparation training and 'bump into' meetings.



adoptervoice

Adopter Voice have created an Adoption Charter. The charter expresses the support benefits of peer mentors. Therefore, working closely with Adopter Voice and Cornerstone (see below) to provide a peer mentoring service that will be launched in 2018/19. This service will offer bespoke mentoring that adopters can access for one to one support at any stage of the adoption journey – 30 peer mentors will be recruited and trained.

Peer Mentoring Scheme

OAWY has partnered with The Cornerstone Partnership to provide a Peer Mentoring Scheme to all OAWY prospective and experienced adopters. We know how challenging and, at times, stressful the process of adopting and being an adoptive parent can be. Our mentoring scheme relies on volunteer mentors who have the experience and desire to help others through what is often a challenging time.



What is the Cornerstone mentoring programme?

The aim of the Cornerstone peer mentoring programme for prospective and experienced adopters is to:

- to provide emotional support and encouragement for families;
- to sign-post to local support;
- to share experiences and successes of parenting adopted children as they deal with transitions, contact issues, challenging behaviours etc.

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ONE ADOPTION WEST YORKSHIRE'S PLAN: 2018/19 - 2020/21



Our Vision: To be a flagship Adoption Agency that develops & promotes best practice, improving adoption standards nationally.

Our Mission: To find loving families who can meet the needs of children & offer an innovative & supportive approach to all those affected by adoption.

What we'll do:

4 Outcomes:

1. Children move into their adoptive family without delay;
2. Families get help and support at every stage of the adoption journey;
3. Children have good quality care, a sense of belonging and stability within their adoptive family;
4. Children, adoptive and birth parents and adopted adults are listened to and have an influence in decisions that affect them and service development;

8 Priorities:

1. Recruit & assess sufficient numbers of adopters to meet the needs of our children;
2. Work with Local Authorities & partners to:
 - Improve early identification of children and further develop the use of EPP across the region;
 - Develop practice around identity (relationships with birth families & life story work);
 - Develop knowledge and understanding about matching with adopters who are committed, flexible, open communicators and are willing to access support.
3. Develop our staff team & panel members to ensure all our children & families receive consistently excellent service & support;
4. Implement a consistent offer of adoption support across OAWY;
5. Develop a Centre of Excellence for Adoption Support;
6. Create new partnerships with organisations that will help us achieve our outcomes;
7. Establish & promote a peer mentoring scheme;
8. Continue to work with Adopter Voice, AT-ID & birth families;

3 Obsessions:

1. Increase the number of adopters recruited
2. Timely placement of children with families
3. Quality of support provided

How we'll do it:



Monitor, Evaluate & Respond to service user feedback & performance data to continually improve our services

A Regional Service with local delivery – we'll make the most of opportunities for regional efficiency & maintain strong local relationships

A Restorative Approach underpinning everything we do. Inclusive & fair processes, working with & alongside all our partner agencies & families

A clear budget strategy that provides value for money

Look at ways to become more efficient and generate income

Motivated, Knowledgeable & Skilled Business Support that enable adoption services to thrive

Outstanding Social Work Practice – we will continue to invest in the development of our staff, ensuring confident & knowledgeable professionals

Do the basics right – know your child and family, analytical assessments & SMART outcome focussed plans

Engage with Children, Young People & Families – we will enhance our groups and continue to empower them to shape services



3 behaviours that underpin everything:

1. Listening & responding to the voice of the child;
2. Restorative Practice: doing with not for or to;
3. Outcomes based accountability is anyone any better off?

How we'll know if we've made a difference:

- Increased the numbers of adopters recruited & approved
- Positive service user feedback
- Reduced timescale in which Children are placed with adoptive parent(s)
- Evaluation from Adoption Support Fund;
- High level of family stability maintained
- A range of established service user groups that feed directly into our business planning.

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As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration. In all appropriate instances we will need to carry out an equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment.

This form:

- can be used to prompt discussion when carrying out your impact assessment
- should be completed either during the assessment process or following completion of the assessment
- should include a brief explanation where a section is not applicable

Directorate: Children & Families	Service area: One Adoption West Yorkshire
Lead person: Sarah Johal	Contact number: 07891277316
Date of the equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment: February 2018	

1. Title: One Adoption West Yorkshire
Is this a:
<input type="checkbox"/> Strategy /Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Service / Function <input type="checkbox"/> Other
If other, please specify

2. Members of the assessment team:

Name	Organisation	Role on assessment team e.g. service user, manager of service, specialist
Sarah Johal	One Adoption West Yorkshire	Head of One Adoption West Yorkshire
Mary Brudenell	One Adoption West Yorkshire	Service Delivery Manager, One Adoption West Yorkshire
Julie Chew	One Adoption West Yorkshire	Service Delivery Manager, One Adoption West Yorkshire
Mandy Prout	One Adoption West Yorkshire	Service Delivery Manager, One Adoption West Yorkshire
Aretha Hanson	One Adoption West Yorkshire	Business Support Manager, One Adoption West Yorkshire
Richard Stevenson	One Adoption West Yorkshire	Practice Improvement & Development Manager, One Adoption West Yorkshire

3. Summary of strategy, policy, service or function that was assessed:
In 'Regionalising adoption' in June 2015 the Government set out its commitment to

markedly improve outcomes for children through the delivery of a regional adoption system where:

- children are matched with the most suitable adopter as quickly as possible;
- recruitment takes place at an efficient scale to provide a pool of 'adoption ready' adopters large enough and well enough matched to the needs of children waiting and;
- enough high quality adoption support services are available nationwide.

One Adoption West Yorkshire (OAWY) was the first Regional Adoption Agency to go-live on the 1st of April 2017. OAWY is made up of the 5 separate Local Authority adoption agencies which provided adoption services for West Yorkshire; Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield and is the largest adoption agency in the North of England.

This new agency is designed to offer an innovative and adopter friendly approach to adoption recruitment, adoption support, and family finding for children and prospective adopters as well as high quality training.

By working together we will provide even higher levels of expertise and support to our adoptive families at all stages of the adoption process and with the inspiration and direction provided by our adoptive parents we will ensure that we provide the kind of support that families want and need.

We want every child to have a family to grow up in and we need more adoptive parents to play a vital role in fulfilling this vision. Adoption is an exciting and challenging experience for everyone involved. We are seeking adoptive parents from all walks of life to reflect the range of children we have who are looking for a secure home with patience, understanding and loving kindness.

This Assessment looks at how OAWY considers Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration throughout the adoption process. It will also highlight areas that need to be improved and the actions that will be taken to address them.

4. Scope of the equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment
(complete - 4a. if you are assessing a strategy, policy or plan and 4b. if you are assessing a service, function or event)

4a. Strategy, policy or plan

(please tick the appropriate box below)

The vision and themes, objectives or outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/>
The vision and themes, objectives or outcomes and the supporting guidance	<input type="checkbox"/>
A specific section within the strategy, policy or plan	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please provide detail:

4b. Service, function, event please tick the appropriate box below	
The whole service (including service provision and employment)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
A specific part of the service (including service provision or employment or a specific section of the service)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Procuring of a service (by contract or grant)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Please provide detail: This assessment will cover the three core elements of service delivery; Recruitment and Assessment, Family Finding and Adoption Support and the services users; the child/ adopted person, people wishing to adopt, adopters, birth parent and staff.</p>	

<p>5. Fact finding – what do we already know Make a note here of all information you will be using to carry out this assessment. This could include: previous consultation, involvement, research, results from perception surveys, equality monitoring and customer/ staff feedback.</p> <p>(priority should be given to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration related information)</p> <p>There are no restrictions to adoptive applicants regardless of age, religion/ belief/ faith, disability, gender, sexual orientation, race or if they are a trans person, provided they are deemed to be able to meet the needs of the child/ children they wish to adopt.</p> <p>Children who wait longer to be adopted generally have one of more of the following characteristics; they are older, BME, have a disability or are part of a sibling group.</p>		
	Strengths	Weaknesses
Age	Age restrictions for adopting applicants are flexible and OAWY recognise that more people are having children at an older age.	There is a shortage of adopters for older children. The lack of placements could have a negative impact on this group as these children may be placed out of their local area which in turn may impact on their continued contact with their family and local support structures. Specific targeting of older adopters has not been carried out to date.
Religion/ Belief / Faith	OAWY accepts adoption applications from applicants of all religions/ beliefs/ faiths. This ensures there is potential for a	There are not always adequate numbers of potential adopters or children to meet the religious/ belief/ faith needs of either party.

	wide range of potential adopters recruited to meet the range of children needing placement.	Adopters from faith backgrounds often adopt for altruistic reasons and tend to consider taking older children and sibling groups. There is not enough adopters for this group of children so a more targeted approach is required.
Disability	Adopters with a disability are able to adopt. The services of the medical advisor are used to ensure decision making is always done to prevent discrimination, whilst ensuring the needs of the child are paramount.	<p>Some potential adoptive applicants who have a disability may view this as negatively impacting upon their right to adopt. For example, the issue of mental health or a life limiting health issue/disability can be a limiting factor when deciding someone is suitable to adopt a child. However the needs of the children to have stability and care throughout their childhood must remain the primary focus and therefore some applicants may feel they have been discriminated against.</p> <p>Some children, because of their complex needs, often wait longer for permanent placements. There is a need for more Adopters to offer a permanent home for disabled children. In particular children with Asperger's or those on the Autistic spectrum are particularly hard to place and consideration needs to be given to recruiting and supporting adopters who have the skills to look after these children.</p>
Gender	Female and male adopters are able to adopt.	<p>Single males and single female adopters at times are not aware they can adopt on their own and applicants from single males are small.</p> <p>Although there are no gender considerations in recruiting Adopters and the service operates according to our own anti-discriminatory practice the main carer within the household within adoption is usually female. A negative impact of this may be that there is a potential for male adopters to become isolated and in these instances they should be encouraged to attend support groups (see Action Plan).</p>
Sexual Orientation	OAWY recruitment procedures are anti-discriminatory and welcome applicants who are LGBT. The assessment process conforms to British Association for Adoption and Fostering (BAAF) guidance on assessment and workers have been trained in assessment,	We are not aware of any barriers to LGBT groups being recruited to adoption. However, refresher training would be useful to staff in matters of recruitment and assessment of LGBT applicants.

	including assessing gay and lesbian adopters.	
Race	Adopting applicants from any racial background are recruited to OAWY, if they meet all the relevant criteria and are able to meet the needs of the children.	Recruiting adopters for children from BME backgrounds particularly children with mixed heritage remains a challenge. Resources are available to purchase appropriate adoptive placements for children and we have a growing number of out of authority placements that reflect this.
Trans People	OAWY policies do not discriminate against trans-gender adopters.	Of all the diversity strands OAWY has the least knowledge and experience in working with Trans People. Staff training and development needs to be undertaken to ensure Trans People who wish to adopt have fair access to the process and feel confident to adopt.

**Are there any gaps in equality and diversity information
Please provide detail:**

N/A.

Action required:
 Action 1 - Develop an innovative & bespoke family finding/ matching process for children who wait longer.
 Action 2 - Ensure marketing campaigns are inclusive of older adopters.
 Action 3 - Specific marketing campaign target at adopters from faith backgrounds.
 Action 4 - Implement a service user feedback mechanism that allows analysis by diversity strand. This will enable OAWY to identify areas where action is required.
 Action 5 – Provide refresher LGBT Training.

6. Wider involvement – have you involved groups of people who are most likely to be affected or interested

Yes **No**

Please provide detail:

In order to gather a perspective of the main service users the following groups who represent adopted teenagers, adoptive parents and birth parents were consulted.

- Adopters via Adopter Voice.

Action required:
 Action 6 - Maintain active contact with service user groups and work with them to identify and implement service improvements.

7. Who may be affected by this activity?
 please tick all relevant and significant equality characteristics, stakeholders and barriers that apply to your strategy, policy, service or function

Equality characteristics

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Age	<input type="checkbox"/> Carers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disability
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender reassignment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Race	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion or Belief
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sex (male or female)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sexual orientation	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other		

(**Other** can include – marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, and those areas that impact on or relate to equality: tackling poverty and improving health and well-being)
Please specify: n/a

Stakeholders

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Services users	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Employees	<input type="checkbox"/> Trade Unions
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partners	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Members	<input type="checkbox"/> Suppliers
<input type="checkbox"/> Other please specify		

Potential barriers.

<input type="checkbox"/> Built environment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Location of premises and services
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information and communication	<input type="checkbox"/> Customer care
<input type="checkbox"/> Timing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stereotypes and assumptions
<input type="checkbox"/> Cost	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consultation and involvement
<input type="checkbox"/> Financial exclusion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Employment and training



specific barriers to the strategy, policy, services or function

Please specify

The above are noted as potential barriers but are not known to be. Action 4, section 12 will seek to evidence if there are any such barriers which OAWY will then plan to address.

8. Positive and negative impact

Think about what you are assessing (scope), the fact finding information, the potential positive and negative impact on equality characteristics, stakeholders and the effect of the barriers

8a. Positive impact:

Recruitment & Assessment of Adopters

1. The OAWY website signposts potential adopters to Information Events which are held across the region, so there are always local events. Generally the events are held at venues that ensure they are physically accessible for people who wish to attend who have a disability;
2. OAWY has a clear statement in its' policy that we accept and actively recruit adopters regardless of age, religion/ belief/ faith, disability, gender, sexual orientation, race or if they are a Trans Person provided they are deemed to be able to meet the needs of the child/ children they wish to adopt;
3. The service focuses on effective partnership working to continue the improvement of services to children affected by adoption irrespective of age, religion/ belief/ faith, disability, gender, sexual orientation, race or if they are a Trans Person. Our marketing and publicity material uses positive images to promote our approach to equality within our advertising, see Appendix A;
4. OAWY have approved a diverse range of people, including same gender couples and single people. We have undertaken specific LGBT recruitment for adoption families and have been actively involved in the LGBT Challenge group;
5. We have a planned process of continual training for adoption Social Workers around LGBT;
6. Constructive use of targeted recruitment activity has increased our ability to secure placements for children with specific needs arising from cultural background or developmental issues and disability;
7. Information events and preparation events are held at venues to meet the needs of adopters with a disability;

Family Finding for Children

8. Profiling Events are held in accessible buildings quarterly which are aimed at adopters in assessment as well as approved. This enables people to get information early about the reality of the children OAWY are seeking to place;
9. OAWY has a robust approach to ensuring that children's religious and cultural needs are met through effective matching meetings identifying need and support plans;
10. OAWY seeks to identify and meet any additional support needs Adopters may have in order to care for children from different ethnic, cultural and religious groups and children with disabilities;
11. OAWY uses Adoption Match and Link Maker to identify placements for those

children who wait longer. This includes regularly attending national exchange days and activity days – allowing OAWY to identify adopters who can meet the specific needs of the child;

Adoption Support

12. OAWY provides generic support services to all affected by adoption (birth relations, adopters and adoptees);
13. Adoption Support Assessments are based upon the needs of the person/ people;
14. Initial advice and information is free and the majority of services are free to access;
15. Adoption Support is provided at a range of accessible locations;

Adopter Voice

16. Adopter Voice are an adopter led group that work with OAWY to ‘challenge, support and input into the development of adoption services at local, regional and national levels so that they are adopter led’. Adopter Voice is available to all adopters and encourages adopters to become involved and/ or access support on-line;
17. All 15 Yorkshire LAs sent a survey to all registered adopters inviting them to join Adopter Voice;
18. Adopter Voice provides an arena for all adopters to access information and advice;

Birth Parent Groups

19. OAWY work with PAC-UK (the country’s largest independent Adoption Support Agency) to learn from feedback from birth parents;
<http://www.pac-uk.org/>

AT-ID

20. OAWY work with AT-ID (adopted teens identity) to learn from feedback from adopted teenagers;
<http://www.at-id.org.uk/>

Staffing

21. Diversity issues are addressed during supervision to ensure that the needs of children are met and that service users are being treated fairly;
22. We are members of New Family social, a LGBT group who offer specific support to the LGBT community of adopters. There are support groups across the region for single adopters;

Training

23. Social workers are trained regarding equality and diversity issues in their degree in social work. All the managers have had recent training regarding unconscious bias within OAWY;

Specialist Advice

24. We commission a service for Inter Country Adoption from the Yorkshire adoption agency. All inter country adopters attend specialist training specific to adopting from overseas provided by this agency.

Action required:

None.

8b. Negative impact:

- Recruitment and Assessment of Adopters
1. There are insufficient adopters with a diverse background coming forward to adopt;
 2. OAWY have a high level of interest from the south Asian communities to adopt full Asian babies rather than older children of mixed ethnicity;
- Family Finding for Children
3. There can be unconscious bias from Children’s Social Workers regarding considering single females and males for the children they have waiting;
 4. Children cannot always be matched with families that meet their own cultural heritage and social workers are not always willing to consider families with a different heritage from the child’s;
- Adoption Support
5. We do not know if there are any groups of people who struggle to obtain the adoption support we offer;
- Training
6. Of all the diversity stands Trans People is the area we have the least knowledge of, training is needed in this area.

Action Required

- Action 7 - Link with BME communities to promote and educate in terms of the children we have available for adoption (work with Leeds City Council’s Communities Teams for advice and support).
- Action 8 - Continue to challenge unconscious bias from children’s social workers in a restorative way and provide training and support as required.
- Action 9 - Conduct Analytical work to establish if OAWY can better target adopters that meet the cultural needs of our children.
- Action 10 - Work needs to be conducted to identify groups that may benefit from more specific adoption support i.e. Dad’s group, same sex parents as there may be gaps in the support we offer.
- Action 11 – Training delivered to enhance organisational understanding of Trans People and to harness their ability to become adoptive parents.

9. Will this activity promote strong and positive relationships between the groups/communities identified?

Yes **No**

Please provide detail:

OAWY will always try to build and maintain positive and open relationships for people aiming to or being involved in the adoption process.

Action required:

See actions 1 – 11, section 12.

10. Does this activity bring groups/communities into increased contact with each other? (e.g. in schools, neighbourhood, workplace)

Yes

No

Please provide detail:

Action required:

None.

11. Could this activity be perceived as benefiting one group at the expense of another? (e.g. where your activity/decision is aimed at adults could it have an impact on children and young people)

Yes

No

Please provide detail:

There could be the perception that certain groups are less likely to adopt than others. The primary focus of OAWY will always be the child. The decision to place a child will be based upon the individual(s) ability to meet the child's ongoing needs and not their individual(s) diverse group. Therefore, prospective adopters who are not matched with a child may feel they are at a disadvantage.

Action required:

See Action 3, section 12.

12. Equality, diversity, cohesion and integration action plan

(insert all your actions from your assessment here, set timescales, measures and identify a lead person for each action)

Action	Timescale	Measure	Lead person
Action 1: Develop an innovative & bespoke family finding/ matching process for children who wait longer.	31/03/2019	A new approach to reduce waiting time for children who wait longer piloted.	Mary Brudenell
Action 2: Ensure marketing campaigns are inclusive of older adopters.	31/03/2019	Campaign delivered.	Mandy Prout/ Dave Glanville
Action 3: Specific marketing campaign target at adopters from faith backgrounds.	31/03/2019	Campaign delivered.	Mandy Prout/ Dave Glanville
Action 4: Implement a service user feedback mechanism that allows analysis by diversity strand.	31/12/2018	Service user satisfaction results reportable by diversity strand. This will enable planned action to be taken to make improvements as required.	Richard Stevenson/ Aretha Hanson
Action 5: Provide refresher LGBT Training.	31/12/2018		Mandy Prout/ Mary Brudenell/ Julie Chew
Action 6: Maintain active contact with service user groups and work with them to identify and implement service improvements.	31/06/2018	Service user groups improvement actions added to OAWY service improvement plans.	Richard Stevenson
Action 7: Link with BME communities to promote and educate in terms of the children we have available for adoption (work with Leeds City Council's Communities Teams for advice and support).	31/03/2019	Outcomes based accountability workshop held with community leaders across the West Yorkshire Region.	Sarah Johal/ Mandy Prout/ Mary Brudenell
Action 8: Continue to challenge unconscious bias from children's social workers in a restorative way and provide training and support as required.	31/03/2019	Set-up training/ support group and deliver bespoke training session(s) as required to children's social workers.	Mandy Prout/ Mary Brudenell/ Julie Chew

13. Governance, ownership and approval

State here who has approved the actions and outcomes from the equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment

Name	Job Title	Date
Sarah Johal	Head of OAWY	
Date impact assessment completed		

14. Monitoring progress for equality, diversity, cohesion and integration actions (please tick)

- As part of Service Planning performance monitoring
- As part of Project monitoring
- Update report will be agreed and provided to the appropriate board
Please specify which board
- Other (please specify)

15. Publishing

Though **all** key decisions are required to give due regard to equality the council **only** publishes those related to **Executive Board, Full Council, Key Delegated Decisions** or a **Significant Operational Decision**.

A copy of this equality impact assessment should be attached as an appendix to the decision making report:

- Governance Services will publish those relating to Executive Board and Full Council.
- The appropriate directorate will publish those relating to Delegated Decisions and Significant Operational Decisions.
- A copy of all other equality impact assessments that are not to be published should be sent to equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk for record.

Complete the appropriate section below with the date the report and attached assessment was sent:

For Executive Board or Full Council – sent to Governance Services	Date sent:
For Delegated Decisions or Significant Operational Decisions – sent to appropriate Directorate	Date sent:
All other decisions – sent to equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk	Date sent:

**You learn a lot when
you adopt, Liam and
Nick learned it really
is good to talk.**



One
Adoption

YOUR REGIONAL ADOPTION AGENCY

Hear more about their adoption story at

www.oneadoption.co.uk/liam



**You learn a lot when
you adopt, Alice and
Ben learned that
honesty really is the
best policy.**



One
Adoption

YOUR REGIONAL ADOPTION AGENCY

**Hear more about their adoption story at
www.oneadoption.co.uk/alice**



**You learn a lot
when you adopt,
Nicola learned that
two can be family.**



One
Adoption

YOUR REGIONAL ADOPTION AGENCY

**Hear more about her adoption story at
www.oneadoption.co.uk/nicola**





For Megan and Angie, starting a family was a little more complicated than for some couples

We thought about all the alternatives - and explored some a little more than others - and although in the beginning I was keener than Angie to consider adoption that was the path we decided to follow.

[Read Megan and Angie's story](#)



Matt and James wanted to adopt a very young child so Early Permanence Placement (EPP) seemed like the natural choice

'We started talking about adoption with friends, family and work colleagues, and it became clear that many people had some knowledge of, or had their lives touched by adoption,' says James. 'So, armed with encouragement and reassurance, we began researching online to learn more about opportunities for adoption and the processes involved.'

[Read Matt and James' story](#)



'You learn a lot when you adopt. Jane and Simon learned how many toys fill a house'

Jane and Simon made the decision to adopt, rather than pursue fertility treatment, after trying for a baby for over five years. They felt that they could provide a loving, stable family home for a child that needed one.

[Read Jane and Simon's story](#)



'You learn a lot when you adopt. Alice and Ben learned that honesty really is the best policy'

Alice and Ben adopted James and his disabled brother Luke, when they were four and three years old respectively, and their four birth children were in their teens.

[Read Alice and Ben's story](#)

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