

One Adoption West Yorkshire



Voice and Influence of Adopters, Children & Young People report card April 2022 to September 2022

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?



Regional Fun Day

One Adoption West Yorkshire hosted a regional Fun Day in May. 17 children and 21 adoptive households from across the Yorkshire and Humber region attended. Here are some comments from those that attended:

- *"It was a valuable and unique experience."*
- *"It was the first event that we'd attended, and we enjoyed it."*
- *"It was great to be able to see the children 'in real life'..."*
- *"...it is invaluable to see the children and their personalities."*
- *"...great opportunity to speak to foster carers, social workers and other prospective adopters who are in the same situation..."*

The feedback from the event is used to improve future events, the next Fun Day is scheduled for October.

Regional profiling events

One Adoption West Yorkshire have held two profiling events, one in April and one in September.

Here are some comments from those who attended the events:

- *"These are an excellent addition to UK wide family finding, thank you for offering this service!"*
- *"I thought this was a great idea and as adopters at the end of stage two it was really helpful to get a feel of what the process is like."*
- *"It was great to be able to access the information at any point over the weekend as well."*
- *"I particularly liked the fact it lasted over a weekend so families can view the profiles, consider them and then view again before expressing an interest in any children."*
- *"I found as a single adopter this was heaps better for me than a large attendee profiling event"*
- *"The videos were wonderful and a great insight into the child/children"*
- *"It was very helpful to have specific family requirements explained at the start of the video"*

Focus group with sibling adopters

In July 2022 One Adoption West Yorkshire held a focus group with a panel of seven people who have adopted siblings. The purpose of the focus group was to gather information about the motivations and barriers to adopting siblings, with the intention of using the information to help inform service development. The adopters, some of whom had adopted pre-regionalisation and some much more recently shared their views on the support they had received, and what they felt gave them the confidence to adopt siblings. OAWY are using the information shared, both positive and negative, to improve the training and support offered to people who have adopted siblings and to help inform the recruitment of more adopters willing to consider sibling groups.

As part of their feedback one adopter said: *“We felt we were prepared [to adopt siblings] because people were honest during the process about how hard it would be.”*

Another adopter, who adopted externally but received support from One Adoption when their child was older said: *“We have been happy with the support [from One Adoption], but we needed real practical support from the beginning; a named support worker to see every week, and a mentor specifically with experience of adopting siblings. Placement seems to be the end of the process.”*



Multi-disciplinary team

Education Feedback

"God bless you. We couldn't have done any of this without your amazing support, the way you explain to school staff without sounding rude and patronising. With your help, the school has seen things from child's point of view. we can't thank you enough"

"Hi J, Can I thank you so much for your time and session yesterday. We all got so much from it, and it has allowed reflection on our practices, both the good and those we can improve. Please keep in touch with us, I am keen to continue to work with you in any way you think appropriate to further support our students' thanks"

"I just wanted to pass on our sincerest thanks for delivering some of the best training we've ever had! Every staff member that attended the CPD left with a best understanding of attachment and early childhood trauma. From everyone at XXXXX thank you!"

Speech and Language Feedback

"AMAZING indeed! I can't put into words how helpful the session was. A is so kind, caring and approachable, I am so glad she is part of OAWY!"

Early years feedback

"P has been providing support for E for some time now. I do sometimes wonder if she got more than she bargained for! She has become such a wealth of knowledge, she is so approachable, supporting and genuinely caring. I have been so grateful for the huge support that she has provided, her knowledge and consideration for matters is so detailed and thorough, she is such a help in a complicated situation. It has been such a benefit to have her to discuss and consider with. I am thrilled that she is just so fab"



Multi-disciplinary team continued

Therapeutic Social Worker Feedback

"Just wanted to say once again thank you J, so much for guiding me through and the support you have given me, you cannot start to imagine how profound I have found this course and how it has really made me think different about things (In a positive way) thank you"

"Hi R, Apologies for the delay in replying, it's been a busy week as usual. The meeting was just what we needed, really helpful to reassure us we are doing the right thing with regards to supporting S with her life story work and so helpful to have your reflections on how we are attuned to her. It is so helpful to think about how S seeks us out for her different needs when discussing life story work and what this offers S. It has been invaluable to think about my relationship with S and taking this into the work we do with S at XXXX. The summary is an accurate account of the meeting, thank you for this it will be helpful for X to read and for us to refer to. You have offered us an awful lot that will carry us for a long time, thank you ever so much".

Foundations for Attachment feedback

"We were in crisis, and this helped us understand lots of issues. I think as adoptive parents there should be a compulsory element to attend these sessions so as to have prior knowledge and understanding. This may have helped prevent our crisis."



Partnership with PAC-UK

ADOPTTEENS
FORMERLY KNOWN AS AT-ID

Activity Days

Adopteens have delivered two in person activity days:

Rother Valley

We hired cycle Karts where young people had to buddy up with each other to ride these and take turns around the lake. It was a well-attended with 7 new people coming to the event, a mix of people from across the entire One Adoption region, and a mix of needs within the group. One young person brought their PA with them, and this worked well as they were able to have the one-on-one support with someone they knew well but also join in with the others in the activity.

York Theatre Royal – Noughts & Crosses

This event was a production of the book Noughts and Crosses, this is a GCSE text for many young people and this was a draw for some. All of them knew the plot of the play and enjoyed seeing it in person to help cement the issues that the book raises around racism and inequality. Three young people attended with their parents – we usually don't work like this as we like the space to be solely for young people but given that it was a less social event and these young people wanted to attend alongside their parents to ease anxiety. We worked with this and we hope that this allows the young people to feel more confident in coming to another one of our events.

One worker from OAWY supported this session and has supported youth council and activity day events consistently for the last 18 months.

Youth Council

The Youth Council have met twice in this quarter at in-person events. We have continued to work on our information for schools which is a 'Myths vs Reality' leaflet – aimed at educating peers about adoption and an updated version of our 'Top Tips for Schools' which we originally produced for DfE in 2016. We will be launching these materials at the OAWY all-staff event in November and delivering a 2-hour workshop based on these materials.



Best ideas - what's next?

Fun Days

Following the success of the regional fun day held in May another is scheduled for October 2022. Children and families from North, South and East Yorkshire will be in attendance



Annual adopter survey

The OAWY annual adopter survey will be emailed to all on our mailing list in October. Adopter responses are then fed into service improvement activity.

Letter swap – contact pilot

Link maker have developed a new system, Letter Swap, which supports a broader and more flexible range of contact between adoptive and birth families. OAWY started piloting this system in August with 7 families. From October OAWY will be working with Adoption UK and PAC-UK to conduct further tests of the system and obtain feedback which will be fed back to Link Maker.



Adopteens - Training the professionals

Adopteens have developed a full day's training schedule and are looking to put on an event in the February half term week.

This event will be open to 30 professionals who work in care planning and adoption and it is an experimental, immersive and reflective training, led by young people. It covers themes of education, identity, assumptions and beliefs about adoption and how we can build and maintain relationships with young people.



Wakefield/ Leeds Teens Group

OAWY are planning to launch a new teens group for Wakefield and Leeds teens this Autumn.

Walk in the wood expansion

We have listened to adoptive parents who told us they missed having the opportunity to meet with other adoptive families and so the 'Walk in the woods' has been expanded to include a Wakefield locality event; there are plans to do similar in Leeds and Bradford and they continue as before for Kirklees and Calderdale families; these will happen roughly each school holidays.

