

**adoption**  
services

**Hampshire Adoption Service**

# Statement of Purpose

**2010-2011**





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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Hampshire County Council acts as an Adoption Agency to provide adoption services as required under the Adoption and Children Act 2002, the Adoption Agencies Regulations 2005 and the Adoption National Minimum Standards.

The Agency aims to fulfil its range of duties and responsibilities under the above legislation and the Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004 in meeting the needs of those children who have or may be adopted, their birth parents and guardians and those people who are or may be adoptive parents.


## 2. PRINCIPLES OF THE SERVICE

- Children are entitled to grow up as part of a stable and loving family, which can meet their needs through childhood and beyond.
- The child's welfare and safety will be the paramount consideration.
- All children will have the same opportunities irrespective of gender, ethnic origin, disability, culture, religion, language and sexual orientation.
- Achieving permanence for a child will be a key consideration in working with children in need and their families and in working with any child who is looked after by Hampshire.
- Permanence can be achieved by remaining with or returning to birth parents, legal permanence with extended family, adoption or permanent placement with other than extended family through legal means.
- Delay in the adoption process can have a significant impact on the wellbeing of children and must be kept to the minimum necessary to achieve the child's best interests.
- Adoption has lifelong implications for all involved. Children and young people who have been adopted, adoptive families and birth families all have access to a range of services and supports to meet their assessed needs.
- Children have the right to be listened to, express their wishes and feelings and participate in decisions about their future. They will be encouraged and enabled to do this in a way appropriate to their age and understanding.

## 3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE SERVICE


The main aims of the Hampshire County Council Adoption Service are to:-

- Provide a range of quality services which can promote best outcomes for children who need permanent placement.
- Meet and comply with the National Minimum Standards for Adoption Services.

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- Adhere to permanency planning timescales as set out in adoption legislation, in order to avoid delay and maximise each child's opportunity to experience a stable and secure family life.
  - Provide appropriate choice of adoption placement for children within Hampshire County Council, and beyond where appropriate, for example through the Consortium or the National Adoption Register, whose needs have been assessed and found to be best met by adoption.
  - Ensure that children are well prepared both practically and emotionally for a move to a new permanent family.
  - Link children for whom adoption is the plan with families who can meet their ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic needs whilst recognising that no child should wait indefinitely for the 'ideal' match.
  - Recruit, prepare and support sufficient adopters from diverse backgrounds to provide permanent family care for children where their individual needs and history will be understood, valued and respected.
  - Provide a comprehensive support package, including financial support where appropriate to achieve stable and successful placements
  - Provide effective and efficient adoption panels to enable prospective adopters' assessments and children's plans to be progressed without delay
  - Ensure all staff are appropriately recruited, supervised and trained to fulfil their agency functions
  - Ensure that wherever possible and appropriate, siblings will be placed together.
  - Ensure that issues for contact with the birth family are carefully considered and meet the individual child's needs.
  - Provide independent time limited advice and support to birth parents at the point that adoption becomes the plan for the child.
  - Provide an efficient and responsive assessment and counselling service for children, adopters, birth relatives and adopted adults in respect of adoption support services in conjunction with other agencies.
  - To maintain effective partnership with other adoption agencies.
  - To ensure that cost effective services are provided and commissioned which maximise available resources.
  - To ensure that accurate and up to date records and management information is kept in relation to individual children, adoptive parents and services and to maintain confidentiality and security of adoption records.
  - Ensure service users are fully involved and consulted on service delivery and service development
  - Treat all service users with respect and without prejudice or discrimination

#### **4. SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE ADOPTION SERVICE**

The adoption service remodelled during 2009 in order to better meet the needs of those children requiring adoption. There are now three area adoption teams comprising child care social workers



and recruitment social workers (from the former County Adoption Team). Each team has a team manager.

#### **(a) CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

The service recognises that children for whom adoption is the plan and adopted children may have specific education, health and emotional needs. Every effort is made to find families who reflect the child's religious, cultural and ethnic needs.

Supporting educational attainment of vulnerable children is a priority for Hampshire and appropriate support will be identified as a matter of priority.

A team of clinical psychologists is available to offer a consultation service and therapeutic counselling for children and adoptive parents. Nurses for Looked After Children are available to address the health needs of children throughout the adoption process.

A children's guide is available for children for whom adoption is the plan.

Hampshire has a pool of informal volunteer advocates from the Hampshire Children's Advocacy Service who offer support to young people to all the meetings and the Adoption Support Service has an independent mediator who can offer a mediation service for Birth Families and Adopters.

#### **(b) RECRUITMENT, APPROVAL, TRAINING AND SUPPORT OF PROSPECTIVE ADOPTERS**

The service responds within stated timeframes to initial enquiries and assessment of prospective adoptive parents. The service recruits, prepares, assesses, trains, supports and links adoptive families with children for whom adoption is the plan.

The Adoption service is open and inclusive. Prospective adopters are welcomed and are given training and help to see the situation from the child's point of view. Hampshire welcomes prospective adopters irrespective of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, culture, religion and disability.

Adopters are provided with a range of information following approval to support them in the adoption task. Support is also provided through training opportunities, access to regular consultations run by a clinical psychologist, post-approval workshops, support groups run by Adoption UK, social events, and individual support from members of the adoption team.

#### **(c) FAMILY FINDING ROLE**

The Area Adoption Team Manager allocates a social worker to all cases where adoption may be an option being considered in childcare planning. Each area adoption team has a lead social worker who attends a regular Family Finding Forum where all children who are deemed 'hard to place' are discussed and plans for seeking permanent adoptive placements formulated, monitored and reviewed.



**(d) SUPPORT TO BIRTH PARENTS AND RELATIVES**

Birth parents and relatives have access to independent support and counselling. Information is given to birth parents about this service at an early point in the permanency planning process.

**(e) ADOPTION SUPPORT TEAM: ADULT WORK**

Currently Hampshire County Council commission additional services to assist with the provision of Schedule 2 counselling, access to records, intermediary and support services.

**Schedule 2 counselling:** In conjunction with a commissioned voluntary organisation, the Adoption Support Team offers a counselling service to adopted adults who are seeking access to records about their adoption and family of origin.

**Section 98 counselling and intermediary work:** The Adoption Support Team offers counselling to birth relatives seeking to make contact with a relative who has been adopted. This may be commissioned from other agencies as appropriate.

The team provides an intermediary service to both adopted adults and birth relatives who are seeking to find a family member. However, this service only extends to individuals living in the Hampshire boundaries.

**Adoption Support Services**

The adoption support team provides a range of adoption support services required under the Adoption Support Services Regulations 2005 and a range of workshops and support groups are provided for adoptive families, children and birth parents/family:

- Assessment of need for adoption support service when requested by an adoptive family, and provision of some of those services where possible.
- Some therapeutic services are provided from within the team and in conjunction with CAMHS and other relevant professionals/providers.
- Adopters Support groups in partnership with Adoption UK
- A range of workshops/support groups for adoptive families on single issues.
- Adoption Information Exchange
- Support of direct contact arrangements (by Area Adoption social workers and the Adoption Support Team)
- Mediation Service provided by Adoption Support Agencies
- Confidential telephone helpline and regular surgeries provided by the Post Adoption Centre



**(f) INTER COUNTRY ADOPTION**

Hampshire adoption agency has a contract with Parents and Children Together (PACT) a registered voluntary adoption agency to train, assess and prepare those people who are seeking to adopt a child from overseas.

**(g) ADOPTION PANELS**

Hampshire County Council Adoption Service provides an advisory service which oversees the recruitment, training, management and administration of four adoption panels. Each adoption panel meets once a month. Arrangements exist for extra panels to be convened to avoid delays in planning for children.

**(h) STEP-PARENT ADOPTION**

Hampshire has specialist step parent workers in each of the area adoption teams to undertake the assessment and court report.

**5. NAME AND ADDRESS OF THE ADOPTION MANAGER  
(information as required by Regulation 2(1))  
AND ADOPTION SUPPORT ADVISER**

**(a) THE ADOPTION MANAGER IS:**

**Karen Parkinson**

County Adoption Service Manager  
Hampshire County Council  
Children's Services  
Town End House  
East Street  
HAVANT  
Hampshire  
PO9 1UB

Telephone number: 02392 244064

E-mail: [karen.parkinson@hants.gov.uk](mailto:karen.parkinson@hants.gov.uk)

Mrs Parkinson qualified in 1976 at Middlesex Polytechnic with a BA Hons in Social Science with a CQSW.

Mrs Parkinson has worked within the Social Services section of Hampshire and Portsmouth for over 30 years and has extensive experience in adoption and planning for children. Mrs Parkinson obtained a Diploma in Advanced Social Work at Goldsmith College University, London, as well as a Masters in Business Administration at the University of Portsmouth.



**(b) THE ADOPTION SUPPORT ADVISER IS:**

**Lyndsey Marshall**

Manager  
Hampshire County Council  
Adoption Support Team  
Glen House  
Glen Road  
Swanwick  
Southampton  
SO31 7HD

Duty telephone number: 01489 587038

**6. THE ADOPTION SERVICE MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE**  
*(information as required by Regulation 2(1))*

The Adoption Manager works directly to the Area Director who also acts as Adoption Agency Decision Maker. For the management structure of the Adoption Service please see section 13.

**7. MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE ADOPTION SERVICE**

The Adoption Service works within the overall Quality Assurance Framework for Children and Families, which sets out a range of general and service specific standards and methods by which these standards are monitored. Children for whom adoption is being considered or who have been placed for adoption are reviewed by Independent Reviewing Officers.

Hampshire Adoption Service continually monitors and evaluates its service at every stage of the adoption process to ensure quality and effectiveness. Hampshire welcomes feedback from service users.

Feedback from prospective adopters on service quality and effectiveness is obtained via feedback sheets on adoptive parents training and the prospective adopter report approval process. The adoption panel experience is similarly evaluated.

As part of the Consortium with Oxfordshire, Surrey and PACT and as a member of BAAF's Southern Regional Group of Local Authorities, Hampshire County Council Adoption Service actively considers and shares good practice and policy development.

The Adoption Service is inspected on a 3-yearly basis by Ofsted (the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills).



## **8. COMPLAINTS**

### **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

Hampshire County Council Children's Services complaints procedure is based on Getting the Best from Complaints (Departments for Education and Skills 2006) The service is provided to service users at the point of contact.

The Complaints and Customer Relations Manager's address is:

Hampshire County Council  
Children's Services  
Complaints Team  
Elizabeth Court 11  
The Castle  
Winchester  
Hampshire  
SO23 8UG

Tel: 01962 847 484

Fax: 01962 834 510

e-mail: [childrens.services.complaints@hants.gov.uk](mailto:childrens.services.complaints@hants.gov.uk)

The Complaints and Customer Care Manager maintains close links with the Adoption teams and monitors the process, outcomes and recommendations of all complaints. An overview looks at all complaints across the service bi-annually.

The Complaints Procedure is made up of 3 parts:

- Stage 1 Local Resolution
- Stage 2 Investigation
- Stage 3 Review Panel

If complainants remain unsatisfied at Stage 3 they can ask for their complaint to be examined by the Local Government Ombudsman.

## **9. INDEPENDENT REVIEWING MECHANISM**

Prospective adopters are given written information about the role of the Independent Reviewing Mechanism (IRM) as part of their preparation process. They are also provided with leaflets about the IRM when information is being prepared for presentation to panel.



## 10. **ADVOCACY SERVICE**

Hampshire provides access to independent and confidential advocacy service for children looked after on behalf of Hampshire County Council. The service supports young people in meetings and reviews, offers independent advice and advocacy, supports young people in making a complaint and facilitates consultation and participation of young people in matters affecting their lives. This service can be accessed via the Participation Officer (CIC):

### **Morag Currie**

Participation Officer (CIC)  
Hampshire County Council  
Elizabeth Court 11  
The Castle  
Winchester  
Hampshire  
SO23 8UG

Telephone number: 01962 841841  
e-mail: [morag.currie@hants.gov.uk](mailto:morag.currie@hants.gov.uk)

## 11. **OFSTED**

### **OFSTED**

Royal Exchange Buildings  
St. Ann's Square  
Manchester  
M2 7LA

Telephone number: 08456 404045  
e-mail: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

## 12. **APPROVAL OF THE STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

The Statement of Purpose will be reviewed and updated annually and formally approved by the Executive Lead Member.

Hampshire County Council strives to meet the requirements laid down in the Adoption Regulations 2003 National Minimum Standards (Department of Health) published under the Care Standards Act 2000. It also reflects the requirements as laid down under the Adoption and Children Act 2002.

The service is particularly mindful of the outcomes framework in Every Child Matters, namely: be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic wellbeing.

<b>13. MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE CHART</b>						
<b>COUNTY ADOPTION SERVICE MANAGER – Karen Parkinson (PA &amp; Adoption Admin Officer – Chris Stray)</b>						
<b>NORTH &amp; EAST AREA</b>	<b>SOUTH EAST AREA</b>	<b>WEST AREA</b>	<b>COUNTY ADOPTION RECRUITMENT</b>	<b>ADOPTION SUPPORT SERVICES</b>		<b>GLEN HOUSE ADMIN TEAM</b>
<b>Team Manager</b> Shirley Elliott (MSc, DipSW, NVO4, Cert of Prac Teaching)	<b>Team Manager</b> Vacant	<b>Team Manager</b> Kaye Robinson (DipSW, NVO4)	<b>Team Manager</b> Hazel Chapman (DipSW, CQSW, PQ)	<b>Team Manager</b> Lyndsey Marshall (BA, MBA, DipSW)	<b>Commissioning Officer/Agency Advisor to Adoption Panel</b> Liane McDonald (BA, CQSW)	Janice Crowfoot (Senior Admin Officer/Panel Administrator) Louise Burke (Panel Minute Taker) Thelma Hampson Eileen Bartlett Andrea White Margaret Penney Samantha Gregory Sandra Coffin
<b>Senior Practitioner</b> Laura Mallinson	<b>Senior Practitioner</b> Sandra Stanbrook	<b>Senior Practitioner</b> Jenny Symington	<b>Senior Practitioner</b> Kay Keen	<b>Senior Practitioner</b> Sarah Woods	<b>Marketing &amp; Communication Officer</b> Alastair Leeson-Smith	
Ian Smithers Maggie Barrand Sian Tiley Wendy Morgan Ros Horncastle Jo Freeman Tess Lee Caroline Dalwood Kathy Dent (Step- parent Adoption)	Clare Quirke Debbie Grey Rita Harrison-Roach Judy Poole Freda Brunton Margaret Chamberlain Barbara Kay Teresa Aldridge Marianne Smith Donna Martin Lesley Riley (Step- parent Adoption)	Baljinder Kenth Carole Kloss Sue Andrews Andy White Susan Harrington Sue Birkett, SSA Libby Wallis Maggie Rance Amanda Dingwall Elaine Mayward (Step-parent Adoption)		Graham Humphries Faith Allen Jayne Laysan Rosalind Smith Pete Lawes  <b>Adoption Support Assistant</b> Kathy Bavister		
<b>Admin Support</b> Denise Cursons Tracy Johnston	<b>Admin Support</b> Roz Francis Anne Rubidge	<b>Admin Support</b> Jan Emes Amy Wondin				

The Corner House 2-8 Cambridge Road Aldershot, Hampshire GU11 3JZ	Havant Area Office Town End House PO Box 61, East Street Havant, PO9 1UB	Hythe Area Office West Shore House West Street Hythe SO45 6AA	Glen House Glen Road Swanwick SO31 7HD	Glen House Glen Road Swanwick SO31 7HD	Glen House Glen Road Swanwick SO31 7HD	Glen House Glen Road Swanwick SO31 7HD
Duty: 01252 320624 Fax: 01252 315022	Duty: 02392 244031 Fax: 02392 498959	Duty: 02380 877702/877736 Fax: 02380 840270	Duty: 01489 587000	Duty: 01489 587038	Duty: 01489 587543	Duty: 01489 587543 and 01489 587000 Fax: 01489 575594

**All social workers have relevant qualifications and are registered with GSCC**



## 14. **FEEDBACK**

We welcome feedback about our policies and procedures so if you have any comments about this Statement of Purpose, please address them to:

**Karen Parkinson**  
County Adoption Service Manager  
Hampshire County Council  
Children's Services  
Town End House  
East Street  
HAVANT  
Hampshire  
PO9 1UB