

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**Report**

Committee/Panel:	Children and Families Advisory Panel
Date:	7 February 2012
Title:	Inspection of Adoption Service
Reference:	3686
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

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1. Summary

1.1. The purpose of this paper is to inform the Children and Families Advisory Panel of the Ofsted judgement following the Inspection of the Adoption Service carried out between 12-16 December 2011. The full inspection report sets out Ofsted's judgements about the quality of the provision that is offered by Hampshire Children's Service Adoption Agency (see Appendix 1).

1.2. The Inspectors were Paul Clarke and Mike Stapley

2. Contextual information

2.1. The methodology of the inspection was rigorous in its approach.

2.2. In advance of the Inspection:

survey questionnaires/letters were sent to the following people:

- adopters approved within the last 12 months approximately, who are either awaiting placements or who (preferably) already have a child placed with them;
- birth family members/parents of children who have been adopted within the past 12 months;
- placing social workers, both Hampshire and those from other authorities, and for advising professionals such as psychologists and therapists.

2.3. A self assessment was prepared against the National Minimum Standards, accompanied by the data set as well as documents and evidence which included:

- Statement of Purpose and Children's Guide
- Information for Adopters

- Recruitment Strategy (for adopters)
- Business Plan or Service Development Strategy
- Reports to the Executive
- Disaster Recovery Plan
- Policies and procedures for the Adoption Service
- Staff training schedule
- Child Protection/Safeguarding policy and procedure
- Complaints procedure
- Other relevant policies and procedures
- Risk assessments on premises for fire, security of files, flood etc.

2.4. During the inspection there was:

- an extensive programme of interviews;
- examination of children's and adopters' case files;
- checks on staff files;
- inspection of premises.

3. Finance

3.1. There are no immediate financial implications although further consideration will need to be given to any resource requirements that may result from the Recommendation to ensure the service meets the prospective adopters' assessment time frame of eight months.

4. Performance

4.1. The overall quality rating for the service is Good

4.2. Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe is Good

4.3. Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do is Good

4.4. Helping children make a positive contribution is Good

4.5. Organisation is Good

5. Recommendations from the Inspection

5.1 There are two recommendations arising from the Inspection:

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that assessments of prospective adopters are considered by panel within eight months of receipt of their formal application (Chapter 3 Adoption Guidance Feb 2011, Adoption and Children Act 2002)
- ensure that telephone enquiries are made to each referee of panel members to verify written references. (NMS 21.1)

5.2 Ofsted will check whether we have acted on these recommendations when we are next inspected.

5.3. An analysis will be carried out of the issues impacting on the assessment time frame of perspective adopters and appropriate action taken to make sure the eight month time frame is achieved.

5.4 Telephone enquiries to referees of panel members is straightforward to implement immediately.

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:**Links to the Corporate Strategy**

Hampshire safer and more secure for all:	yes/no
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Maximising well-being:	yes/no
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Enhancing our quality of place:	yes/no
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

Document

Location

None

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equalities Impact Assessment:

1.1.

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

2.1.

3. Climate Change:

- a) How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

- b) How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?