



Post Adoption Support

Guidance for writing mailbox letters

From Birth Families To Adopters



What is the mailbox exchange service?

The mailbox service is a post adoption service for receiving, storing and exchanging information on behalf of adopted children.

The information allows adopted children to keep in touch with their birth families in an indirect way.

When a child has been living with their adoptive family for a while and feels secure and settled, letters can be confidentially exchanged through the mailbox, allowing significant people in the child's life to be kept informed of their progress.

REMEMBER Mailbox is officially set up between birth relatives and adoptive parents.

Exchanging information allows:

- An adopted child to learn more about their background, and keep in touch with birth relatives and know about any changes and events in their birth family.
- A birth parent to keep up to date with the progress and health of the child and to feel they can pass on information about themselves or other family members.
- An exchange of information that prepares an adopted child for the future.

What information should I include in my letter?



It's not a good idea to talk about why a child has been adopted or what went wrong. This can be upsetting for your child.

A mailbox letter is a way for adopters and birth parents to safely share information over the years.

We would normally encourage birth families to write to the child's adoptive parent/s.

Include information that you think that your child would like to know about you. You could tell them how you have been spending your time.

In most cases letters are sent and signed by birth relatives using their first names. Signing your letter mummy or daddy is not encouraged as this can be confusing for your child.





What do I say?

- Talk about what's happening in your everyday life such as interests, hobbies.
- Include any particular questions you may have about the child, such as:

Example - How is Thomas doing at school?
What subjects does he like?

- News about events in the family.
- News of any brothers and sisters or other birth relatives.
- A reassurance that you are happy to hear that they are doing well.

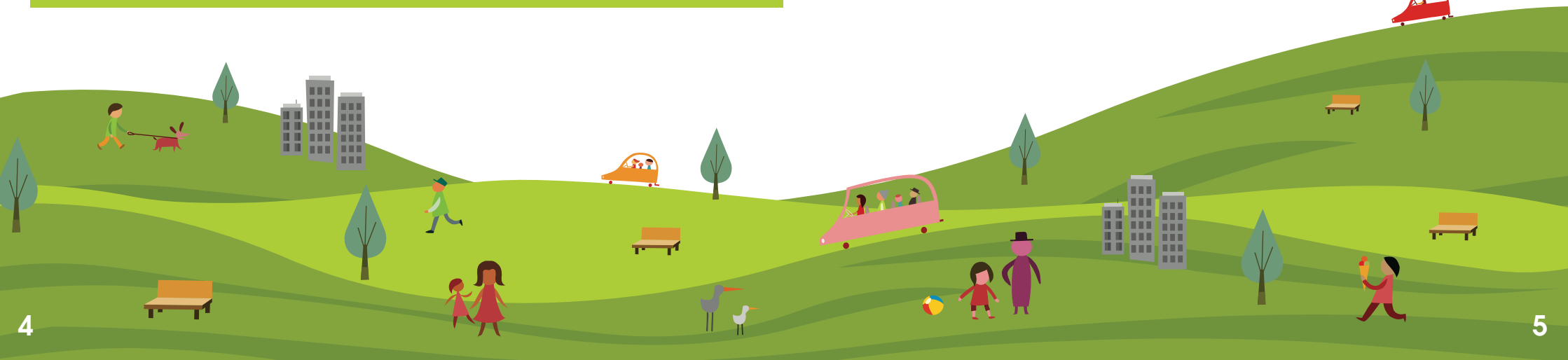
REMEMBER It can be very unsettling for the child to say that you are constantly missing them, or want to see them again. Adopters may not feel able to share such letters with the child.

Finally

While we all like to give positive news, occasionally adoptive parents and birth families may sometimes have to share worrying or distressing information about:

- Health issues
- A death in the family
- Difficulties in their family

Sometimes it is best to discuss with a worker from the adoption mailbox about how to pass on such news.



Letter from birth family to adopters

REMEMBER NOT TO INCLUDE YOUR ADDRESS!

Dear Adopters (or name of adopters)

Thank you for the letter that you have sent. I am so pleased to hear that Thomas is doing well.

Since I last wrote I have started voluntary work. I am working in a shop. I sell lots of different sorts of household goods! I really like my job and meet lots of people. I wonder what Thomas will do when he grows up?

Some more exciting news is that I have a dog now, he is called Fred. He is very gentle and loves to go for walks with me. Fred is brown and he is very cute.

I loved your last update and couldn't believe how much Thomas had grown.

I am so pleased that Thomas is enjoying his new school and has made so many friends. It will be lovely, in your next update, if you could let me know how he is doing with his schoolwork.

It sounds like you had a lovely holiday and I am so pleased that Thomas enjoys swimming. I have always thought that it is really important that children learn to swim when they are little. I enjoy swimming but I don't go to the pool as often as I would like to!

I'm going on holiday too this year, to the Lake District, which will be nice.

I look forward to receiving your next update.

With best wishes

Jayne

Step by step to posting your letter.

Step one

Please put your letter/information update into a plain stamped, unsealed envelope.

Step two

Place this envelope in another envelope, together with a note with your name and address (sender), name and date of birth of the child the letter relates to and who the letter is for (adoptive parent).

Without this information the mailbox administrator cannot identify who the letter is from and where it needs to go.

From - Jayne Jackson (Birth Mother)

To - Thomas Jackson

DOB 15/07/2006



Step three

Please then post to:

*Adoption Mailbox
Room C27A
PO Box 1337
County Hall
Preston
Lancashire
PR2 0TG*



If you have any queries please contact us on 0300 123 6701

