



FAMILY FINDING

ROLE

AND

PROCEDURE

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1. Introduction

The Regional Adoption Agency – Together for Adoption - is available to provide advice and support with regard to family finding issues, at any point in the care proceedings including at admission to care, in writing the CPR and should be placed for Adoption (SHOBPA) decision making.

Once the Should be placed for Adoption (SHOBPA) decision has been made at the ADM meeting, the child's care plan will be noted on Together for Adoption's children's tracker and will be monitored through monthly tracking meetings. This will support the child's local authority with ensuring that the child's plan of adoption is progressing in a timely manner and Together for Adoption will be able to review the appropriate adopters coming through for approval.

Most of the decisions about family finding and utilising differing resources and considering the progression of family finding are generally agreed via regular discussions and meetings between representatives from Together for Adoption and the social worker.

2. Family Finding

Together for Adoption will hold monthly tracking meetings in conjunction with the child's local authority to ensure that early permanency is being considered for all children. Information gained will filter into Together for Adoption's recruitment strategy to enable family finding to be proactive.

The Local Authority will chair a profile meeting for children with a Should Be Placed For Adoption Decision (SHOBPA). (if this is part of their family finding process) This meeting will involve the child social worker, foster carer, educational professional and all other relevant professionals.

This meeting will determine the child's needs and the desired adoptive family to meet those needs. The outcome of this meeting will be to devise a family finding action plan. This plan will be reviewed by the social worker in line with the child's care plan.

If an adoptive family is not identified within Together for Adoption, then a child will be profiled via link maker or any other appropriate family finding services.

For any adoptive families being considered as a potential match for a child, the social worker will meet with their line manager to carry out a Selection Meeting to highlight the strengths and vulnerabilities of all families being considered. The outcome of the selection meeting will determine which adoptive family is considered to be the family that can meet the child's needs. Following this meeting all relevant information will be forwarded for the adoptive family to consider.

If a match is identified within Together for Adoption, then the adopter's worker and the social worker will visit the prospective adopters together. If a match is identified

external to Together for Adoption, then the social worker will visit the adopters with the worker from the identified agency. The purpose of this visit is to give the adoptive family the opportunity to understand the child's needs and to evidence how the family can meet those needs.

Following the visit, the adoptive family will be given the opportunity to meet with the foster carers for the child/ren. The purpose of this visit is to share information about the child's needs, care routines and to outline the potential transitional support needed.

Following this visit an adoptive family would be given the opportunity to speak with and visit any relevant professionals within the child/ren's life. This could include the following; school, medical advisor, previous social worker or previous foster carer.

Within the family finding process it may be decided that it would be beneficial for the child and adoptive family to have a "bump into meeting". The purpose of this meeting is to give the adoptive family the opportunity to see the child in a neutral environment to support putting written information into context. This visit is to be child led and is recommended not to be more than 30 -60 minutes.

Once the adoptive family have received all appropriate information to allow them to make an informed decision, a pre-panel meeting should be held, to clearly identify the strengths and potential support needs of the match (which should be confirmed in the Adoption Placement Report). A clear link must be demonstrated in the Adoption Placement Report between the match vulnerabilities and the adoption support plan. The adoption support plan will be compiled in consultation with the adoption support service within Together for Adoption through a pre-booked consultation appointment. A referral to the adoption support team can be considered in line with any identified support needs for the child and family.

Within this meeting the following areas may also be considered; post placement contact with foster family, final birth family contact, outstanding preparation work for the child and adoptive family, any outstanding information required by the adoptive family and a potential transitional plan.

The social worker and adopter's social worker will have responsibility for ensuring that the following documents are submitted to the Panel administration on the agreed submission date.

- Adoption Placement Report (fully signed);
- Signed copy of Prospective Adopters Report (PAR);
- Signed copy of prospective adopters approval minutes;
- Updated and signed Child's Permanence Report (CPR).

The social worker and adopter's social worker will support the adoptive family in attending Together for Adoption's panel to discuss the potential match with a view to gaining a recommendation.

Following panel all relevant paperwork outlining panel's recommendation will be sent to the agency decision maker for a final decision for agreement of the match between the adoptive family and child.

3. Post Agency Decision

Following the agency decision a date will be set for the placement planning meeting to take place.

The placement planning meeting will be chaired by a representative from the child's Local Authority and the social worker, foster carer and adopter's social worker will attend the meeting. Prior to the meeting all relevant people will have had an opportunity to view the draft transitional plan for the child and this will be discussed and confirmed within the meeting.

The relevant paperwork for this meeting is the Adoption Placement Plan and the Transitional plan, these will be completed by the child's social worker. The adopter's worker will ensure that the family receive mileage claim forms and matching certificates. A mid-way review date will be agreed and chaired by the local authority representative.

The review will identify the progress of the transitional plan and whether any significant changes need to be made. At the review a formal placement letter will be signed by the adoptive family and the social worker will take responsibility for ensuring that all relevant notifications are sent to the adopter's residing authority.

On placement day the social worker will provide the adoptive family with copies of the placement and care order and the child's birth certificate.

4. Family Finding Activity

Together for Adoption will hold the following events to ensure proactive family finding:

- Monthly tracking meetings to consider all children with a "potential" plan of adoption. These meetings will ensure that there is no drift for children and that family finding is proactive;
- An available adopter's profile book that will be sent out to the local authorities once a fortnight. This book will outline all the available adopters within Together for Adoption who are approved or coming to panel in the next 4-6 weeks.

- Profile events, these events will be held in line with demand from the local authority and are for children who wait the longest. Adoptive families will be invited to the events to discuss children's needs in greater detail;
- Meet the Adopters events, these events will be held quarterly and are an opportunity for adopters to meet with experienced adopters to consider fostering for adoption, sibling groups, older children and different background considerations.
- Together for Adoption are available to provide advice and guidance to social workers on developing children's profiles and in discussing potential matches;
- Together for Adoption are able to support social workers with the promotion of Adoption Activity Days, organised through the NW RAAs and CoramBAAF;
- Together for Adoption provide targeted recruitment events to ensure that adopters being recruited reflect the needs of children that we are family finding for.

5. Family Finding Recording

The plan of action devised from the profile meeting will be held on the child's case management system and will be regularly reviewed by the child's social worker in line with the child's care plan.

The social worker will profile the child through link maker and will take responsibility for activity from this being recorded on the child's case management system.

The child's family finding process will be evidenced through the family finding booklet devised by Together for Adoption and in the Adoption Placement Report. These documents will be held on the child's case management system.