

Adoption Application Process

Adoption Process Stage 1

When we have formally accepted your Registration of Interest you will be asked to sign a Stage 1 agreement and given a home study adoption preparation pack to work through. You will be given help and guidance if needed to work through this. We will carry out the necessary checks and references including a Disclosure and Barring Service check (formally CRB). We will ask you to arrange for a full medical examination with your GP and we will also ask you for the names and addresses of three people who know you in a personal capacity. If you are a couple two of your referees should know you as a couple. At least one of your referees must have known you (both) for a minimum of five years and not more than one of the referees may be a relative. We will need to arrange to interview all three of the referees over the course of both stages.

At the end of Stage 1 a decision will be made with regards to your application and if successful a formal invitation to begin Stage 2 will be sent to you. If needed you may take a break of up to six months between the stages.

If we are unable to offer a full Stage 2 assessment, we will provide a clear explanation of the reasons why.

Adoption Process Stage 2

This is where your assessment begins. An adoption social worker will conduct a full assessment that involves a series of visits to your home to meet you and your family, separately and together. By getting to know you really well we will be able to complete your prospective adopters report with you which will be presented to the adoption panel. If concerns arise during your assessment we will share these with you and you will be given the opportunity to address them.

We will take additional references up at this stage; we may require a reference from your landlord if you live in rented accommodation, your employers, and the schools attended by any children in your household. We may wish to speak with any adult children you have elsewhere. Also we will contact any previous partners where you have jointly parented or cared for a child together. Social Workers are sensitive to the fact that previous partners may sometimes be deliberately misleading.

Training and Preparation

During the 2 stage process you will be asked to attend three consecutive days of adoption preparation training. This is to give you a better understanding of what is involved and also a time to reflect on your own life experiences, and may be during Stage 1 or Stage 2 depending on what is most convenient at the time.

We also encourage you to get as much experience with children as possible; this could be by volunteering at local schools, nurseries and other youth activities such as brownies, beavers,

scouts or guides. You could consider asking family members and friends if you could 'borrow' their children occasionally!

Panel process

You will be invited to attend the adoption panel along with your social worker where they will present your prospective adopter's report which will have been shared with you previously, and a recommendation will be made as to your suitability to adopt. The agency decision maker will ratify this decision in writing.