

## **Information for Out of County adopter's social workers regarding a match with Derbyshire children**



Derbyshire County Council is committed to ensuring that all adoptive placements have the best possible start. This document sets out our expectations of you and what you can expect of us in the interagency process.

### **Matching Process**

- You will have already received information about the child through Derbyshire's family finder and will also have had some discussions with the child's social worker.
- You will be invited to a matching meeting which will be chaired by the family finder. The child's social worker will attend as will the supervising social worker for the foster carers. The manager responsible for the child may also attend. Occasionally a previous social worker who knows the child better will also attend.
- Where there are two or three possible families who appear able to meet the child's needs then both families' social workers will be invited to attend. The meeting will tease out which family most accurately meets the child's needs.
- If the family with whom you work is deemed to be the most appropriate then their details and the PAR will be uploaded onto Derbyshire's County Council's client record system.
- Any future contact will be noted on their record on the client record system by the child's social worker.
- Prior to matching panel Derbyshire County Council workers will provide you and the prospective adopters with full information including an updated medical report, any educational reports and a meeting with the foster carers. If appropriate a meeting will be arranged with the medical adviser to the adoption panel although this is only possible in cases where there are known medical conditions.

### **Prior to Matching Panel**

- There is an expectation that you will contribute to the matching report. The report will be written in the format of Derbyshire's adoption placement form. The child's social worker will detail the child's needs and you are asked to address how the prospective adopters meet those needs in each section. You are also asked to provide an update on the prospective adopters and address the support your agency will provide within the report.
- Please ensure that the child's social worker has a copy of the adopters' BAAF form AH and medical advisor's comments for approval which will be given to the Panel Clerk prior to Matching panel and uploaded onto the adopter's record.
- The child's social worker should also have a copy of the minutes of the adoption panel at which the prospective adopters were approved. These will be uploaded onto the adopters' record and will be made available to DCC panel members.

- The information provided to Matching Panel will be uploaded to the adopters' file following ratification of the match.

## Matching panel

- There is a waiting room for you and the prospective adopters. The process is as follows:
  - The panel chair and professional adviser will come and introduce themselves to you and the prospective adopters
  - If there are questions that panel members want to ask just of the social workers you and the child's social worker will be invited in to panel. The prospective adopters will verbally be given an indication of what the questions to them will be
  - If there are no specific questions for the social workers you and the prospective adopters will be invited in together.
  - After panel members have asked the prospective adopters all their questions they will be asked to return to the waiting room. You should remain in the panel room so that you can hear the discussion and the recommendations.
  - Once a recommendation has been agreed the panel chair and the professional adviser will go to see the prospective adopters in the waiting room to tell them of the recommendation.
  - The medical adviser will speak to the prospective adopters to discuss health visitors/medical issues.

## Sharing information

- You are able to view the child's electronic file and share any additional relevant information with the prospective adopters after a matching meeting has taken place, if you feel this would be helpful.
- There will be a life appreciation day where the adopters will be given more 'soft' information about the child. Depending on the age of the child this could be a half day or a whole day. The meeting will generally be chaired by the service (team) manager responsible for the child. Minutes of the meeting will be taken and provided to you and the adoptive parents.
- The child should have a life story book to accompany them to their new home.
- The later life letter will be available at the time of the adoption order.
- If the adoptive parents are not provided with either the life story book or the later life letter please inform the adoption manager, Gwen Roe, ([gwen.roe@derbyshire.gov.uk](mailto:gwen.roe@derbyshire.gov.uk)) who will follow this up with the relevant district.

## Introductions

- If the adoptive parents live more than 60 miles away from the child Derbyshire County Council will pay for accommodation during the introductions. See document re financial support for further information.
- The introductory plan will be agreed at a planning meeting using the Derbyshire Placement Plan as a basis for discussion

- Adoptive parents will be provided with 2 copies of the birth certificate, and one copy of the Placement Order and medical consent letter either at the placement planning meeting or during the introductions.

## **Finance**

- Derbyshire County Council will pay introductory costs for all children placed for adoption. Please see separate (Financial Support) sheet detailing what will be paid
- The child's social worker will provide you or the prospective adopters with introductions expenses form. It is important that the prospective adopters detail what the receipts are covering.
- If the prospective adopters are eligible for a settling in grant and wish to claim it then the child's social worker will provide you or the prospective adopters with equipment form. Again, the prospective adopters should detail what the receipts are covering.
- The prospective adopters will need to supply their bank details to Janet Leedham, Finance Section, CAYA, County Hall in order that payments can be made directly into the adoptive parents' account. I
- If child/ren are eligible for an adoption allowance this is means tested. The child's social worker will arrange for a financial assessment form to be sent to adoptive parents. They should complete this and return it as quickly as possible to Janet Leedham, Finance section, CAYA, County Hall, Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4 3AG. The final decision regarding payment of an adoption allowance is made by the agency decision maker.
- A settling in grant is only available to prospective adopters whose child(ren) meet the criteria for an adoption allowance or where the prospective adopters' financial circumstances are such that they would be eligible for an adoption allowance if the child met the criteria.
- The adoption order application will be paid for by Derbyshire County Council. The adoptive parents can pay for this and then be reimbursed or the child/ren's social worker can arrange for a cheque to be issued.

## **Placement**

- Child/ren's social worker or fostering support worker will be present on the day of placement
- Generally it is thought most appropriate for the prospective adopters to collect the child from their foster home. Usually this is done early in the day in order to make things easier for the foster carers and to give the child time to settle in their new home before bed time. Some foster carers prefer to do the introductions differently and we ask for tolerance in this accepting that the move will be very hard for them and their children
- At time of placement adoptive parents will receive the child/ren's medical card and amended red book ( child health record)

## **Post-placement**

- It is anticipated that you and the child's social worker will alternate visits weekly for the first month prior to the first childcare review. Visits will gradually reduce as the adoptive parents become more confident and the child's social worker will discuss this with you.
- The support plan should be reviewed at each childcare review prior to the adoption application.