



# Adoption Central England

## 4th Anniversary Week February 2022

### Bulletin: 3

## ACE—Putting children at the heart of what we do

Increasing the quality and quantity of early permanence placements is a strategic priority of regional adoption agencies nationally, and ACE encourages all prospective adopters to carefully consider whether they feel able to provide this truly child-centred type of placement.

ACE encourages children's social workers to consider whether the number of placement moves for a child, and the associated loss and trauma involved could be minimised through **Fostering for Adoption**. Where the necessary assessments have been completed and it is deemed highly likely that the final plan for a child will be one of adoption, a child can be matched and placed with prospective adopters on a fostering basis temporarily.

#### Case Study—Ella:

Ella's parents had sadly been known to Social Services for a number of years and her older brother and sister had been placed for adoption some years ago. Assessments undertaken in court proceedings informed a pre-birth assessment which concluded that there had been little change since her siblings were placed for adoption. There was no one in the family who could care for Ella either. Ella's social worker made the request for a Fostering for Adoption adoptive family for Ella and a suitable family was found from the number of approved ACE adopters who were able to consider Fostering for Adoption. When Ella was born she was placed with her prospective adopter for the duration of court proceedings whilst her future care was decided. If a Placement Order is granted by the court (which gives the authority to place a child for adoption) Ella will never have to experience the trauma of having to move from her Fostering for Adoption carers or have her primary attachment disrupted. Ella's carer transports her to see her mother weekly and this time is positive. Ella's prospective future adopter and birth mother are developing a relationship that will form the foundations for future contact if she is adopted.

Fostering for Adoption

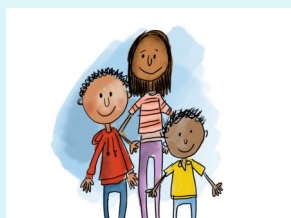
ACE supports the maintaining of relationships between adoptive families, adopted children and their birth families, by providing support to all involved in any planned or unplanned after adoption contact.

Understanding who we are and where we have come from is an important part of our identity - and this is so important for children who have been adopted. This includes children having a good understanding of their adoption journey and being supported to maintain connections with their birth family members, either through letterbox or other social media arrangements or by direct face to face contact.

ACE can support adopted children to maintain relationships with their birth families, including brothers and sisters living elsewhere, birth parents and other birth relatives. Working alongside **Family Connexions** (the ACE birth family support service) adoption social workers have



been able to work with adoptive parents to positively promote and, in some circumstances, re-establish relationships for their children and young people to maintain these important relationships. Overall this helps to promote a positive sense of identity and self for the child or young person at the same time as strengthening relationships within the adoptive family.



Contact and identity