

Complaints and representations about the Adoption Service

Guidance for staff in Children and Families

Version: 2.0

Date Issue: June 2017

Review Date: June 2018

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Team: Children and Families

Protective Marking: Internal

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. This procedure covers complaint and representations received in respect of the adoption service.
- 1.2. Children and young people, their birth parents, prospective and approved adoptive parents with, or without, children placed, adopted adults and parties to non-agency adoption processes have the right to complain about the adoption service provided directly by the agency or by a contracted authority or agency.
- 1.3. The handling of these complaints will give due regard to the sensitivity surrounding adoption related issues, and the need to balance the respect for confidentiality against the requirement to provide an appropriate service.
- 1.4. Efforts should be made as far as possible to resolve the issue at a local level close to the team that has been involved in providing the service, or which has been responsible for decision- making related to adoption.
- 1.5. Depending on the nature of the complaint, it will be investigated by the appropriate manager within the Adoption Service, or by the operations manager within the children's team.

2. Complaints by children and young people

- 2.1. Children and young people will receive information about their right to complain at the point that the decision has been made to pursue an adoption plan. They should also receive a copy of the Children's Guide to Adoption which provides details about how they can make a complaint to OFSTED, and the Children's Rights Director as well as the agency.
- 2.2. Any barriers to the child or young person understanding or being informed about their right to complain or make a representation should be considered and addressed by those workers and other professionals, including foster carers, with whom they have regular contact.

3. Complaints by adopters, adopted adults and others

- 3.1. Prospective and approved adopters are advised of the agency's complaint and representation procedures from the initial stages of their contact with the agency.
- 3.2. Adopted adults and other people affected by adoption such as birth parents, and those involved in adopting from overseas, and non-agency adoption who also receive services from the agency have the same right to lodge a complaint about any aspect of the service they receive.
- 3.3. Complaints can be directed to the [Customer Relations Team](#), or the operations manager for Adoption services who will investigate the matter within 28 days.

4. Complaint monitoring arrangements

- 4.1. The details of the investigation, the outcome and action taken will be recorded and the findings of these matters will be referred to the [Customer Relations Team](#) for monitoring purposes, and other action as appropriate.
- 4.2. Complaints about the Adoption Service will differentiate between those issues that are process related, those related to the adoption plan, and those that are service related.
- 4.3. Complaints about the Adoption Service are collated annually and reported to OFSTED as requested. The records of the complaint investigations and findings will be retained for 3 years.

5. Further Information

[Children's social care complaints](#)

[Childrens Social Care Complaints Policy and Procedure \(PDF, 263.35 KB\)](#)

[Adoption Services](#)