



*Making Social Care
Better for People*

inspection report

ADOPTION SERVICE

Corporation of London Adoption Service

**PO Box 270, Guildhall
London
EC2P 2EJ**

Lead Inspector
Sue Nott

Announced Inspection
27th October and 23rd November 2005 10:00

The Commission for Social Care Inspection aims to:

- Put the people who use social care first
- Improve services and stamp out bad practice
- Be an expert voice on social care
- Practise what we preach in our own organisation

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This is a report of an inspection to assess whether services are meeting the needs of people who use them. The legal basis for conducting inspections is the Care Standards Act 2000 and the relevant National Minimum Standards for this establishment are those for *Adoption*. They can be found at www.dh.gov.uk or obtained from The Stationery Office (TSO) PO Box 29, St Crispins, Duke Street, Norwich, NR3 1GN. Tel: 0870 600 5522. Online ordering: www.tso.co.uk/bookshop

Every Child Matters, outlined the government's vision for children's services and formed the basis of the Children Act 2004. It provides a framework for inspection so that children's services should be judged on their contribution to the outcomes considered essential to wellbeing in childhood and later life. Those outcomes are:

- Being healthy
- Staying safe
- Enjoying and achieving
- Making a contribution; and
- Achieving economic wellbeing.

In response, the Commission for Social Care Inspection has re-ordered the national minimum standards for children's services under the five outcomes, for reporting purposes. A further section has been created under 'Management' to cover those issues that will potentially impact on all the outcomes above.

Copies of *Every Child Matters* and *The Children Act 2004* are available from The Stationery Office as above.

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SERVICE INFORMATION

Name of service Corporation of London Adoption Service

Address PO Box 270, Guildhall
London
EC2P 2EJ

Telephone number 020 7332 1215

Fax number 020 7332 3137

Email address

Provider Web address

Name of registered provider(s)/company (if applicable) Corporation of London (The)

Name of registered manager (if applicable) Sharon Davidson

Type of registration Local Auth Adoption Service

No. of places registered (if applicable) 0

Category(ies) of registration, with number of places

SERVICE INFORMATION

Conditions of registration:

Date of last inspection N/A

Brief Description of the Service:

The adoption service for the Corporation of London is based within the Children, Families and Asylum Seekers team. The authority operates a limited adoption service, and has only rarely placed children in their care for adoption. It does not actively recruit families as its numbers of looked after children are so small, but it does assess adoptive families for domestic and intercountry adoptions. It provides counselling and support to birth parents and families if the situation arises. It offers assistance and counselling to adopted adults who wish to see their birth records, although the majority of those who approach the Corporation, do so because they work in the area, rather than because they were adopted through the Corporation.

The Corporation of London has an arrangement with Hackney Social Services to use their preparation groups for domestic adoptive applicants, and their adoption panel for any adoption cases. It also uses their out of hours service.

There is no in house fostering service provided in the Corporation, but the service for Children, Families and Asylum Seekers, which is covered by one team of 8 social work staff, one team clerk and a team manager, is responsible for locating placements within the private sector to meet the needs of the small number of children in their care. The Corporation has on average thirty looked after children, but the majority are unaccompanied minors, and at the time of inspection only three were under sixteen. One child was on an Interim Care Order, the rest were accommodated. The last child placed for adoption was five years ago. More recently three families had been approved for adoption; Of these two were for inter country adoption. The agency spot purchases any extra services as required, and has established partnerships with other services to provide consultancy and support services.

A new Director of Community and Childrens Services had been appointed, and had started a five week overlap with the present Director of Social Services who was leaving.

SUMMARY

This is an overview of what the inspector found during the inspection.

This is the first inspection of the adoption service provided by the Corporation of London. Two inspectors spent one and a half days in the agency and interviewed child care social workers in the only children and families team, the team manager and Director of Social Services. The Corporation of London refer their adoption cases to the London Borough of Hackney's adoption panel. This was observed by the second inspector during Hackney's inspection (although at the time the inspector was not aware, that this panel dealt with work from the Corporation). The panel chair and the decision maker at Hackney had also been interviewed. Hackney's decision maker made the decisions on the Corporation cases as well. Two of the three adoptive families were interviewed, and questionnaires received from all three. Supporting documents were provided by the agency, and a small number of files, including personnel files, adopter's and children's files were read during the course of the inspection.

The inspectors would like to thank the managers and staff for their cooperation during the inspection process.

What the service does well:

Overall, this limited service was a well-managed one, that endeavoured to provide a good service when required to adopters and children.

The agency was welcoming to prospective adopters, but families were usually advised that they may wish to contact other agencies as the City of London have no children at present needing adoptive placements.

Feedback from adopters included favourable comments about staff with whom they had had contact. Comments included: "The attitude of the Corporation Social Services team was always positive and encouraging", and "We are generally very pleased with the services of the Corporation of London".

Adopters generally felt the assessment process was good – "Preparation classes were very useful and well run"; However, two adopters commented on delays at different stages in the process, including delays in the allocation of a social worker and changes in workers. One adopter wrote "it took five months for my preparation classes and home study to be arranged", but added "Once the assessment started it was done very quickly and professionally".

Adopters felt they had undergone a thorough assessment and generally felt they had a good experience. Comments included " We are immensely grateful for our social worker's support during this complicated international adoption process".

The social workers rarely dealt with adoption cases, but were kept up to date with changes in practice and legislation by the team manager, and in house training. Communication within the team and department was good, and workers were committed to achieving the best outcomes for the children and adopters they provide a service for.

The agency had not made any placements of its own children in the last five years. However, in recent assessments of both domestic and inter country adopters they had appropriately taken into account cultural, religious and ethnic background issues in making their recommendations.

The agency would undertake long-term work with adopters and their families to provide support where needed. Individual packages of support can be negotiated with other professionals where necessary. Adopters were aware of the support available: "we have felt able to call upon our social worker for everything that we've needed".

The agency is able to access good legal advice, and uses Hackney's medical adviser for any adoption situations.

The service has an experienced agency manager, providing good leadership, support and communication. Formal supervision sessions were held regularly, and there was a lot of sharing and consultation between members of staff. Staff confirmed that managers were approachable, and valued their knowledge and skills. Staff tended to specialise in specific areas of interest to cover all the tasks of their team, and there was a variable amount of knowledge and skills on adoption issues.

The low level of adoption activity meant that adoption did not have a particularly high profile, but the strategic and operational management of the service ensured that workers had a clear sense of their responsibilities in this area. However, competing priorities and staff changes in such a small team did at times impact on service delivery. Managers and staff responded proactively on individual cases where shortfalls had occurred.

There were satisfactory procedures and information management systems in place, although improvement was needed in monitoring any delay in the assessment of adopters. The adoption service was well supported by efficient administrative staff, and files were particularly well ordered and up to date. The IT system had good backup support. The office space provided a good working environment.

What has improved since the last inspection?

This is the first adoption inspection under the National Minimum Standards.

What they could do better:

The Corporation of London does not have any formal recruitment plans due to the lack of Looked After Children in their area who need adoptive families. They do not have the resources to actively recruit families for children from other authorities. However, they will try to raise awareness of adoption locally when they can, for example, during national adoption week. They use BAAF's adoption publicity as producing their own information would not be cost effective for the small numbers they need.

The agency has no children to place at present, so the quality of its service to birth families could not be tested, and no views of birth families could be obtained. Most of their LAC were unaccompanied minors, and so the extent to which birth families were engaged generally in the care planning process was limited. No Form E's had been completed in recent years.

The team had undergone a number of staff changes in recent years. Whilst some social workers demonstrated skill and understanding of the adoption process, others lacked knowledge and familiarity with the tasks to be completed. Specialist training opportunities for staff in this area need to continue to be provided on an ongoing basis.

The agency uses Hackney's child protection procedures. Child protection training in relation to children placed for adoption should be included in the Corporation's training programme, and covered by clear policies within the general framework provided by the London Child Protection procedures. Sustaining expertise and competence in all areas of statutory work with children in such a small authority is challenging. One worker took the lead in Child Protection work.

There had been some delays in the allocation of assessments of two adopters in the year preceding this inspection due to staff turnover. One questionnaire received from adopters expressed frustration about the delays pre-approval, and the communication at the post approval stage had not always been as reliable as should be expected with such small numbers.

Hackney's adoption panel considered and made recommendations on adoption work undertaken by the Corporation of London. The London Borough of Hackney was also making the decisions in these cases. This practice needed to

be reviewed urgently to determine whether a joint panel with an appointed decision maker in the Corporation of London would be more appropriate to ensure the separate identity and responsibility of the cases. The manager should also ensure that adopters do not wait unnecessarily long following recommendation at panel for decisions to be confirmed appropriately in writing.

The agency's adoption support service responded to need on an individual case by case basis. There was easy access to therapeutic services provided at St Bartholomew's Hospital. It will be important that this service has expertise in the special needs of all the parties involved in the adoption process.

The files of staff, sessional workers and panel members were generally good, but CRB's obtained by other agencies are not acceptable. Also evidence of telephone enquiries to follow up on references should be available on file.

There was no index of archived adoption records, and as the longest member of staff working in the team had only been there four years, there was little knowledge of previous cases. All records were stored at the London Metropolitan Archives.

Please contact the provider for advice of actions taken in response to this inspection.

The report of this inspection is available from enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk or by contacting your local CSCI office.

DETAILS OF INSPECTOR FINDINGS

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Management

Scoring of Outcomes

Statutory Requirements identified during the inspection

Staying Safe

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- The agency matches children with adopters (NMS 2)
- The agency assesses and prepares adopters (NMS 4)
- Adopters are given information about matching (NMS 5)
- The functions of the adoption panel are as specified (NMS 10)
- The constitution and membership of adoption panels are as specified (NMS 11)
- Adoption panels are timely (NMS 12)
- Adoption agency decision is made without delay and appropriately (NMS 13)
- The manager is suitable to carry on or manage an adoption agency (NMS 15)
- Staff are suitable to work with children (NMS 19)
- The agency has a robust complaints procedure (NMS 24 Voluntary Adoption Agency only)

JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):

The agency provides a small, individual service to ensure effective and safe caring for children placed with their adoptive families. The agency prepares adopters well to meet the needs of children placed for adoption, and to ensure appropriate placements are made and maintained.

EVIDENCE:

The Corporation of London does not have any formal recruitment plans due to the lack of children in their care who need adoptive families. However, there was evidence that efforts were made to welcome prospective adopters who approached the agency. Recruitment had not been part of a planned long-term strategy, as the agency does not have the resources to actively target recruiting families for children from other authorities. Managers should continue to monitor trends within the service, alongside an examination of any changes in the demography of the area, in order to project the make up and numbers of any adoptive families needed in the future. The team try to raise awareness of adoption locally when they can, particularly during national adoption week. They use BAAF's adoption publicity and information booklets as producing their own would not be cost effective for the small numbers needing a service.

The agency has no children to place, so the quality of its service to birth families could not be tested, and no views of birth families could be obtained. Most of their LAC were unaccompanied minors, and so the extent to which birth families were engaged in the general care planning process for their children was limited through circumstances. No Form E's had been completed in recent years.

Any plans for the development of post adoption support services should be incorporated with a strategy for working with birth families throughout the adoption process. One worker specialised in dealing with any post adoption work, but this was mainly birth records counselling and related work.

The population of the Corporation of London is very small, and only about 13% of the total population are children. Approximately 50% of residents are from black and ethnic minorities, including a high proportion from Bangladesh. It is, therefore, important that any information or publicity leaflets should be designed to include and encourage applicants from different ethnic backgrounds. Staff were aware of the need to place children with families who were likely to meet their cultural, ethnic and religious needs. There was evidence that these issues had been appropriately addressed in the three assessments carried out.

Sustaining expertise and competence in working with children needing substitute families in such a small authority is challenging. Whilst some social workers demonstrated skill and understanding of the adoption process, others were not unfamiliar with the tasks to be completed. As this one team has to carry out all the tasks necessary to complete the adoption process, the manager should ensure sufficient skills and knowledge are maintained within the staff group, and that specialist training opportunities in this area continue to be provided within available resources.

The agency has satisfactory systems in place to monitor individual care planning, and the director had appropriate access to relevant statistics as well as knowledge of individual cases.

There was evidence that prospective adopters had undergone a thorough preparation, assessment and approval process. The domestic adopters approved had attended preparation courses run by Hackney Social Services. The two ICA adopters attended preparation run by an independent worker, experienced in this area of work, and commissioned especially for them. Adopters made positive comments about the preparation they received, and thought it was a valuable experience. Adopters thought the recording in Forms F's was generally accurate, and inspectors found the information in the Form F's seen was detailed and informative and gave a thorough picture of applicants. Ways of helping childless adopters to gain more practical parenting experience were explored, and a single adopter was encouraged to help out in a nursery. Adopters comments included: "the home study was carried out over

a four month period by a charming, efficient and helpful independent social worker, and that part of the process was much less stressful than I was expecting”, and the worker was “from the outset always professional and interested, and put herself out to accommodate us over home study meetings.” Adopters said the social workers were good at keeping them informed of their progress during the assessments, and took the process at their pace. However, there was evidence that there had been delays in some cases at the early stages of the process, and steps should be taken to ensure these are minimised in future.

The agency undertakes appropriate checks on adopters to comply with the regulations, including family members and ex-partners where appropriate.

This is a very small authority, and only one Corporation of London child had been placed in the last five years, although an interagency placement had been made with their only approved domestic adopters in the past year. The adopters with children placed from another agency were positive about the efforts made by the Corporation social workers to obtain relevant information on their child.

The Corporation have basic policies and procedures concerning adoption, and shares Hackney’s adoption panel procedures, and guidance. The Corporation must ensure that all the policies and procedures in use meet statutory requirements.

The Corporation does not have it’s own panel and “uses” Hackney’s adoption panel to consider and make recommendations on adoption work undertaken by their workers. Hackney’s adoption agency also makes the decisions in these cases. This practice must be reviewed urgently to ensure there is a properly constituted “joint” panel as required under regulation, with a separately appointed decision maker in the Corporation of London.

Hackney’s panel had been observed during the inspection of their adoption service by the second inspector, and was appropriately chaired by an experienced chair. The panel was not constituted as a joint panel. There were no formal avenues for the panel chair to feedback on issues and areas of concern to the Corporation. It is recommended that these be formalised, whilst a more detailed review is undertaken of the future strategy for dealing with adoption work that needs to be presented to an adoption panel by the Corporation.

Hackney’s adoption agency policies and procedures did not include declaring an interest in a case under consideration at the adoption panel. No guidance had been issued to panel members and this was not contained within the panel member handbook. The Corporation must ensure that this is addressed with Hackney as part of a review of meeting the Standards and the implementation of the Adoption and Children Act 2002.

Adopters complained about the lack of coordination between the Corporation and Hackney's panel administration. Paperwork had gone astray in two of the three cases dealt with by the panel and adopters commented "Although the panel themselves were very pleasant, the paperwork wasn't properly signed and when it was returned to them they eventually admitted they had lost it causing a huge delay". Also an ICA adopter was approved, but further information was requested by panel from one of their referees. This took three months to obtain, and further delay was then caused in obtaining a copy of the decision maker's approval letter needed for DfES processing. The coordination of panel administration between the two agencies must be improved to reduce delay for adopters and children.

The Hackney panel meets regularly, and there is no problems booking cases in. The decision maker is a senior manager in Hackney, and although decisions appear to have been made promptly, there are problems over formal notification letters being forwarded appropriately. The wording of these letters relates to Hackney's adoption agency, not the Corporation of London, and consequently there is an issue over which authority takes responsibility for this decision. This needs to be clarified.

Hackney's panel member files did not contain all of the elements required in the regulations. If this is to be a joint panel, the Corporation should ensure this work is done.

A written protocol for the work of advisors to the adoption service needed to be developed.

The nominated manager for the adoption agency must be a permanent member of staff. At present the manager is employed by an agency. Staff files examined had the appropriate checks and references. However, one file had a CRB check from another authority, this is not acceptable. There was no evidence of telephone follow up of references on files. All social work staff are qualified, and registered with the General Social Care Council (GSCC). A number had done Post Qualification awards. Team members had variable knowledge and experience in a range of childcare work.

Enjoying and Achieving

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- The adoption agency provides support for adoptive parents (NMS 6)
- The agency has access to specialist advisers as appropriate (NMS 18)

JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):

The adoption agency provides effective support for the small number of adoptive parents. Staff and adopters have access to specialist advisers, and the provision of specialist services and packages of support can be tailored to meet the individual needs of the children and their adoptive families.

EVIDENCE:

Adopters contacted expressed a variety of views regarding the support that would be available to them at different stages in their child's life. This in part was due to recognition that the Corporation was a very small service, and that strategies to provide a more comprehensive package of adoption support services was tailored to meet individual need. One to one support to adopters was found to be generally very good. Independent counselling and therapeutic services could be arranged and financed by the Borough if local services were not available. Adopters were advised of post placement events run by other organisations, and access to Hackney's post placement support services could be negotiated for domestic adopters. Currently one member of the team provided post adoption support, and team members all carried a variety of work to cover all tasks.

Also a more cohesive approach to provide support alongside health and educational services within the Corporation was being developed for all children and families with the imminent formation of the new Directorate of Community and Children's Services. Access to CAMHS services was said by staff to be good. Ongoing training for all relevant professionals should be provided in building a greater awareness of and expertise in issues specifically related to adoption situations. It was positive that the borough had recently hosted the DFES training on the changes in adoption legislation for neighbouring boroughs.

The corporation used Hackney's medical adviser. Adopters interviewed with a domestic placement had access to the medical adviser from their child's agency. Legal advice was said to be good, and the advisers were said to be approachable and accessible. However, as discussed above a written protocol needs to be developed setting out the role of the specialist advisers used by the agency.

The agency has had no disruptions. The manager reported that if this situation did develop support would be given to adopters and children during and after the disruption. A disruption meeting would be held, and any recommendations of this meeting used as a learning experience.

Making a Positive Contribution

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Birth parents and birth families are involved in adoption plans (NMS 7)
- Birth parents and birth families are involved in maintaining the child's heritage (NMS 8)
- The Adoption agency supports birth parents and families (NMS 9)

JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):

Although managers and staff expressed a clear commitment to providing services that enabled birth families to contribute to their children's futures, these standards could not be sufficiently evidenced, as the agency had no children to place for adoption.

EVIDENCE:

No children had been placed for adoption in recent years, although an old file was looked at, and the work carried out found to be satisfactory. Staff interviewed expressed an understanding of the needs of birth parents, but acknowledged that they would need to do more to develop this aspect of the service if the volume of adoption work increased in the Corporation. However, the difficulty in maintaining continuity of staff in the department may affect the agency's ability to deliver a good and consistent service.

No birth relatives were seen by the inspectors, and no questionnaires sent out. Independent counselling could be arranged if the situation arose. Additionally, birth parents would be given information on the Natural Parents Network, and access to an adoption support worker.

The agency has a commitment to lifetime adoption support and provides assistance to birth relatives and adopted adults through birth records counselling, tracing and intermediary work.

Management

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- There is a clear written statement of the aims and objectives of the adoption agency and the adoption agency ensures that it meets those aims and objectives (NMS 1)
- The agency provides clear written information for prospective adopters (NMS 3)
- The manager has skills to carry on or manage the adoption agency (NMS 14)
- The adoption agency is managed effectively and efficiently (NMS 16)
- The agency is monitored and controlled as specified (NMS 17)
- The staff are organised and managed effectively (NMS 20)
- The agency has sufficient staff with the right skills / experience (NMS 21)
- The agency is a fair and competent employer (NMS 22)
- The agency provides training for staff (NMS 23)
- Case records for children and prospective / approved adopters are comprehensive and accurate (NMS 25)
- The agency provides access to records as appropriate (NMS 26)
- The agency's administrative records processes are appropriate (NMS 27)
- The agency maintains personnel files for members of staff and members of adoption panels (NMS 28)
- The premises used by the adoption agency are suitable for purpose (NMS 29)
- The adoption agency is financially viable (NMS 30, Voluntary Adoption Agency only)
- The adoption agency has robust financial processes (NMS 31)

JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):

The adoption agency was found to be well managed, with effective systems of communication that supported workers in providing services which could be individually tailored to meet the needs of the children and families as required.

EVIDENCE:

The agency has a Statement of Purpose, which has been recently been revised and this needs to be developed further. The Statement should provide further details on the staffing of the service, and systems to monitor and evaluate the service. It also does not give the address and telephone number of the Commission as required under LAASR 2003 Schedule 1. Staff spoken with confirmed that they had seen it and thought it was accurate.

The agency has not had any situations where they have needed to use a Children's Guide. If they did they would use one printed by BAAF, with additional information about the Corporation. It was not thought to be financially viable for the agency to produce their own guide.

BAAF publications are used to provide information for adopters, birth families and adopted adults. The agency has access to translation and interpreting services, which could be used to meet the linguistic needs of children and families involved in the adoption process.

The agency is small, and has no children waiting for adoption. It has access to a small number of sessional workers to undertake assessments, if the social workers in the team have limited capacity at that time. However, delays have still occurred in the allocation of adopters recently assessed by the Corporation, and managers should ensure that sufficient resources are available to minimise any possible future delays.

Prospective adopters receive an information pack about the process. They also get the chance to talk to adopters at the preparation groups or on an individual basis if they wish.

The agency is well managed and the manager, who was employed via an agency, demonstrated effective leadership skills. She is appropriately experienced, qualified and knowledgeable. However, she did not hold a management qualification. The manager should start a management qualification course as soon as possible. Lines of accountability are well established and communication is generally good within the department. Demand may grow, particularly for Inter country services, and managers will need to ensure resources and systems keep pace with any growth. It is recommended that the workload for the team manager, who is responsible for a wide range of services, is kept under review.

The service manager shared the supervisory responsibility for team members with two senior social workers. One took the lead on asylum seekers issues, and the other on child protection. All staff confirmed that they had regular

supervision. Staff felt their caseloads were monitored by the manager, and efforts were made to utilise individual skills, experience and preferences.

All staff were very clear about the importance of handling initial enquiries to the agency in a sensitive and welcoming manner and adopters commented on the positive response received from the Corporation. However, one adopter felt communication had been poor in the early stages with phone calls not returned.

The agency has satisfactory information systems for the size of the service to monitor the progress of cases. The managers also have systems in place for monitoring the work of the agency through regular meetings, and statistical information and performance indicators. The director reported to the children's sub-committee of the Corporation, and included any adoption activity in her regular reports.

The agency has sufficient staff to maintain the service, but there had been delays in the allocation of some assessments. In order to improve timescales, and to develop the service further as demands dictates, this will need to be kept under review. The quality of the administrative support to the team was good.

It was noted that there was no indexed record of any adoption files over five years old. All records for the Corporation are held at the London Metropolitan Archives. Adoption records are, therefore, not held separately. It is not clear how many adoptions, if any, were carried out since the Corporation was established in 1965. It is felt that because the area covered by the service has a very small amount of residential properties, the numbers would be tiny. However, it is worrying that there is no official record of this, and no adoption register. Further enquiries should be made regarding past files, and all future records should be stored and indexed separately.

Staff have access to the corporate training which is provided. Team training and development days are held on different issues, and managers should ensure that relevant staff have sufficient time to consider the future development of the Corporation's adoption work, particularly the impact of future changes in legislation. A number of staff have post-qualifying awards, and there is access to external training courses. Each request for training is considered individually.

Case records on adopters were well organised and structured. There were procedures regarding case recording and accessing information. A file was examined for the only child adopted from the Corporation in the last five years. It was comprehensive, but was not an adoption file. Any future children going through the adoption process should have a formal adoption file with all information as required by regulations. Running reports were up to date. There was evidence of a file audit system being operated and of case decisions by supervisors on the files seen.

Personnel files were also well organised, and held all the required information. However, CRB's for all workers, including sessional staff, must not be accepted from other agencies, and telephone follow up of references should be evidenced as stated earlier.

Current files were stored in lockable cabinets in lockable rooms. All archived files were kept at the London Metropolitan Archives. These were not visited, as the agency was unsure whether there were any adoption files in the archive. A disaster recovery plan had been produced which covered security, fire and water damage.

The offices of the adoption service were on the second floor of premises shared with a medical practice. The space was comfortable, with additional meeting and interview rooms. Adopters attending meetings would need to wait in the general reception area, which was shared with the medical practice. There was disabled access.

SCORING OF OUTCOMES

This page summarises the assessment of the extent to which the National Minimum Standards for Adoption have been met and uses the following scale.

4 Standard Exceeded (Commendable) **3** Standard Met (No Shortfalls)
2 Standard Almost Met (Minor Shortfalls) **1** Standard Not Met (Major Shortfalls)

“X” in the standard met box denotes standard not assessed on this occasion
 “N/A” in the standard met box denotes standard not applicable

BEING HEALTHY	
Standard No	Score
No NMS are mapped to this outcome	

MAKING A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION	
Standard No	Score
7	X
8	X
9	x

STAYING SAFE	
Standard No	Score
2	2
4	3
5	3
10	2
11	1
12	2
13	1
15	3
19	2
24	N/A

ACHIEVING ECONOMIC WELLBEING	
Standard No	Score
No NMS are mapped to this outcome	

ENJOYING AND ACHIEVING	
Standard No	Score
6	3
18	2

MANAGEMENT	
Standard No	Score
1	2
3	3
14	3
16	3
17	3
20	3
21	2
22	3
23	3
25	2
26	3
27	3
28	2
29	3
30	N/A
31	N/A

Are there any outstanding requirements from the last inspection? N/A

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

This section sets out the actions, which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Voluntary Adoption and the Adoption Agencies Regulations 2003 or Local Authority Adoption Service Regulations 2003 and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider(s) must comply with the given timescales.

No.	Standard	Regulation	Requirement	Timescale for action
1	AD1111	AAR 1997 5(6)	The agency must review the arrangements for a joint adoption panel and decision making process with the London borough of Hackney.	31/03/06
2	AD10	AAR 1983 6(1)	The Corporation must ensure that policies and procedures in use meet all statutory requirements, and Minimum Standards.	31/03/06
3	AD28	LAASR 2003 11 (3d)	Panel member files examined at Hackney, did not contain all of the elements required in the regulations. If this is to be a joint panel, the Corporation must ensure that an accurate file for each panel member containing all of the required elements is maintained.	31/03/06
4	AD19	LAASR 2003 15(1)	CRB's for all workers, including sessional staff, must not be accepted from other agencies.	31/03/06
5	AD19	LAASR 11(3)	Evidence of telephone follow up of references must be recorded on personnel files.	31/03/06
6	AD13	AAR 1983	The coordination of panel administration between the two agencies must be improved to reduce delay for adopters and children.	31/03/06
7	AD1	LAASR 2003 2(1)	The Statement of Purpose must be developed further to adequately cover all areas listed in Schedule I of the Local	30/04/06

			Authority Service Regulations 2003.	
8	AD21	LAASR 2003 8(1)	Managers must ensure that there are sufficient staff to avoid delay in the allocation of work. The staffing situation must be kept under review with regards to future developments in the service.	31/03/06
9	AD14	LAASR 2003 6	The manager must start a management qualification course as soon as possible.	31/05/06
10	AD25	AAR 1983 7	Any future children going through the adoption process must have a formal adoption file with all information as required by regulations.	30/04/06

RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations relate to National Minimum Standards and are seen as good practice for the Registered Provider/s to consider carrying out.

No.	Refer to Standard	Good Practice Recommendations
1	AD2	Managers should continue to monitor trends within the service, alongside an examination of any changes in the demography of the area, in order to project the make up and numbers of any adoptive families needed in the future.
2	AD3	Any information or publicity leaflets should be designed to include and encourage applicants from different ethnic backgrounds.
3	AD23	Ongoing training for all relevant professionals should be provided in building a greater awareness of and expertise in issues specifically related to adoption situations.
4	AD4	Any plans for the development of post adoption support services should be incorporated with a strategy for working with birth families throughout the adoption process.
5	AD21	The manager should ensure sufficient skills and knowledge are maintained within the staff group, and that specialist training opportunities in adoption continue to be provided within available resources.
6	AD10	It is recommended that formal avenues for Hackney's

		panel chair to feedback on issues and areas of concern to the Corporation are instigated, whilst a more detailed review is undertaken of the future strategy for dealing with adoption work that needs to be presented to an adoption panel by the Corporation.
7	AD18	The agency should develop a written protocol for specialist advisors.
8	AD25	Further enquiries should be made regarding past adoption files, and all future records should be stored and indexed separately.

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