



*Making Social Care  
Better for People*

# inspection report

## ADOPTION SERVICE

### **Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council Adoption Service**

**655 Auckland Drive  
Smith`s Wood  
Solihull  
B36 0SN**

*Lead Inspector*  
Vivien Slyfield

*Announced Inspection*  
11th December 2006      09:15

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

<b>Reader Information</b>	
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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](http://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](http://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.

This report is a public document. Extracts may not be used or reproduced without the prior permission of the Commission for Social Care Inspection.

# SERVICE INFORMATION

<b>Name of service</b>	Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council Adoption Service
<b>Address</b>	655 Auckland Drive Smith`s Wood Solihull B36 0SN
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 749 8143
<b>Fax number</b>	0121 704 8129
<b>Email address</b>	
<b>Provider Web address</b>	
<b>Name of registered provider(s)/company (if applicable)</b>	Solihull MBC
<b>Name of Nominated manager (if applicable)</b>	Michelle Whiting
<b>Type of registration</b>	Local Auth Adoption Service

# SERVICE INFORMATION

**Conditions of registration: N/A**

**Date of last inspection  
March 2004**

Brief Description of the Service: Solihull Adoption Service is part of the Education and Children's Services Directorate for the Metropolitan Borough of Solihull. In 2003 Solihull became a Pathfinders Children's Trust as part of developing structures for the provision of "Every Child Matters" and the Children Act 2004. Solihull is a small borough and has developed close networking relationships across departments and agencies in its service provision.

The Adoption Team is based at Jubilee House in Smith's Wood and consists of a team manager, assistant team manager and seven qualified social workers, two of whom focus on the provision of adoption support services. A recruitment team has been established that recruits both foster carers and adoptive parents. A professional adviser and a panel administrator support the adoption panel.

The Adoption Team prepares, assesses, supports and trains prospective and approved adopters. The assessments include stepparent adoption and adoption with a foreign element. They provide a family finding service for children from Solihull who need adoptive families and match them with suitable adopters.

Solihull is part of the West Midlands Consortium and works in partnership with neighbouring authorities.

# SUMMARY

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

This is the second inspection by the Commission of Solihull Borough Council's Adoption Service. Before the inspection fieldwork took place, supporting documentary evidence was received and read by the lead inspector. Questionnaires were received from 11 prospective and approved adopters, 5 placing social workers, 4 placing authorities and 1 specialist advisers.

The lead inspector spent 4 days with the service including the day panel was observed. A second inspector joined the inspection for three of those days. Senior and front line staff from the Adoption Service were interviewed, as were a group of children's social workers, the Decision maker and panel Chair. Four adopters were interviewed. An interview was arranged with a birth parent who subsequently withdrew on the day of the interview. Personnel files, adopters' and children's files were read during the course of the inspection. The premises were also inspected.

The inspectors appreciated the work that had been put into organising the inspection and the way in which all staff cooperated with openness and honesty. There was a commitment from staff at all levels to use the inspection constructively in developing their service.

## **What the service does well:**

The specific work with children in preparing them for adoption was undertaken with knowledge, understanding and commitment by staff. They were supported by useful and effective resources, including a range of workers who would assist with life story work.

There were many comments from adopters about the quality of the service they received. They were positive about the way the preparation courses were presented and run. The course was viewed by them as helpful in preparing for adoption and in understanding the needs of children and comments included that the "preparation courses were excellent." The majority comments received from adopters were very positive about the adoption team, one said,

"Overall extremely professional, helpful and above all caring and understanding. We cannot speak highly enough of our social worker."

There was also a clear focus on the full range of support needed by adopters and their children. There was well developed and effective use of CAMHS, with a particularly effective use of the specialist role of the Clinical Psychologist – Pre and Post Adoption. There was evidence of how useful this post has been in the support and maintenance of placements. There was also a strong commitment to the provision of appropriate financial support for adopters.

The relationship between the childcare teams and the adoption team is well organised and works effectively. Both childcare and adoption staff valued each other's role and had a clear understanding of their responsibilities. The knowledge and expertise within the adoption team was recognised and appreciated by other workers.

The management of the service was experienced, skilled and effective. This was also a reflection of the management at all levels. Solihull was viewed positively by its staff as an employer who provided effective supervision, useful training and as being "easy to get into discussion with."

The Decision Maker has made sound decisions and has ensured the service maintains robust approval processes for adopters.

The approach to complaints and issues raised is constructive. Managers use such opportunities to review their systems and procedures and make changes where appropriate.

## **What has improved since the last inspection?**

Adoption support has developed considerably since the last inspection. The areas of progress are identified in "what the service does well."

Similarly there has been progress in the work with birth parents. An independent service is available through Adoption Support and the two adoption support workers in the adoption team undertake direct work.

The Children's Guide has been improved since the last inspection. There has been considerable effort put into developing a useful tool for direct work with children. This may need some further development for older children but currently the loose-leaf arrangement of the Guide makes individual changes straightforward.

## **What they could do better:**

The administrative support for the Letter-Box exchanges needs to be reviewed. The current arrangement of one of the adoption support workers holding responsibility for exchanges in relation to 101 families works well but requires a considerable amount of administrative work that could be undertaken by some additional time from suitable qualified staff. A more general review of the number of administrative staff available would be useful in supporting the adoption service.

Some of the panel processes need to be strengthened. A clearly recorded CRB check must be in place for all adopter assessments presented to the panel. The minutes should be consistently available at the following panel meeting. The panel discussion and minutes should consider the needs of each child within a sibling group separately to ensure there is a clear and specific focus on each child. The service needs to ensure it makes full use of the professional adviser to the panel to provide a quality assurance check on work due to be presented and to monitor recommended changes to reports which have been presented.

While there were not delays within the adoption process in general there were some delays noted early in the process for prospective adopter, between an expression of interest and the preparation groups. This delay relates to there being only two preparation courses per year due to the size of the borough. Efforts are made by staff to address this by approaching neighbouring authorities to use their preparation group, but there remained evidence of some delays.

Consideration should be given to the organisation of inter-country adoption. The limited numbers of prospective inter-country adopters makes it difficult for workers to develop knowledge in this complex area of work. Comments were received in questionnaire from prospective adopters that indicated dissatisfaction with the way these assessments were managed such as "our SW had never done an international adoption before which was unhelpful".

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](mailto:enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk) or by contacting your local CSCI office. The summary of this inspection report can be made available in other formats on request.



# **DETAILS OF INSPECTOR FINDINGS**

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Management

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# 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)
- The agency safeguards and promotes the welfare of its service users (NMS 32)

**The Commission considers Standards 2, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 19, 24 and 32 the key standards to be inspected.**

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

2,4,5,10,11,12,13,15,19 and 32. Quality in this outcome area is **good**.

This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service. The systems in place for the preparation, assessment and approval of adopters promote the making of safe placements for children.

## **EVIDENCE:**

There was a clear focus on the needs of children throughout the adoption service. The recruitment process establishes this at the outset. Recruitment has been strengthened since the last inspection with the establishment of a separate team for the recruitment of foster carers and adopters. Staff in this team have skills and experience in marketing and work closely with social work staff in the adoption team. An appropriate pool of adopters has been established to meet the needs of children whose plan is adoption. Due to the

size of the borough the adoption service recruit from areas where they believe they are going to be able to place children securely.

The only delay noted throughout the adoption process was at an early stage when prospective adopters may need to wait for a vacancy on a preparation group. There was evidence from the files seen of one adopter who approach Solihull in January 2005 and as the next course in the Spring was full they had to wait until September to undertake the preparation prior to applying. Comment was also made in one of the questionnaires received that they waited 11 months for the prep sessions. The adoption staff were aware of this difficulty and stated that there were occasions when they asked a neighbouring authority to provide training for a prospective Solihull adopter. This arrangement is reciprocal and staff commented it was effective.

The preparation course was run over four days and provided effective preparation for adopters. A number of very positive comments were received about the preparation. One said, "We learnt so much about children in care at the Preparation meetings. No one realises what some children go through." Good use was made of specialists and the course is reviewed and evaluated after its conclusion.

There was a range in the standard of assessment reports seen. Most were of a good quality with all references being undertaken, including to all employers of prospective adopters. The reports demonstrated an evaluation by the social worker of the information received. They would be strengthened by a clearer use of competencies in providing evidence of the adopter's skills and experience. Similarly the introduction of regular second opinion visits would provide a more robust system. It is recognised that where there are issues to be addressed that a second opinion visit is already undertaken.

Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks are undertaken and appropriately recorded. These must be in place prior to an assessments presentation to the adoption panel. There were examples where this was not the case; in the panel minutes seen and an assessment where one check was not recorded on the assessment report.

There are about two inter-country adoption assessments each year. Currently these are shared across the team. A complaint and comments on the questionnaires from prospective adopters indicate that the knowledge and awareness of assessing workers was limited in this field. One prospective adopter commented,

"Our social worker had never done an international adoption before

- which was unhelpful at times.... They should provide an adequate service."

There is a need to consider how this service is provided. It may be helpful, with such infrequent requests for this work for one or two workers to develop a particular interest or specialism in this area.

Overall the adoption panel works well. The members at the panel observed were well prepared and used their skill and experience effectively. There needs to be a clear resolution of any conflict of interest or declaration of

professional interest, which is then clearly recorded in the minutes. The panels are organised effectively and efficiently. No delays or difficulties were reported in workers being able to book dates to attend the panel. In the consideration of sibling groups the panel discussion and the minutes should give clear individual consideration to each child.

The minutes are full and informative. The panel administrator works effectively and with commitment to provision of an efficient system. The process of the preparation of the minutes needs to make sure that the minutes are available for the following panel and are signed by the chair rather than the decision maker.

The decision maker is well informed and has all the available information when reaching a decision. The decisions are made within the timescales and the decision maker appropriately follows through issues. There were examples of robust and effective decision making, which have ensured a safe and effective service.

Matching is well considered by the service. There were informative matching reports and managers strive to ensure there is a clear and effective process to meet the needs of children. There was an example of detailed exploration of complex cultural and race issues in relation to a particular sibling group. Full information had been provided and both the adoption and childcare teams had taken a clear and considered approach. The social worker for the child commented the adoption team and managers were, "absolutely brilliant about dealing with a mixed race issue."

The manager is suitable to manage the service in terms of references, checks and a considerable range of skill and experience in adoption work. Staff were similarly appropriate to undertake their work for the adoption service.

# 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)
- Services are tailored to meet the needs of people affected by adoption (NMS 33)

## The Commission considers Standards 6 and 33 the key standards to be inspected.

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

6, 18 and 33. Quality in this outcome area is **good**.

This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service. There is a range of support available to adoptive families, which promotes and maintains secure placements.

## EVIDENCE:

There has been considerable development within the support to adopters since the last inspection. There are now two social workers within the adoption team who focus on adoption support. They provide a response to adopters who call and will arrange to visit and support within days of contact. They undertake adoption support assessments, which were evidenced on files. They link with the child protection team and have a clear childcare focus to ensure that referrals are considered appropriately and suitable services are provided.

A range of training has been provided for adopters including "A Piece of Cake" and "Living with Teenagers". Some training is provided jointly with neighbouring authorities of Coventry and Warwickshire to allow skilled trainers to be bought-in. Adopters commented positively on the level of support they received. The "response was brilliant" and "we've left messages and they always, always get back to me". The input from the adoption support workers was enthusiastic, committed and well motivated to the provision of an effective service of support. There was effective use of financial support and a determination and commitment from the adoption team to ensure that

sufficient financial support is available. There was evidence of assistance in the provision of larger cars and of on-going financial support.

The development of a specific adoption post within CAMHS has been of considerable benefit in supporting adopters. The post developed from a Best Value Review and an awareness that adopted children were being referred to CAMHS and a commitment to address the issues raised. There can be a response from the CAMHS team within two weeks of a referral and there is access to the full range of services provided. Adopters commented about how helpful the adoption psychologist was. One adopter said, "(seeing the adoption psychologist) has really helped to put things in perspective", and "it would have been so useful to have these (counselling sessions ten years ago." For one adopter the input of the CAMHS has made a difference to the family in maintaining the placement.

There was a real commitment to further develop the CAMHS support to adoption work. The multi agency training pack the "Solihull Approach" is in the process of being extended. Work is underway to develop the pack specifically for foster carers and adopters, which will be used to support adopters in their care of children.

There was evidence of good and effective use made of other specialist advisers to the service. Workers said they had "good access to specialist advice." Social workers referred to accessible and informative medical advice, which was also fully utilised within the adoption panel. The legal advice was similarly accessible and useful. One worker commented that they were "very well supported by the legal service."

## **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)
- Service users receive good quality services based on their needs (NMS 34)

### **The Commission considers Standards 7, 8, 9 and 34 the key standards to be inspected.**

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

7,8,9 and 34. The quality in this outcome area is **good**.

This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service. The lifelong commitment to birth parents facilitates and enhances their ability to make a positive contribution towards their child's heritage and so give useful and accurate information to children about their history.

### **EVIDENCE:**

The evidence from files, staff and questionnaires demonstrated a clear understanding of the values and significance of the heritage of adopted children. The children's social workers were sensitive to the needs of birth families while retaining a firm hold on their focus on the child. The development of specialist knowledge around inter-country would strengthen the service further.

There are systems in place to engage birth parents and offer support. Independent support is commissioned from Adoption Support and the managers review and monitor the use made of this service. At present there has been limited use and there are plans to distribute an information leaflet to local solicitors who act for parents to try to increase the use of the support offered. The adoption support workers in the team engage with birth families and undertake direct work with them. This includes assistance with letters to maintain contact.

Contact after adoption between birth families and children is managed well. A Letter-Box system for exchange of information is well established. Reminders of exchanges are sent in advance and followed up if over due. Copies are made of all material sent. There are over one hundred families involved in the system, some of whom are sibling groups and most have more than one exchange per year. It is to the credit of the workers involved that after some administrative input in developing the database the system is run effectively by the adoption support social workers. The lack of administrative support should be reviewed to allow the appropriate use of the skills of workers.

Some childcare social workers raised some concern about their perspective that there had been a recent example of adopters changing the name of a child given by their birth parent. They expressed the view that adopters were "very powerful". Managers within the service were aware of these issues and already addressing them.

There was a strong commitment to the effective provision of life-story work. Social workers had resources available and while under pressure to find the time for this work saw it as a priority and had support from colleagues in providing life-story books. Workers have access to colleagues in the LATCH team and the Psychologist for Pre and Post Adoption to support them. The level of commitment to this work was impressive, especially the comments made by children's social workers that they would use resources to customise their own story for a child to explain and explore the issues around adoption. It would be of benefit to this work, however, to revisit and establish Life Appreciation Days as a means of holding on to important early life experiences for children.



# 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)

**The Commission considers Standards 1, 3, 16, 21, 25 and 27 the key standards to be inspected.**

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

Quality in this outcome area is **good**.

This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service. The agency is well managed at all levels and this ensures that a safe and effective service is provided to adopters and children.

## **EVIDENCE:**

There is a clear statement of purpose, which reflects the operation of the service. It would be advisable to remove the Chair of the adoption panel from the structure chart, as he is independent of the service structure.

There has been time and effort spent in considering how best to develop a children's guide. There is now a suitable document in place in the form of a loose-leaf guide in a small pouch/case. The manager was aware this would be less suitable for older children but as it is loose-leaf those parts would be used in a more appropriate guide. There was a clear understanding both from managers and workers of the function of the guide and a real commitment to have an effective tool for working with children in preparing them for adoption.

The information provided for prospective adopters was well thought out and put together. There was effective use made of research material. Adopters commented that they found the pack they received useful and as one said, "All the information was very clear."

The initial response received by prospective adopters was of a similar high quality. Prospective adopters commented that their enquiry was dealt with sensitively by "friendly and helpful people." There is an inclusive and open response to those approaching the service.

The nominated manager for the service is skilled and experienced in the work and operates the service effectively. Other knowledgeable and experienced managers who worked effectively together support her in her role.

There are generally sound systems for monitoring the service. There is a constructive approach to issues raised, including complaints and there was evidence of action being taken by the service in response to the monitoring. Some areas of the work could be strengthened. There was recognition that there is a system of file audit, however there should be more evidence of supervision on files and of signatures to reports. The service needs to ensure it makes full use of the professional adviser to the panel to provide a quality assurance check on work due to be presented and to monitor recommended changes to reported which have been presented.

The organisation and management of the service is effective. There are well-established, effective system and structures in place. For example, there is an adoption team worker linked with each childcare team, which provides a useful and constructive mechanism for communication and liaison. There are clear and well-defined roles and responsibilities with clarity about cover during absence. Home finding has early alerts to minimise delay. Placing social workers commented that the adoption team "are quick off the mark to find placements."

There is a need for the service to review the level of administrative support to the adoption team. This is particularly an issue in relation to the Letter-Box

system. The social workers value and appreciate the support they received while recognising the restraints through lack of time. One administrative worker was described as "an absolute diamond, she goes above and beyond".

The staff in the adoption team are mainly well established and have considerable skill, knowledge and experience, including in direct childcare work. Children's social workers saw the adoption team as a source of reliable information, with "good communication, tremendous planning that works really well." It was note worthy that the adoption team were seen as providing considerable support during the introduction of the new legislation. Children's social workers were confident that they would be given accurate advice and information and gave examples of the calm and effective response from the adoption team, " when we get an answer we're confident it's the right one!" The working relationship between teams was seen to be good. The workers felt they "worked well together." The work of some individuals in the adoption team was described as "brilliant" and "fantastic".

Solihull was viewed positively as an employer. Supervision was valued and arranged regularly as well as informal supervision being available. Managers at all levels were viewed as approachable and supportive and staff felt valued by the authority.

Staff and records showed that training was made available to staff, including a wide range of specialist training. There was recognition from the adoption team of the budgetary constraints upon training. All staff felt they had been prepared and supported in the introduction of the Adoption and Children Act, "We had fantastic training about the Adoption and Children Act."

Records of complaints were compliant with regulation. The records generally were well ordered, but would be improved with the issues raised earlier about signatures. The storage of files was secure with suitable cabinets and locked rooms. The adoption archive was not inspected on this occasion as there were no changes in provision and the archive was seen as appropriate during the last inspection.

Jubilee House is suitable in general for the purposes of the service. However, although the staff were accepting of the arrangement there is a difficulty for the adoption team in accessing administrative support, including the photocopier, when the meeting room is in use. When this happens the staff have to go outside, which can be problematic depending on the task and the weather.

# 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

<b>BEING HEALTHY</b>	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
No NMS are mapped to this outcome	

<b>MAKING A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION</b>	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
<b>7</b>	3
<b>8</b>	3
<b>9</b>	3
<b>34</b>	3

3

<b>STAYING SAFE</b>	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
<b>2</b>	3
<b>4</b>	2
<b>5</b>	4
<b>10</b>	3
<b>11</b>	3
<b>12</b>	2
<b>13</b>	3
<b>15</b>	3
<b>19</b>	3
<b>24</b>	N/A
<b>32</b>	3

<b>ACHIEVING ECONOMIC WELLBEING</b>	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
No NMS are mapped to this outcome	

<b>ENJOYING AND ACHIEVING</b>	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
<b>6</b>	3
<b>18</b>	4
<b>33</b>	3

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

Are there any outstanding requirements from the last inspection?

### 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	AD4	AA Regs 2005	An enhanced criminal record certificate must be in place on all applicants before their assessment is presented to the adoption panel. Details of the record must be recorded in the assessment report.	31/12/06
2	AD5	AA Regs 2005 17(1)	The panel and the subsequent minutes should give full consideration to the needs of each individual child in a sibling group.	31/12/06

### 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	AD3	Every effort should be made to avoid prospective adopters having a long wait to attend a preparation course.
2	AD4	Consideration should be given to the organisation of inter-

		country assessments to allow the establishment of appropriate knowledge and expertise.
3	AD17	The Adoption Service should ensure it makes full use of the professional adviser to the adoption service in its quality assurance of reports to the adoption panel and I monitoring alterations to reports.
4	AD12	The minutes of the adoption panel are available for consideration at following panel meeting.
5	AD20	The Adoption Service should review the lack of administrative support provided for the Letter-Box system.
6	AD8	The Adoption Service should revisit the establishment of Life Appreciation Days.
7	AD17	There should be consistent evidence of supervision recorded on files and of the manager's and author's signatures to reports.

## **Commission for Social Care Inspection**

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