



*Making Social Care
Better for People*

inspection report

ADOPTION SERVICE

Bury MBC Adoption Service

**18-20 St Mary`s Place
Bury
BL9 0DZ**

Lead Inspector
Jayne Ivory

Announced Inspection
20th November 2006 09:30

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	Bury MBC Adoption Service
Address	18-20 St Mary`s Place Bury BL9 0DZ
Telephone number	0161 253 5000
Fax number	0161 253 5494
Email address	
Provider Web address	
Name of registered provider(s)/company (if applicable)	Bury MBC
Name of Nominated manager (if applicable)	Jane Holden
Type of registration	Local Auth Adoption Service

SERVICE INFORMATION

Conditions of registration:

Date of last inspection

Brief Description of the Service:

Bury Metro Borough Council Children's Services undertakes the functions of an Adoption Agency for the community of Bury. The separate adoption team was established in 2005. The adoption team has a full time adoption manager who also functions as the adoption agency adviser. The adoption team is made up of five qualified staff, including: one full time senior practitioner, 1 full time social worker and two part time members of staff. There is a designated adoption support social worker that is supervised by the adoption team manager. One full time and one part time social worker in the adoption team also deal with family and friend carers and special guardianship assessments and support. The family placement service is located in an office in the centre of the town.

The purpose of the agency is:

- To match and place children with adopters who can best meet their assessed needs throughout childhood and beyond, once adoption has been identified as being the most appropriate plan.
- To prepare children prior to introduction and placement with adopters in an age appropriate way whilst ensuring that the child's own history is understood and preserved.
- To recruit, prepare, assess and approve adoptive applicants who can meet the needs of children needing adoption both locally and nationally. This includes the recruitment of adopters for older children, sibling groups, disabled children and children from diverse ethnic backgrounds.
- To provide a range of adoption support services, either directly or through contractual arrangements with other agencies for adopted children and their families. This includes assessments for adoption support and financial support where appropriate.

- To offer a range of services and information to birth parents in order to make effective plans for their children, where adoption has been identified as being in the best interests of their child.
- To provide counselling and information from adoption records to adopted adults.
- To provide an adoption agency service in respect of non-agency placements, including step-parent adoption applications.

SUMMARY

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

The inspection was extremely well prepared for with all required pre-inspection material being forwarded as requested. The agency provided the best facilities available to them and engaged in the process as willing participants. The programme that was arranged was well coordinated and very manageable. This enabled the inspection to be carried out with the minimum of disruption and maximum efficiency.

The inspection was carried out over four days, with one extra-day being allocated to the observation of the adoption panel. During the course of the fieldwork interviews were held with key managers and staff. The Independent Panel Chairperson of the adoption panel was also interviewed. An examination of personnel files was undertaken in the offices of Human Resources.

Visits were made to four adoptive families. In addition two visits were made to service users who were in receipt of adoption support services. The views of adopters and adopted adults are incorporated into the text of this report. Completed questionnaires were received from adopters/prospective adopters (9), placing social workers (8), and specialist advisers (2). Two questionnaires sent to birth families were returned.

The case files of the adopters visited were read – and the files of children placed with them. Other case files were also examined. Written materials relating to the operation of the agency were read, including policies and procedures, protocols and information provided for children, prospective and approved adopters and social workers.

The inspection also considered the council's arrangements for adoption support services and interviewed staff involved in the assessment, review and provision of these services. The inspection took place alongside a full inspection of the fostering and private fostering services in Bury. Readers may find it helpful to consider all three reports for a full overview of the Fostering and Adoption and Adoption Support Service to children in the Council.

What the service does well:

Bury promotes good outcomes for children by ensuring that a high percentage of the looked after children in the council are placed for adoption. Given the resources that are available to the adoption service and more specifically to the adoption team the numbers of children placed and the quality of the matching of children with adopters who can meet their needs is of a high standard.

Much time and effort is invested in the matching process, and the close working relation between the adoption team and their colleagues in the care planning team ensured that Bury experienced consistently low disruption rates. There are very few children waiting for adoption placements and this is as a result of a clear focus upon family finding in the adoption team, and close collaborative working across the service.

The quality of recruitment, preparation and training for adopters was of a high standard. Adopters made positive comments about the preparation training, which they had found a helpful resource later on in their adoption journey. Adopters confirmed that they had received a professional, thorough and sensitive service from the staff in the adoption team.

Support services in Bury were found to be very good for children and their adoptive families. The service has a well-established ASSA role, a dedicated adoption support worker and excellent multi-agency links to specialist services. The inspection found compelling evidence that the needs of birth parents were considered throughout the service from the point of first contact to the excellent arrangements for post placement and adoption support with a partner voluntary adoption agency.

The quality of the service offered by the adoption team given the resources that are available is very high. The small team delivers very well. This is due to the experience, commitment and knowledge of the staff, who are supported by a dedicated team manager. The team manager acts as the agency adviser and is valued across the service in this role.

The adoption team enjoy good collaborative working relationships with their colleagues in the care planning teams. Links with the Looked After Children's Team are continuing to strengthen.

Bury benefits from a committed adoption panel. The panel draws from a wide range of professional and personal experience in making their recommendations to the service. The adoption panel also benefits from excellent panel administrative support and a skilled minute taker.

Bury has been through some challenging times in the recent past with regard to staff recruitment and retention in the wider children's service.

All staff reported that the consultation process as part of the restructuring into more focused teams had made a significant improvement to staff morale and to recruitment and retention issues. This in turn was beginning to improve outcomes to children by ensuring greater consistency in their social worker.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The service has been pro-active in ensuring that the majority of requirements and recommendations have been met from the action plan, which came as a result of the first inspection. This improvement was also noted in the follow-up visit in July 2005.

Bury has improved the services available to non-relinquishing birth parents by developing a partnership with a local voluntary adoption agency. The information from the commissioned service was of a good quality and provided evidence that birth parents were able to access services appropriate to their needs.

Bury had invested additional resources in the adoption team and had recruited a dedicated adoption team manager in 2004.

What they could do better:

Bury's adoption service would benefit from further developing a recruitment strategy that meets the needs of the children in the borough and allows Bury to participate in the regional and national adoption framework, without compromising practice standards across the service.

The service acknowledged that more needed to be done to tighten up on the timescales for ensuring that all children's assessments were considered in a more timely way by the adoption panel. The role of the Independent Reviewing Officers in triggering a referral to the agency adviser may be one way to ensure earlier involvement of the adoption team in the child's assessment.

The adoption team were unable to meet timescales for completing adopter's assessments. Given the size of the team and their prioritisation of family finding and their involvement in assessing and supporting some other permanent placements, including long term fostering and special guardianship placements, timescales were not able to be met. This is an area that must be addressed by the service either by reviewing the remit of the adoption team, or by increasing staffing resources available to adoption.

Issues concerning the ability of adopters to support their adopted child to overcome discrimination in all its forms were not as well developed or evidenced in the prospective adopter's report as they should be. This is an area for additional training.

Life-story work, which had been a real strength in the first inspection, had become a cause of concern. The staff who were skilled at completing life-story books and work were involved in ongoing professional training, and the increase in numbers of children placed meant that many children were placed without their life-story work. In some of the cases seen, children who had been adopted were still waiting for their life-story books. This is an area that the service must improve upon to ensure good outcomes for children in their adoptive placements.

Although there was a good system to ensure that the adoption panel's recommendations were forwarded to the agency decision maker within timescale. Not all agency decisions were made within timescale and many written notifications were also out of timescale. The service acknowledged this, and was in the process of establishing a robust system to ensure that agency decisions and written notifications were made in a timely way.

The adoption team benefits from excellent administrative support. However examination of case files confirmed that the service is operating a hybrid system of recording. In April 2007 Bury move over to an electronic case file and service user database. Some of the social workers had started to use the system to record their activity; others were using hand written case recording systems. During this time of transition it is still important to ensure that case files provide evidence of management oversight and case file audit.

The letter box files and the Panel member files are stored in a locked cabinet that is on the ground floor close to windows that do not have bars and in a room that has no separate alarm. This important information would benefit from being stored in a more secure setting.

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. The summary of this inspection report can be made available in other formats on request.

DETAILS OF INSPECTOR FINDINGS

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Staying Safe

Enjoying and Achieving

Making a Positive Contribution

Achieving Economic Wellbeing - There are no NMS that map to this outcome

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)
- 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):

Quality in this outcome area is adequate as the majority of children with a plan for adoption benefit from a service, which is child focused and which safeguards and promotes their welfare. However the limited resources available to the service have contributed to unnecessary delay for some children with a plan for adoption, and for delays in the assessments of adopters.

This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

EVIDENCE:

Bury promotes good outcomes for children by ensuring that a high percentage of the looked after children in the council are placed for adoption. The adoption service have sound practice concerning family finding and matching children with adoptive families. The service works closely with

partners in the region to ensure that children with a decision to be placed for adoption are placed with the best family for them.

Children's social workers confirmed that although a significant majority of Bury children are placed with adopters outside of the borough, that they received a great deal of support, advice and assistance from the agency adviser and from their colleagues in the adoption team. Matching is a collaborative process with a series of meetings and information gathering to ensure that children are placed with the family that can best meet their needs.

The service acknowledged that more needed to be done to ensure that all children had a timely plan for adoption, and that systems to notify the adoption team of any children who may require family finding in the future needed to be refined to ensure consistency across the service.

The service may benefit from refining current systems to ensure that an automatic notification to the agency adviser is sent from the four-month statutory review if the plan for a child is likely to be adoption. The quality of children's assessments was seen to be improving across the service.

The majority of adopters confirmed that they are prepared and assessed in a sensitive but thorough way. The quality of preparation training provides adopters with information about the needs of children waiting and supports adopters to develop a more inclusive approach to birth parents and birth families. Most adopters confirmed that they had found the training really helpful, however one couple felt that issues concerning equality and diversity were somewhat overlooked.

Prospective adopters who wish to adopt a child from overseas are directed to the overseas helpline. The adoption team manager acknowledged that the service were still in the process of considering a development to commission a local voluntary adoption agency with special experience in assessing inter-country adopters.

Some adopters had concerns about the time it had taken for their application and assessment to be progressed. A typical comment included: "It seems to have taken a long time. Once we were allocated our social worker, who was excellent, everything moved along much more quickly, but we did wait to get on training." Other adopters who had approached the agency to adopt a second child had received a different response and felt that they had been fast tracked through the process. The adoption team were only in a position to accept applications after preparation training and were therefore not able to comply with practice guidance concerning the timescales for all prospective adopters. This is something that the service must address.

Bury has two adoption panels every month. An Independent Chairperson, whose term of office had just expired at the time of the inspection, chaired both panels. The service has recruited another Independent Chairperson to take over at the start of 2007. The new Independent Panel Chairperson is very knowledgeable and experienced in adoption matters.

The adoption panel benefits from regular training events. Panel members come from a wide range of personal and professional backgrounds and are very committed to their roles and responsibilities to the adoption service.

During an observation of the adoption panel, one independent panel member abstained from contributing to making a recommendation on a prospective adopters application and subsequent match. The panel member did not feel able to say why they had abstained. It should be made clear that panel members' role is to approve or not an applicant based on their ability to parent an adopted child. Abstaining from the process based upon any other grounds is not permitted in the regulations. This is something that the service must address with the concerned panel member.

The functioning of the adoption panel is supported by policies and procedures that are in the process of being redrafted.

Panel minutes were accurate, concise and made clear reasons for recommendations.

The agency decision maker is committed to their role, however the inspection found that there had been some difficulties in ensuring that the agency decision and subsequent written notification were being made in a timely way. The agency adviser and agency decision maker had begun to address this problem by establishing a meeting after every adoption panel.

The agency decision maker is the Director of Social Care, and has been involved in the major restructuring of Bury's Children's Services. The meetings between the agency decision maker and the independent panel chairperson have not taken place as regularly as they should in the last twelve months. The agency decision maker should reinstate the quarterly meetings with the independent panel chairperson. This will ensure that any panel performance issues are addressed, that the independent panel chairperson's appraisal is completed and that the Director has the opportunity of receiving feedback on the performance of the adoption agency.

The manager of the adoption agency would benefit from management training that meets or exceeds NVQ Level 4. The adoption team reported that they had access to a good range of training. Any external training that team members attend is cascaded to their colleagues. The service had received training in the

Adoption and Children Act 2002, completing Child Permanence Reports and the implementation of the integrated children's system.

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):

Quality in this outcome area is good, given the resources available, the service provides ongoing adoption support and access to specialist services if required to all those touched by adoption.

This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

EVIDENCE:

Bury has well developed arrangements for providing services for adoption support. The team has a designated adoption support social worker who is responsible for running the monthly adoption group, adoption support events and evenings. Although this is the responsibility of one person, who was shortly to leave the department, there was evidence from discussions with service users in receipt of adoption support services that they had a good service from Bury based upon the needs of their child or children. One adoptive family said that they had found it very difficult to get support in the first place when they had approached the agency some years ago. However the family acknowledged that they had received an extensive package of support, including respite care and funds for an additional bedroom. More recent examples of adoption support assessments confirmed that the initial assessment team were responsible for completing initial assessments for adoption support, which would then be co-worked or referred onto the adoption support worker if appropriate.

The adoption support social worker confirmed that they had received training in managing child protection and cases of historical abuse. Any cases involving safeguarding issues were not held by the adoption support social worker but

were referred to a specialist safeguarding team and were co-worked if appropriate.

Bury has developed a virtual adoption support team with fast tracked access to specialist advisers, including a child psychologist with specialist knowledge in adoption and the needs of looked after children.

Bury's adoption service benefits from access and support from the medical adviser who ensures children's and adopter's medical reports are scrutinised before panel. They are also available to offer advice and support to adopters concerning any proposed match. Legal advice to the service is also of a consistently high standard.

Service users who were interviewed as part of the inspection confirmed that they were clear about the service that they were entitled to, and were consulted about how this service was delivered to them or to their family and children.

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):

Quality in this outcome area is adequate based upon the ability of the service to recognise and respond for the need to support birth parents and their families from the outset of their child's plan for adoption. However the service must do more to ensure that a child's heritage is preserved in the form of life story work to promote good outcomes for the child in their adoptive placement.

This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

EVIDENCE:

The inspection confirmed that Bury's adoption service is committed to working alongside birth parents throughout the adoption process. Placing social workers efforts to ensure that birth parents wishes and feelings were recorded and available for the adoption panel evidenced this.

Bury had commissioned an independent social work support service from a neighbouring voluntary adoption agency with specialist knowledge and experience of working with birth parents.

Feedback from the quality of the work undertaken with birth parents confirmed that the independent social worker had been able to engage some birth parents who had been resistant to having any further involvement with Bury.

This had promoted good outcomes for children in that some birth parents had felt more able to contribute information for their child, through their independent social worker.

There was close liaison between the independent social work service and effective systems to ensure that birth parents were referred at the point of the panel recommendation and agency decision that a child should be placed for adoption.

The adoption team worked hard with their colleagues in the child-care teams to ensure that staff were aware of the need to preserve and maintain a child's heritage. Child-care team managers and social workers confirmed that they were committed to gathering information at the earliest opportunity. However more must be done at a strategic and operational level to ensure that life work is completed within the child's timescale, with a recommendation to bring the completed initial life story work to the first adoption review, or in some instances to the adoption panel. Concerns about the delays in completing life-story work were evident from adopters and from Independent Reviewing officers. There is an urgent need to address the issues concerning delays in life-story work across the service.

The service has clear practice guidelines concerning the provision of an adoption support assessment for service users and has clear practice concerning service delivery of adoption support. One adopted adult reported that the adoption support social worker had, "Really helped me to find out about my adopted and birth family. I don't think I could have managed to do all of this without their help. I am now in touch with my brother and sister."

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. Bury has good management support and effective management systems to ensure that the needs of all those touched by adoption are at the forefront of strategic planning and service delivery.

This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

EVIDENCE:

There was a statement of purpose in place that had been reviewed in January 2006 and had been formally approved by the executive of the council. It clearly outlined the aspirations and operations of the agency and was written in an easy to read style. The policies and procedures of the agency, many of which were in the process of being reviewed and revised, supported the statement of purpose and most indications were that the agency operated in line with these. The service has a range of children's guides for older and younger children.

The information provided for prospective applicants is of a very good standard; it gives a clear indication of all the implications and processes of adoption, including profiles of the kind of children requiring placements, and it also specifies the range of people that the agency wishes to recruit. It is a well - presented pack that is welcoming and clearly aimed at providing all relevant information in an accessible and encouraging format.

The adoption team reported that they were well supported by their manager, and the managers involved in the adoption service reported that they were well supervised and supported by the service manager.

As has already been stated the manager of the adoption team has just started to access some internal management training, but would benefit from more formal management training that meets or exceeds NVQ Level 4. Other managers involved in the adoption service were suitably qualified and experienced. The inspection found evidence that the Adoption Team worked well within the wider constraints of the service and that the relationship between the team and placing social workers was generally positive. The agency adviser considered that they would like to establish closer links with the care planning team.

The adoption team holds some long term fostering cases and is also involved in special guardianship and non-agency adoptions. The adoption team face the challenge of implementing the practice guidance concerning timescales for assessments of adopters. Therefore either some consideration must be made regarding the adoption teams role and function, or some additional resources must be made available to enable the team to comply with practice guidance and timescales for prospective adopters assessments.

The team manager dealt with the few complaints made against the agency sensitively, efficiently and effectively. Withdrawals and de-registrations were also managed well.

Staff in the adoption service had accessed training in the Adoption and Children Act 2002.

All staff said that they were familiar with the council's personal development and annual appraisal system. Staff reported that they received regular professional supervision from the adoption team manager.

The service should establish, without delay, a robust system of file auditing: children's adoption files showed little or no evidence of any management oversight, and the quality of some of the paperwork was poor. It is of utmost importance that children's adoption files reflect an accurate record of all work undertaken in relation to the adoption, which will be readily understood by the adoptee at any future date.

Adopters' files were generally well ordered, but reflected a service that was in transition from paper records to an electronic recording and filing system. Both the paper and electronic records lacked evidence of management oversight. Decisions made during supervision should be recorded on all files and any signatures on documents should be dated and supplemented by the manager's or social workers full name.

The service should develop and implement effective quality assurance systems which evidence the supervision and management decision making process of children's and adopters' assessments. This system should be compatible with the electronic file system that is being introduced throughout the service in April 2007.

Administrative staff were seen to be hardworking and sensitive to the nature of the work of the service.

The letter box files and the Panel member files are stored in a locked cabinet that is on the ground floor close to windows that do not have bars and in a room that has no separate alarm. This important information would benefit from being stored in a more secure setting.

Staff personnel files were examined as part of the inspection. All staff files complied with the national minimum standards and the regulations, however the service may wish to consider making the recording of the telephone verification of written references clearer by having a box on the new starter form.

Panel members' files did not contain all the evidence required in the standards and regulation at the time of the inspection, however all outstanding references have now been chased up and the files are now confirmed as

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

MAKING A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
7	3
8	2
9	3
34	3

STAYING SAFE	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
2	2
4	2
5	3
10	1
11	3
12	3
13	1
15	3
19	3
24	N/A
32	3

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

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

MANAGEMENT	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
1	3
3	4
14	2
16	3
17	3
20	3
21	2
22	3
23	3
25	2
26	3
27	3
28	3
29	3
30	N/A
31	N/A

Are there any outstanding requirements from the last inspection? Yes

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	AD13	27.1 Adoption Agency Regulations 2005	The service must make arrangements for the agency decision and the subsequent written notification of the agency decision to be made within timescale.	30/03/07
2	AD10	26.1, 2 Adoption Agency Regulations 2005	The service must ensure that panel members are aware of their role and responsibility to make a recommendation based upon the parenting capacity of prospective adopters. Any inability to adhere to the regulations must be addressed by the agency adviser and the agency decision maker.	30/03/07
3	AD21	10,a and b Adoption Service Regulations	The service must also ensure that there are sufficient staff to meet the needs of adults suitable to adopt in a timely way.	30/03/07
4	AD4	8.2(B) LAA 1983	Bury's Adoption Service must consider the full range of equal opportunities and diversity issues in assessments concerning individual adopters. (new timescale)	30/03/07

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	AD4	The service should consider how prospective adopters assessments are completed within practice guidance timescales.
2	AD4	The service should finalise arrangements to commission a specialist service for adopters choosing to adopt a child from overseas.
3	AD8	The service should consider how to improve the delivery of life story work within the child's timescale.
4	AD20	The service must keep under review and consider the impact on the adoption service of the adoption teams involvement in permanence placements including longer term fostering and special guardianship placements.
5	AD25	The service should ensure that case files provide evidence of management oversight and case file audit. Decisions made by supervisors should be evident on case files and should be signed and dated.
6	AD27	Case Recording should be legible, clearly expressed and signed and dated.
7	AD25	The letter box files and the Panel member files should be stored in a locked cabinet in a more secure setting.
8	AD2	The service should develop an ongoing recruitment strategy, which is kept under review and is informed by the needs of the children waiting locally.

Commission for Social Care Inspection

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