



Making Social Care
Better for People

inspection report

ADOPTION SERVICE

Coventry City Council Adoption Service

**Stoke House
Lloyd Crescent
Wyken
Coventry
CV2 5NY**

Lead Inspector
Rosemary Chapman

Announced Inspection
23rd-24th, 30th-31st August, 1st September 09:00

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	Coventry City Council Adoption Service
Address	Stoke House Lloyd Crescent Wyken Coventry CV2 5NY
Telephone number	02476 785619
Fax number	
Email address	jack.mcconnochie@coventry.gov.uk
Provider Web address	
Name of registered provider(s)/company (if applicable)	Coventry City Council
Name of registered manager (if applicable)	Jack McConnochie
Type of registration	Local Auth Adoption Service

SERVICE INFORMATION

Conditions of registration: None

Date of last inspection March 2004, follow up inspection October 2005

Brief Description of the Service:

Coventry City Council provides a comprehensive adoption and post adoption service to all those people affected by adoption. This includes children for whom adoption is the plan, birth parents and relatives, prospective and approved adoptive parents and adopted adults. The adoption service is based in the recently developed Children, Learning and Young People's Directorate.

The adoption team is based at Stoke House and works closely with the recruitment team, permanency team and locality teams to progress adoption plans for children.

The service:

- a. recruits, prepares, assesses, supports and provides welfare supervision to both domestic and inter country adopters
- b. works with children's social workers to identify matches for looked after children and assist in their placement
- c. provides support and counselling for birth parents, including independent support through a service level agreement with a voluntary organisation
- d. provides an adoption support service
- e. provides a service to adopted adults and adult birth relatives of adopted adults including birth records counselling and an intermediary service (including a service level agreement with Adoption Support).

SUMMARY

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

This is the second inspection of the adoption service provided by Coventry City Council. Prior to the inspection fieldwork, supporting documentary evidence was read by the lead inspector. Questionnaires were received from 1 birth parent, 17 prospective and approved adopters, 1 placing social worker, 4 placing authorities, and 2 specialist advisers.

Two inspectors spent 5 days in the agency and interviewed:

a group of placing social workers

the recruitment team and marketing officer

2 Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs)

the Independent Support Service social worker

the direct worker for children

administrative staff

adoption social workers

the adoption support services adviser (ASSA) and post adoption social workers

the nominated manager,

the team managers of the adoption team and permanency team,

the agency decision maker,

an elected member

a birth parent

Five adoptive families were selected to be case tracked and this involved reading their files, the files of the children placed with them and a home interview.

In addition, the adoption panel was observed, the vice chairperson and chairperson were interviewed and a selection of files, including personnel files, adopters' and children's files were read during the course of the inspection. The premises and archive storage were also inspected.

The inspection was extremely well organised by the managers of the service and the inspectors would like to thank them and the staff for their cooperation during the inspection and the hard work which they put in when organising both the pre-inspection material and the inspection programme. The openness and helpfulness of staff at all levels enabled the inspection to be carried out efficiently and effectively.

What the service does well:

The agency has a good recruitment strategy in place, which embraces diversity and which meets the needs of children requiring adoptive families. Children's wishes and feelings are respected and strenuous efforts made to place siblings together and meet cultural and religious needs.

The preparation, assessment and approval of adopters is thorough and timely. An adopter said: the preparation groups were very well done: engaging, informative and motivating" – another adopter found them "invaluable". One adopter commented: " I could not have wished for a more efficient team than Coventry Social Services. They were excellent". Other agencies have also commented positively about the service: "we found the individual we worked with to be very open, supportive and with children's needs at the forefront of her thoughts". The panel is well organised, regular and thoughtful in its recommendations.

Adoptive families receive good support and a variety of services are available to the adults and children. Good relationships with other agencies ensure that this support covers every need a child may have. One adopter said: "the support from our social worker was brilliant and we have found the whole experience very positive and quick. We cannot recommend Coventry more highly".

The direct work undertaken with children is excellent and the life story work which informs the life storybook is of a very high standard. There is also good work with birth parents, particularly in relation to help with letter writing to support contact.

The organisation of the agency is good, with a dedicated team of fieldwork staff who are responsible for any child for whom adoption is the plan. This model has been effective in preventing delay and providing an expertise in adoption work. Staff engaged in adoption work, both from this team and from the adoption team, are knowledgeable, skilled and experienced.

The management of the agency is extremely good, with both strategic management and good, sound practice based, knowledgeable and experienced managers. Staff are well supported through regular supervision, good training opportunities and a child centred ethos which permeates throughout the agency. This is confirmed by an adopter who commented: "we have found the social services in Coventry to be open, well organised, friendly and very supportive". Another adopter said: "Overall Coventry has been great".

What has improved since the last inspection?

All matters which were raised as requirements or recommendations at the inspection in March 2004 were followed up in October 2005. The findings were that all requirements and recommendations had been attended to satisfactorily.

Personnel and panel members' files now contain all the required information, with improved recording of training, induction and checks.

The post adoption service has increased and developed, with a senior practitioner in post and a comprehensive selection of support available to adopters, children and birth parents.

The staffing levels in the adoption and post adoption teams have improved and are now fully staffed with permanent members of staff.

The agency has worked hard to update policies and procedures and provide staff training to meet the requirements of the new legislation.

What they could do better:

The recording of the reasons for a recommendation in the panel minutes needs to be detailed and also the capacity in which panel members appear. The extract of the minutes which is placed on file should also contain this information.

The agency decision needs to be consistently made in a timely way and the notifications of this decision to birth parents must be on the children's case file.

Children's case files need to be improved so that they have an adoption file which starts at the right time and contains all the information required by regulation.

The Children's Guide needs some further work to make it more age appropriate and engaging.

The service needs more administrative support for the recruitment team and the post adoption team in particular. Staff would also benefit from more space in the building.

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

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

DETAILS OF INSPECTOR FINDINGS

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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)

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

2,4,5,10,11,12,13,15,19

Quality in this outcome area is good. This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service. Good recruitment practices are in place for both adopters and staff and adopters are well prepared and undergo a thorough assessment by knowledgeable staff to promote safe placements for children.

EVIDENCE:

The agency is very clear about the types and numbers of children, both within their Council and within the local Consortium, for whom adoptive families are being sought. There are good recruitment strategies in place, including targeted recruitment. The recruitment team, who is also responsible for the recruitment of foster carers, has a clear, written plan, including advertising campaigns, presence at local events, the development of the recruitment of black families, links with the refugee centre and imaginative initiatives which are evaluated to identify successes and trends.

Evidence presented during the inspection indicates that a lot of effort is put into enabling children to remain with their siblings, if this is appropriate. The Council had been able to place 6 children together in one adoptive family, facilitated by the provision of major expenditure and a lot of social work

support. This is commendable. Likewise, culturally appropriate families are also sought. There was also evidence in case files seen that children's views are ascertained and acted upon. This was confirmed by children spoken with and the IROs, who also ensure children's views are listened to and acted upon.

Prospective adopters undergo a thorough preparation, assessment and approval process. The preparation groups are run on a regular basis to prevent prospective adopters having to wait too long and adopters commented on the quickness of the process. They have also been very positive about the content, saying they were "brilliant" and "invaluable". There is an interview at the end of the preparation groups, which is useful in evaluating the effectiveness of the sessions, assessing the learning, and what needs to be further discussed in the assessment. Foster carers confirmed that they were also able to attend the group and inter-country adopters access the preparation training of a specialist service.

The assessments seen were of a good quality and safe caring was clearly addressed. Extensive checks are undertaken including checks when applicants have lived overseas, employers and ex partners. Adopters confirmed they were kept informed of the progress of their assessment. Assessments are progressed in a timely way and there was no evidence of any delay.

There is a good matching pro-forma which clearly identifies the needs of the child and how the families being considered can meet those needs. Adopters confirmed that they could meet the child's foster career, talk to the medical adviser and have access to all the information needed to make an informed decision.

The adoption panel is well organised and has good, clear, written policies and procedures which reflect the operation of the panel and which have been updated to take into account the requirements of the new legislation. Prospective adopters are invited to attend panel and this was observed at the panel attended by the inspector. Adopters said they were made to feel at ease.

The adoption panel is properly constituted with a mix of people with different backgrounds and experiences. There was evidence that panel members are provided with regular training, which includes training with staff from the agency. The panel members' files inspected indicated that panel members undertake an induction and observe a panel prior to taking up their membership. All panel members have up to date CRB checks in place and have signed confidentiality agreements. The panel deals on average with 1 case of inter-country adoption per year and they are provided with up to date legal and other advice by the worker who specialises in this area.

The adoption panel is held on a fortnightly basis to meet the needs of the children and prospective adopters to prevent any delay. Staff commented that

the panel would make every effort to hear a case at short notice to enable them to meet court deadlines, either by sitting longer or having an extra panel. The panel observed was efficiently organised and conducted. Panel members receive the paper work a week in advance and the minutes are well written and thorough. However, they need to state the reasons for the conclusions, and it is recommended that the capacity in which members attend is detailed on the minutes, and the membership is also detailed on each individual minute which is placed on children's and adopters' files.

There is evidence that the decision is not always made in accordance with the timescales and there was no evidence of notifications to birth parents on the files inspected, although there was a pro forma for this and the process was detailed in the procedures. The agency decision maker makes his decision in a considered manner after reading the papers and the minutes and seeking extra information where necessary.

The manager's file contains evidence which indicates that he is a suitable person to manage the agency. Likewise the social work staff are involved in robust recruitment and selection procedures, with evidence in the files inspected that written references are followed up by telephone enquires and up to date CRB checks in place. Social workers are qualified and undertake appropriate training, including the post qualifying childcare award. The staff interviewed impressed as competent, qualified, experienced and knowledgeable. There is a child centred ethos amongst the managers and staff, there is access to supportive and appropriately qualified specialist advisers and therapists and the staff team embraces diversity in all its forms.

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):

6,18

Quality in this outcome area is good. This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service. The agency provides a good range of adoption support services and other specialist services for children which enable families to access appropriate help and promote permanent placements.

EVIDENCE:

There is a well-developed adoption support service for adopted adults, adoptive families and birth relatives. The adoption support team include 1 full time senior practitioner, the ASSA, who works 4 days a week, 1 full time social work post and 2 part time social work posts, with some administrative support. There is an annual post adoption support plan, which is regularly evaluated and reviewed. Adopters have been asked what they want, both individually and via a questionnaire and the service does its best to meet the requests. One adopter said: "they kept their word on everything they said, nothing was too much trouble, I had 100% help".

Services for adoptive families include support groups, social events, training and workshops, counselling, newsletters, links with other adoptive families, financial and other support and signposting to other services. The post adoption team undertake all assessments of need for post adoption support and are developing a formal protocol for working with other parts of the department if there are child protection issues, for example.

Training for adopters includes a "Piece of cake" and a parenting course. The support groups have included topics on life storybooks, education and psychological services, talking and telling, letterbox and parenting teenagers.

An activity day for adopted children was held last year and another is planned this year, jointly with a neighbouring authority as it was felt to be very

successful. There are coffee mornings and a disco. There are also plans to run a group for teenagers.

The team have recently commissioned a "buddying" scheme through a service level agreement with Adoption UK.

There is weekly input from the psychological service and there is a new CAMHS post in the permanency team to provide focussed post adoption support.

Work with the education department has included the development of a booklet "The Adopted Child in School" and workshops for adopters on reading, speech and language development and the importance of education. Social workers commented that there has been good support from the education service when children have to move schools and in individual cases and the SENCOs (special educational needs coordinators) are said to be helpful.

The agency has access to a medical and legal adviser, with protocols in place for staff to access their advice. The medical advisor was said to be "child centred and very helpful". There is also access to advice on inter-country adoption, education, psychological advice and issues of race and disability. Social workers commented that there are specialist services available for children and that "money was not an issue", providing a reasonable case was made for the service.

The work undertaken by the direct worker with children in the permanency team plays a large part in ensuring adopters are aware of the child's heritage and reinforces the learning which has taken place in the preparation training and through the home study assessment. The families interviewed demonstrated understanding and empathy in relation to the need for children to know about their birth families and the importance of keeping memorabilia and information safe.

There has been 1 disruption this year, which was a child from another Authority placed with a Coventry adopter. The file inspected showed clear evidence of co-operation with the other local Authority and support to the adoptive family, with a disruption meeting planned for the near future.

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):

7,8,9

Quality in this outcome area is good. This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service. The services available to children and birth families, particularly in relation to the maintenance of their heritage, contact and understanding of their life story promotes openness within adoptive families and better outcomes for children.

EVIDENCE:

The inspectors were very impressed with the direct work which is undertaken with children being placed for adoption and there is a recognition of the importance of this work throughout the service. There is a dedicated worker in the permanency team who undertakes this work and uses it to produce life storybooks of a very high quality, some of which were provided during the inspection. Occasionally the social workers in the permanency team undertake this themselves, and would like more time to do so, but the conflicting demands of court work make this difficult at times. The agency is also considering undertaking life appreciation days.

Since the last inspection, there is a service to birth parents which includes access to an independent worker from a voluntary agency, who can offer support. Although the take up of this service has not been good, which is not unusual, the worker has been proactive in trying to address this, by visiting social work teams and reviewing officers, putting posters in offices, clinics and nurseries, emailing social workers to advise them of the service when they are involved with a birth parent of a child who may be placed for adoption and generally raising the profile. There is written guidance for social workers to outline the service and the referral process.

The permanency team also offer a service to birth parents, although sometimes relationships are strained because of the court process. However,

contact between parents and children takes place at the same building in which the team are based and this ensures they are available at any time for informal meetings and they offer an open invitation to be in touch at any time. They use imaginative ways to try and elicit the wishes and feelings of birth parents, including involving solicitors. The IROs will also be involved with this aspect of the work. The wishes of parents were recorded on the child's permanence reports inspected. One off meetings between adopters and birth parents are also undertaken.

The post adoption team have taken a proactive stance in addressing direct contacts which have been in place and which will be made in future and these are now reviewed and the responsibility for them placed within this team. In relation to indirect contact, there is a robust letterbox scheme in place and this includes help with letter writing. One birth parent who had received help commented that the social worker had been "brilliant and helpful". Another birth parent commented in a questionnaire: "the staff are really nice, made me welcome and were very helpful to me".

There is a leaflet for birth families which provides information about the support groups available to them. The agency also provides a limited intermediary service for birth families wishing to make contact with their adopted children once they are adults. There is a counselling service for adopted adults wishing to see their birth records and this provides a quick response. Although there is no tracing service, they are referred to other adoption support agencies that will assist with this.

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):

1,3,14,16,17,20,21,22,23,25,26,27,28,29

Quality in this outcome area is good. This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service. The management of the service is good at all levels, providing a strategic overview and sound management practices which support staff in providing an effective service for children.

EVIDENCE:

The agency has a comprehensive statement of purpose, which has been recently reviewed in line with the requirements of the new Adoption and Children Act 2002. Staff interviewed were aware of its contents and felt it reflected an accurate picture of the service.

The agency has worked hard at developing a suitable Children's Guide to adoption. The draft provided for the inspection was a big improvement on the previous one used, being far more child friendly and it contained all the information required. However, the inspectors felt that it was still aimed at older children and needed some more work. This was discussed in some detail during the feedback and the difficulties in providing a Guide which was suitable for the range of children, including some very young children, was acknowledged.

The recruitment team are involved in the initial stages of a prospective adopters contact with the service. A duty social worker is available as the first point of information giving and the written information sent to enquirers is of a good standard, gives clear information about the process and the types of children who need adoptive families. The service is open and welcomes all types of applicants and the photographs in the information pack reflect that. Adopters commented on the good initial contact they received and these comments included: "a very prompt response to a telephone enquiry", "speed and efficiency of everyone from first telephone enquiry", "very positive attitude and rapid response" and "excellent information verbal and written".

The agency is managed by people who are suitably qualified, skilled and experienced. The management is very good and the staff involved have complementary skills, which ensure there is a strategic approach backed up by sound childcare practice. The nominated manager has provided a proactive and strategic approach to developing all aspects of the service but this has been underpinned by the adoption team managers who are competent, knowledgeable, experienced and skilled in management practices. There are clearly defined roles, responsibilities and accountability, which ensures the service is managed effectively and efficiently. However, there is also an enthusiasm and passion about providing a good adoption service for children and adopters.

The permanency team have proved their effectiveness in placing children without delay and supporting these placements. Specialising in placing children for whom adoption is the plan has enabled them to develop an expertise and sound professional practices based on knowledge, experience and skill. They are child centred and dedicated to ensuring the child has a smooth transition to their adoptive family. This has proved to be a good model for ensuring good outcomes for children.

There are clear procedures for monitoring the work of the agency and again this is at all levels of management and by the executive, who receive an annual report, quarterly updates and weekly briefings. The elected member

demonstrated an awareness of the workings of the service and a positive attitude to ensuring good outcomes for children. This was said to be across all political parties.

Staff interviewed said they felt well supported and valued and that their managers showed them "care and concern". They felt their workloads were monitored effectively and they reported good, regular formal supervision backed up by managers who were accessible and approachable at other times. The level of administrative support was increased following the previous inspection but there is now a need for further expansion, giving the developments of the service. More administrative staff are needed particularly for the recruitment team and the post adoption team. Although staff report that the office equipment is sufficient for their needs, some felt more training in IT would be beneficial, although the manager reported that this is readily available through corporate training.

The service has an appropriate number of other staff and any shortfalls have been addressed through the use of agency staff. A good timely service is provided as evidence that there are sufficient staff in place.

Staff felt that Coventry City Council is a fair and competent employer although they were particularly enthusiastic about the teams in which they worked and the support and ethos of their colleagues and direct line managers. There are flexible working arrangements, good pay and holiday entitlement.

Staff also commented on excellent training opportunities. There has been a lot of training on the new Adoption and Children Act and staff routinely undertake child protection training. Their appraisals identify other training needs. Staff felt that managers would always try their best to meet any requests for training, which included external training courses.

Case records on adopters are well organised and comprehensive. The case files inspected on children, both current and archived, had some shortfalls. These included the lack of written notifications to birth parents following the decision to place a child for adoption and when a match was made, a later life letter was not on one archived file seen, not all had photographs of the child and the adoption file did not commence at the time when adoption was proposed as the plan. As the Council have clear written procedures on the content of case files and pro-formas for relevant letters, an effective system for ensuring these are complied with needs to be developed.

The files are subject to regular file audits and there is good evidence of managerial oversight in the monitoring of timescales and progress of work. Decisions by supervisors were clearly recorded on all case files inspected. The file storage is appropriate, with policies on access and confidentiality. The recording of complaints was good enabling easy access to information and detailing the action taken to resolve issues.

Files on personnel and panel members meet the requirements and are well organised.

The premises are appropriate, identifiable and accessible to staff and visitors, with suitable security mechanisms in place for the building, contents and IT systems. Staff, both social work and administrative, commented on a lack of space now the size of the team has increased and minor health and safety issues were raised. The agency has an appropriate disaster recovery plan, which has been recently updated.

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	3
8	4
9	3

STAYING SAFE	
Standard No	Score
2	4
4	3
5	3
10	3
11	3
12	2
13	2
15	3
19	3
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	3

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

No

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	AD13	AA Regs 2005 19 and 33	The agency must ensure there is evidence that the notifications to birth parents have been sent to them, as well as informing them verbally, following the agency decision in relation to the child.	31/12/06
2	AD25	AA Regs 2005 12	The agency must ensure that children's case files comply with the requirements of the legislation.	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	AD12	The agency should ensure that the panel minutes state the reasons for the recommendations and the capacity in which panel members appear, and that this information is also available on the extract in the file.
2	AD13	The agency should ensure that the decision is made in accordance with the recommended timescales.

3	AD1	The agency should review the Children's Guide to ensure it is more age appropriate and engaging.
4	AD20	The agency should ensure there is an adequate number of administrative staff to support the work of the service.

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