

Adoption & Permanent Families Service – East Midlands

Statement of Purpose for Adoption and Foster Care



Adoption & Permanent Families Service –East Midlands May 2017
Statement of Purpose for Adoption and Foster Care

The Voluntary Adoption Agencies and the Adoption Agencies (miscellaneous amendments) Regulations 2003 – Schedule 1, Draft Adoption Regulations July 2014; Fostering Service (England) Regulations, 2011

1. Aims, and objectives	ii
2. Principles	ii
3. Services Provided	iii
4. Conditions of Registration	v
5. Monitoring and Evaluation	v
6. Procedures for Recruiting, Preparing, Assessing, Supporting & Training Adopters and Foster Carers	vii
7. Summary of Complaints Procedure	xii
Annexure A: Registered Provider, Responsible Individual and Managers: Contact details	xiii
Annexure B: Qualifications and experience of managers and staff	xiv
Annexure C: Governance Structure	xvi
Annexure D: Organisational Structure	xvii
Annexure E: Management Structure	xviii

CORAM ADOPTION AND PERMANENT FAMILIES SERVICE (APFS)

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

1. Aims and Objectives

Coram believes that children are best able to enjoy close and enduring relationships and to develop their potential within a family setting. This ethos is underpinned by Article 21 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child; that every child has a right to family life which, if it cannot be provided by the family of origin should be provided by a permanent alternative family. We recognise that those who have suffered separations and adversity may require additional support at different times in childhood and beyond, and that knowing about their birth family history and understanding the reasons for the separation is important in developing a positive sense of identity. Coram's aims and objectives are therefore:

- To match and place children who are looked after by Local Authorities and who are referred to Coram, in families where they will feel that they 'belong' on a permanent basis and be encouraged to make secure attachments. This may be by adoption, foster for adoption, long term foster care, placement with birth relatives or with concurrent planning carers;
- To recruit, prepare, assess and support adopters and carers from a diverse range of backgrounds who have the ability to meet the needs of children referred to Coram by Local authorities;
- To provide post placement and post adoption support to children and their new families where Coram has been involved in making a placement;
- To provide access to information, counselling, intermediary services and support as appropriate to adults whose lives have been affected by adoption or other permanent placements, including adopted adults and their birth relatives and those who grew up in the care of Coram and were placed in foster or residential care;
- To work in partnership with Local Authorities to improve permanence planning by reducing drift and delay within the care system.
- To promote best practice in permanence planning for children by undertaking research and disseminating information to the professional network in Local Authorities, the courts, mental health services etc;
- To establish innovative projects and disseminate best practice

2. Principles

The work of the Adoption and Permanent Families Service is informed by the principles of the National Minimum Standards for Adoption and for Foster Care:

- The needs, rights and welfare of children are our paramount concern.
- We welcome all prospective adopters and other carers and treat them with respect.

- We recognise the lifelong implications of adoption for all parties and offer comprehensive support services to adopters, carers, and adopted children and adults.
- We offer birth parents and relatives a support service where appropriate, including access to records and intermediary services where the placement was made by Coram. In interagency placements support to birth relatives of adopted children is the Local Authority's responsibility;
- Coram's Early Permanence Programme supports the parents of children in placement and works towards rehabilitation of the children if that is achievable within the children's timescales. An aspect of that work is the provision of supervised contact and coaching to help the parents develop their parenting skills.
- We work within an equal opportunities framework and value diversity. We recruit adopters and carers who we believe will be able to meet the needs to the children who need permanent placement through adoption, including those from a range of ethnic, religious backgrounds, those with disabilities and those of all sexual orientations. We balance the child's holistic needs and timescale in selecting a placement.
- The children we place are amongst the most vulnerable and marginalised children in society. We champion their right to family life and to enjoyment of health care, leisure facilities, education and therapeutic support.
- We welcome families who can prioritise children's needs, and who can make a commitment to the child on a permanent basis and persevere through difficult times.
- We believe that many different kinds of family structure (e.g. single parents, couples who are heterosexual or gay, married, in civil partnerships or unmarried) can provide the kind of nurture and parenting required by children who have suffered separation from their birth family and possibly adversity such as abuse, neglect or exposure to substances whilst in utero.
- We understand that birth parents and relatives of the children we place experience a profound loss, and that they may wish to make a contribution to their child's life, for example by providing photographs or a letter for the child to read in later life. We advocate a spirit of openness so that children grow up with knowledge and understanding of their birth family. Where it is in the children's interest, we support direct or indirect contact with birth relatives.
- We have a rigorous policy to safeguard children's welfare and implement Coram's Safeguarding Children Policy.

3. Services Provided

Coram's Adoption and Permanent Families Service operates two Branches and in addition has Service Level Agreements with the London Boroughs of Harrow and Redbridge, Thurrock Council and the City of London. In addition Coram and Cambridgeshire County Council have created a new VAA, Coram Cambridgeshire Adoption, to provide a comprehensive adoption service for children referred by Cambridgeshire CC and for local residents.

- Coram Adoption East Midlands*** - based in Shepshed, serving adopters within approximately one hour's travelling distance of the office base in North Leicestershire which is close to Junction 23 of the M1.
- Coram Capital Adoption*** – an adoption placement and support team serving adopters who live approximately 35 – 40 miles from London or those who live in our Partnership Local Authorities. The London team includes a sub-office in South London.

Both Branches:

- These branches recruit, prepare and approve adopters and foster for adoption carers and place children who are looked after within the public care system. They welcome enquirers from all sections of the community in keeping with Coram's inclusive ethos.
 - Both Branches provide a range of post adoption support services to families, children and adult adoptees where the agency was originally involved in making the placement. Access to information, intermediary services and counselling are offered to adopted adults and birth relatives seeking information about or contact with their adopted relative, if Coram was involved in making the original placement.
- c. *Early Permanence (Concurrent Planning and Foster for Adoption)*** - Coram offers a specialist service to children aged 0-2 years who are subject of care proceedings and where on the basis of the past history, it is likely that the children will need a permanent placement outside the birth family. Until a Placement Order is made, there is always a possibility that the child will return to the care of its parents/wider family. The overall aim is to prevent drift and delay in achieving permanence for these children and to reduce placement moves by placing them with carers who are dually approved as foster carers and as adopters (i.e. concurrent planning carers or foster for adoption carers).
- During care proceedings the dually approved carers are the children's foster carers. They bring the children for contact regularly and are involved in handovers to the child's parent/s before and after the contact session, helping to facilitate the child's attachment to his/her parent or relative.
 - If the outcome of the care proceedings is that the child should return to birth parents/relatives, Coram will facilitate this, supporting all the parties.
 - If the outcome of care proceedings is that the child cannot return to birth parents/relatives, s/he will then remain with the carers and be adopted by them. In this way the child's attachments are protected whatever the outcomes (a win/win situation for the child).
 - If adoption is the outcome, Coram provides adoption and post adoption support.
- d. *Adoption Support Services including support to placements by other agencies*** - Coram has developed parenting skills programmes for adopters and creative therapy for adopted children all of which are available in London, and the East Midlands. Coram offers support post order. This may include further life story work, assistance with contact, advocacy and referral to other agencies for specialist support.
- Coram East Midlands is an active member of the East Midlands Adoption Consortium and works in collaboration with nearby local authorities to assess the support needs of Coram families. Consequently we have been able to access a variety of therapeutic interventions for our families via the adoption support fund.
- DfE Strategic Grant Fund 2016-2018*** - Coram is developing a Regional Adoption Support Service based in our Shepshed office jointly with 'Faith in Families' based in Nottingham. A clinical lead for this service has been in post since March 2017, offering specialist consultations to adoptive parents referred by Coram, Faith in Families and Local Authorities across the East Midlands. The model ensures that families get the support they need earlier, in settings where they feel comfortable and supported, with full clinical assurance. Families receive a consultation which provides an assessment of the child's strengths, difficulties and needs, and is followed up with a range of therapeutic interventions funded by the ASF.
- e. *Support and Participation groups for children and young people*** - In the East Midlands groups and camps for children and young people are available to all children placed with

Coram families and potentially to other agencies on a spot purchase basis. They are activity based, but enable children and young people to identify with one another as adopted people with shared experiences and concerns. The young people's groups also engage in participation work with the aim of giving adopted young people a voice particularly in preparing prospective adopters and in educating professionals.

Coram Adoption East Midlands has taken part in the Adoptables programme, and continue to do so. This is a three year participation project funded by the Queen's Trust, which aims to give older adopted young people and young adopted adults a voice in the social and political arena. Over the past year the Adoptables have worked with Coram Life Education (which provides a full programme of PHSE education which is available to schools throughout England) to develop a module for use within schools to expand understanding of adoption and remove the stigma and bullying faced by many adopted children.

- f. National Centre for Early Permanence* - Coram has been designated the National Centre for Early Permanence and has established a subscription scheme to support local authorities and voluntary adoption agencies to develop concurrent planning programmes and foster/adoption placements. In 2016/17 over 120 babies and young children were placed in concurrent planning or foster for adoption placements by subscribing LAs and VAAs.

4. Conditions of registration

Coram is registered to provide domestic adoption services including adoption support services and birth records and intermediary services, (not inter-county adoption services), and as a fostering service.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation

i) Supervision

- All social workers/senior practitioners/managers receive regular reflective supervision. The frequency depends on the needs of the supervisee, but is generally not less than monthly. Coram has a supervision policy.
- All children's, adopters' and post adoption file entries are read and signed by the relevant manager.
- There is a protocol within the Adoption and Permanent Families Service for regular file audits by managers.
- London Managers and the Branch Manager East Midlands receive supervision from the Head of Service.
- The Head of Service receives supervision from the Managing Director of Adoption.
- All safeguarding issues or serious concerns about placements are discussed with the Managing Director by the relevant Manager, and are recorded by the social worker. Monitoring reports are submitted to the Managing Director and Coram's Safeguarding Lead.
- Complaints are likewise investigated in line with Coram's Complaints Policy. They are reported to the Managing Director and are included in the quarterly and annual monitoring reports to the Director of Operations and Children's Services Committee in order that any concerns are discussed and remedial action taken.
- There is a quarterly return of safeguarding referrals to the Children's Services Committee, plus quarterly and annual summaries to review themes and take any action necessary. These quarterly and annual reports include summaries of

complaints received during the year. These reports are presented to the Children's Services Committee.

ii) Adoption Panel

- The East Midlands Adoption Panel meets once per month with the occasional extra panel as needed. Should a fostering panel be required cases can be referred to the London Adoption & Fostering Panel.
- The East Midlands Adoption Panel has an Independent Chair.
- The Adoption Panel considers all applications from prospective adopters and makes recommendations on their applications.
- The Panel considers 'brief reports' on adoption and fostering applications during the assessment if problematic issues arise during stage 2 and the agency is considering ending the assessment.
- The Panel may consider reports on proposed or actual placements for the purpose of information and advice. It does not make recommendations on matches.
- The Panel considers reports on the progress on placements from time to time and gives advice.
- The Panel considers reports on disrupted placements and of any cases referred to the IRM and advises on lessons to be learned.
- The Panel performs a 'quality assurance' function, commenting on reports and the social workers' assessments. This may be in relation to a particular case, or via a six monthly report on the quality of the reports submitted to panel, and whether the statutory timescales have been met. This six monthly report is submitted to Coram's senior managers and trustees; an annual report is submitted each year.
- From time to time the Panel advises the agency on policy and practice.
- Panel training is offered regularly.
- Panel members reflect a wide range of backgrounds and personal and professional experience including social workers, educators and adoptive parents.

iii) User Feedback

- Evaluation forms are completed by prospective adopters/carers who have:
 - attended preparation and training groups, and
 - attended the adoption and fostering panels.
- Feedback forms are sent out after the adoption order is granted, and at this stage they are asked to comment on their whole experience with Coram. These forms are not mandatory, however the response rate has generally been good.
- The children who are placed with Coram adopters are the responsibility of their placing Local Authority and receive their support from their local authority workers. Coram therefore does not request feedback from them although we do receive informal feedback from time to time.
- Periodically Coram undertakes a user satisfaction survey of adopters or carers asking for information on the adoption support they have received over a period of years and their overall experiences (both positive and negative) of the adoption and early placement process, with an opportunity for them to provide suggestions regarding improvements. These suggestions are discussed further and if possible and appropriate implemented within the service.
- Coram is developing the participation of users across the organisation:
 - Adopters who received a service from Coram in past years are included as members of the central list of Panel members.

- Selected adopters have served as Governors and members of the Children's Services Committee.
- Parenting skills groups for adopters with young children 3-8 years have been made available in the East Midlands since Sept 2014. Parenting groups for adoptive parents of young people approaching adolescence began in January 2014 and will continue to be run as needed. This has been offered in partnership with Leicestershire CC and Leicester City Council. It is planned that this collaboration will continue. These groups have been funded by the Adoption Support Fund.
- Adopters have actively supported Coram's work by participating in our monthly drop in events and preparation groups to share their experiences with enquirers and those in the assessment process. We are sometimes able to involve an adopted young person in these events too.
- The Adoptables: Adopted young people in the East Midlands enjoy regular support groups provided for children and young people in four age bands. The groups for teenagers and young adults have developed material (art work and DVDs) for use in sharing their views with professionals and policy makers
- Compliments/complaints feedback – Coram welcomes feedback from service users on the service they receive, including complaints and compliments. Service users are provided with a leaflet about the complaints process.

iv) Financial and Business Management

- The Managing Director and Head of Service are responsible for providing:-
 - Monthly finance returns to monitor and ensure that the Service is within budget. This includes statistics of referral and placement trends in order to monitor the ongoing viability of the Service.
 - Monthly output data across the service covering all aspects of the work.
 - Quarterly reports are made to trustees summarising the trends arising from the outputs data; planning is then tailored to changing circumstances.
 - A six monthly analysis of the quality of reports presented to Panel is made to the senior managers and trustees.
 - Annual reports of the work of the Adoption and Fostering Panels are collated and presented to Senior Managers and Trustees.
- The Director of Operations makes a quarterly report to the Children's Services Committee regarding any particular issues affecting the Service. Relevant issues arising from this are then presented to the Trustees.
- The Branch Manager and Deputy Manager meet monthly to discuss issues impacting on the Branch including financial and strategic planning, policy, training needs, and learning from safeguarding reports, complaints and difficult cases.
- The Adoption and Permanent Families Management Team (Managing Director, Head of Service and Branch Manager, East Midlands) meet six times per annum to review strategic needs and plan in the light of management data, the national contact and Coram's own operational plans.
- The Senior Adoption Managers meet with Coram's Senior Management Team at least twice yearly to review the work of the service in the light of current trends and outcomes and to plan the future direction and set the annual budget. The Senior Management Team reviews the forward plans and budget before these are submitted to the Children's Services Committee and Trustees.

6. Procedures for recruiting, preparing, assessing, approving, supporting and ongoing training for adopters

All enquiries are dealt with promptly and helpfully – whether by telephone, letter or e-mail in line with timescales within the Two Stage Adopter Assessment Process. Enquiries are dealt with on the same day if at all possible. A detailed information pack is sent to enquirers who meet the eligibility enquiry which includes a copy of the Coram complaints procedure. Enquirers from outside our area are referred to First4Adoption. A general information pack is sent to those who do not meet the criteria but are interested in knowing more about adoption.

Coram's criteria are inclusive. There are no 'blanket bans' but we do seek adopters and permanent carers who have the capacity to provide a permanent home for children who have complex backgrounds.

Within 10 days enquirers who meet the eligibility criteria for prospective adopters and who wish to proceed with their interest in adopting through Coram in London are invited to an initial interview with a Social Worker. Some enquirers choose to attend an Information Meeting before attending for an initial interview. At the initial interview enquirers will be given information about the adoption assessment process, including timescales and the range of children likely to be placed. At the initial interview the enquirer will be offered the Registration of Interest Form (ROI). The enquirer will be told who to contact if they need any help in completing the form.

Once the enquirer returns the ROI the Branch Manager will let the enquirer know within 5 working days whether Coram is able to accept this. If the ROI is declined the enquirer will be informed of the reasons in writing.

If the ROI is accepted the prospective adopters will be sent information about Stage One of the assessment process including: Preparation and Training Information, the Stage One Agreement Form, information about Statutory Checks and the Stage One Pack. The prospective adopters will also be given the name of their allocated social worker for Stage One.

Preparation and Training

Prospective adopters are offered preparation and training and can choose to do all in Stage 1 or spread across Stages 1 and 2. The training is designed to help them assess their own capacity and motivation to adopt a child by providing information, stimulating discussion and also through meeting experienced adopters. Prospective Adopters are also encouraged to access the e-learning material on the First4Adoption website, and to take advantage of other resources such as books, DVDs etc. They are also asked to look for opportunities to extend their experience of children if this is needed.

Early Permanence

Prospective adopters who are applying to be concurrent planning or fostering to adopt carers will receive two additional full day training sessions. This training is designed to help people assess their own capacity and motivation to care for a child placed under foster for adoption regulations or as a concurrent planning placement. The training includes meeting with experienced early placement carers. Because of this element of self-selection, there is an opportunity for enquirers to decide whether or not to proceed. Applicants are expected to complete evaluations on each of the groups. Coram offers early permanence prep groups to other LAs and VAAs in the region.

None of the preparation is formally assessed as we believe people are better able to learn if they feel able to ask questions and contribute to discussions in an atmosphere of acceptance. However, if the group leaders have particular concerns, these will be shared with the individual after the groups, and then with the assessing social worker. The group leaders write a brief descriptive comment on the applicant's participation in the groups for inclusion in the Prospective Adopter's/Foster Carer's Report.

Statutory Checks

All statutory checks, including DBS checks and medicals are taken up as soon as the ROI is received. Applicants are aware that negative police/statutory checks may affect their application and in some cases may result in rejection. References are taken up with Local Authorities where the applicants have lived over the past 10 years. Applicants are advised to inform us of any adverse history or medical condition which any of these checks may reveal. If applicants work with children or vulnerable adults, employers are asked whether there are any concerns of a safeguarding nature. This includes voluntary work.

Most other checks including employer's checks, contacting adult children of the applicant/s and former partners with whom the applicant has jointly parented a child will be done in Stage 2.

Medical Advisor

Applicants will be asked to have their adoption medical as soon as their ROI is received. The Medical Advisor may follow up any concerns with the GP/hospital consultant. The Medical Advisor's opinion is taken into account in assessing the applicants' suitability to progress to Stage 2 alongside other information.

Stage 1

Every effort is made to complete the work of Stage 1 within two months, unless there are clear reasons why it needs to take longer, for example when a criminal record check is delayed, or if a prospective adopter wants more time.

The allocated social worker will meet with the prospective adopters on at least two occasions during Stage 1. This will initially be to complete the Stage 1 Agreement and to identify how the prospective adopters can best enhance their knowledge and understanding of adoption. The second meeting will normally be a home visit where the health and safety check will be completed and the progress to date discussed.

If a decision is made by the agency during Stage 1 that the prospective adopter is not suitable a written explanation of this decision will be provided and the adopters will be informed about the complaints process.

Stage 2

Stage 2 begins once the statutory checks are returned and the prospective adopters have confirmed that they wish to proceed. A Stage 2 application form is completed by the applicants, and an agreement is drawn up which details the work to be undertaken and the timetable for meetings etc. Visits to referees will be undertaken in Stage 2. The work in Stage 2 will be completed by one social worker. If there are particular concerns a second opinion interview will be arranged. All assessments are regularly discussed in supervision.

Applicants are given to understand that we see the whole assessment process as a shared responsibility between themselves and Coram and that we will raise any concerns with them.

During Stage 2 if issues arise which the assessing social worker and his/her manager believe might mean that an applicant would not be approved by Panel we may present a 'brief report' to Panel. Applicants may make representations in person or writing to Panel. If Panel recommends that the application should not be completed, and the Agency Decision Maker (ADM) is subsequently 'minded' to decide that the assessment should not be completed, the ADM will issue a 'qualifying determination', and inform the applicants of their options. The applicants are entitled to ask for their application to be reconsidered by the Coram Panel, or to go the Independent Review Mechanism (IRM). The recommendation of the subsequent Coram Panel or

of the IRM is then referred back to the ADM, who will consider all the information and reach a decision which will be final.

Stage 2 will usually take 4 months unless there are reasonable grounds to extend the assessment, or the prospective adopter requests an extension to the process. The proposed date for submitting the application to Panel will be set during the Stage 2 agreement meeting. If there are delays in completing the assessment the reason for this will be explained in the report for Panel. Applicants see their Prospective Adopters Report (PAR) and may contribute to it/correct it or attach their own written comments. They will usually have up to 5 working days for this work. Applicants may attend panel if they wish and address any issues personally. However Panel's recommendation is made on the basis of the social work assessment and the information in the PAR, not on the impression made by applicants at panel.

In the course of the assessment, the topics listed in the PAR are covered, and each applicant is offered at least one individual interview. At least one visit is paid to the applicant/s' home. Any children of the applicant/s will be involved in the assessment and their views obtained in an age appropriate manner.

Interviewing Members of Extended Family/Adult Children

If members of the extended family are expected to play a significant role in an adopted child's life (e.g. by providing day care for a working parent) they should be interviewed. Family members or friends who may regularly provide back-up care should be police checked.

Where possible adult children of the applicant(s), including those who live away from home, are interviewed. They can provide useful information on parenting skills and insight into the applicant's ability to keep children safe and to protect them from abuse. Involving them appropriately in the process can ensure greater understanding by them of their new sibling and that their parents may need support. Where an interview is not possible, adult children receive a letter seeking their comments on their parent's plans. The comments of adult children are taken seriously. They do not have an automatic veto but their views are considered and followed up. If we can obtain their permission their comments are shared with the applicants.

Former Partners

Where applicants have jointly parented a child with a former partner, that partner will generally be contacted to request their view on any concerns they may have about the applicant's ability to keep a child safe. If this is not possible/appropriate (e.g. because of possible violence from an ex-partner towards an applicant), the reason needs to be explained in the assessment report and the panel will need to take a view of all the circumstances. Former partners do not have a veto, and anything they say needs to be considered in context.

Referees

At least three personal referees need to be interviewed and to complete a written reference. One of these should be a family member who may be different from the family member referred to above. In the case of applicants who are couples, it is Coram's policy to interview a representative from each side of the family. Additional referees may be needed if there are issues about a particular stage in the applicant's life about which we need to obtain another view. A written summary of each interview is made. Interviews with referees are confidential and referees should be assured that Coram will treat them as such. Referees are asked whether they are happy for their reference to be shared with the applicant/s. Referees are also informed that when adoption applications are made to the courts, the court may reveal information which may include references. Referees are asked to sign the summary of the interview which goes to Panel. Referee questionnaires are sent out during Stage 1 and verification from referees that they do not have concerns about the applicants' approval is also obtained by a phone discussion. Face to face interviews with referees usually take place during Stage 2.

Panel

When the Panel has considered the application, Panel makes a recommendation whether or not the applicant/s should be approved as adopters/foster carers. The recommendation is considered by the Decision Maker, who makes the decision. If the applicant is dissatisfied with the outcome s/he may make representations via the Independent Review Mechanism. The procedure for applications that go to the IRM is described above.

Review of Adopters/Foster Carers

Two types of reviews are carried out:

- a) *Prospective adopters*: Where there is a significant change of circumstance, or if approved adopters have not had a child placed within a year since being approved (and similarly if they wait for a further period of a year without a placement) they will be reviewed by the relevant manager.
- b) *Foster carers* are reviewed every year. The first review of a foster carer is presented to the Panel.

If as a result of the review there is a recommendation for deregistration of either a foster carer or a prospective adopter, or to alter the terms of approval of the foster carer, the social worker will write a report for Panel, detailing

- (i) Linkings/Placements that have been considered and why no placement resulted.
- (ii) Significant changes in circumstances.
- (iii) Changes in the kind of child sought.
- (iv) The applicant's views and wishes
- (v) Information from updated statutory checks – DBS and other checks need to be updated every two years for prospective adopters, and every three years for foster carers.
- (vi) Recommendation as to whether to continue the approved status of the applicant/s or not.

As with the original approval, prospective adopters/foster carers have the right to see the report, comment on it and to attend Panel. The representations procedure or referral to the Independent Review Mechanism is available at this stage as at the initial approval stage.

Second Time Applicants

Second time applicants may be eligible for a fast track process. Their assessments will build on their experience and concentrate on issues that the previous placement has raised as well as considering the needs of their existing child/ren and their needs in relation to a new placement.

Supporting Placements

- a) Social work visits to foster/adoptive families should be appropriate to the needs of each placement. As a minimum, all foster/adoptive families should be visited within a week of the child being placed, thereafter weekly till the first review, two/three weekly to the second review, two/four weekly till third review. After this visits should be no less than six/eight weekly. Support visits may be shared between Coram and the placing Local Authority. Coram is not responsible for statutory visits to children – these are the responsibility of the placing Local Authority.
- b) Carers/adopters will have the office phone numbers of their Coram social worker, and their manager. Carers/adopters will also be given the out of hours phone number of the local authority who is the care authority for the child placed with

them. In addition they will be given a contact number for their social worker and/or his/her manager to use out of hours although there is no expectation that there would always be someone from Coram available out of hours.

- c) Coram provides various support services including:
- Study days/evening seminars/support meetings
 - Annual picnic/social events
 - Newsletter
 - Consultation and advice on behavioural problems/emotional difficulties
 - Consultation and advice on talking to children about their history (Life Story Book Work)
 - Adoption Support Gateway as described above
 - Liaison with and referral to specialist services such as Community Mental Health Services or local educational support
 - Support in arranging contact
 - Letterbox system
 - Books/DVD library
 - Parenting Skills training
 - Adolescent Parenting Skills training
 - Groups and one off events for parents and children and young people
 - Camps for children and young people
 - Access to creative therapies and equine assisted learning
 - Assistance to access the adoption support fund via the relevant Local Authority
 - Friends and Family Days to help prepare and inform those supporting prospective adopters

7. Summary of Complaints Procedure

Stage 1: Informal Complaints

In the first instance these should be referred to the relevant Branch Manager or Head of Service. Informal complaints will be dealt within 10 days, when the Complainant should also be informed of his/her right to make a formal complaint if s/he is not satisfied.

Stage 2: Formal Complaints

When a formal complaint is received, a member of Coram's Senior Management Team will be appointed to coordinate this. S/he will complete an investigation within 20 days and inform the Complainant of the outcome and of any action to be taken. Complainants should be told about their right of appeal.

Stage 3: Appeal Stage

This will be dealt with by the Chief Executive Officer, who will appoint a Coram trustee to undertake the investigation. The investigation will be completed within 35 days. The Complainant will receive a response as to the outcome of the investigation and what action is to be taken, together with information about Ofsted if s/he remains dissatisfied.

Complainants will be given any necessary help to register their complaint.

The relevant manager will report back to the Chief Executive within 10 days as to how the recommendations have been implemented.

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Annexure B: Qualifications of the Managers and Staff

i) Henriette Jeanne Kaniuk

Qualifications:

BA Hons English Literature, University of the Witwatersrand, 1966

BA (Hons) Social Work, University of the Witwatersrand 1971

Career:

1972-1980 Social Worker/Senior Practitioner Camden Social Services Dept

1980- Managing Director, Adoption Services, Coram

Registered as a social worker with the Health and Care Professions Council

ii) Alice Noon

Qualifications:

BA Hons, English Literature, University of Nottingham, 1981

CQSW and Diploma in Social Work 1990 Croydon College.

Certificate in Management Studies, Lewisham College, 1999.

Graduate Diploma in work with Children and Families, including Enabling the Professional Development of Others, Royal Holloway/University of London 2009.

Career:

1990 – 1992 – SW Bexley CAMHS Team

1992 – 1995 – SW, Bexley Adoption and Fostering Service.

1995 – 1999 – SW, Lewisham Adoption Service.

1999 – 2001 – Development Officer, BAAF

2000 – 2002 – Independent Social Worker, Adoption Support.

2001 – 2009 – Senior Practitioner then Acting Team Manager, Childlink Adoption Society

2009 – Present – Head of London Adoption Service

2016 – Present – Head of London Adoption Service, and East Midlands Adoption Service

iii) Hayley Howlett

Qualifications:

BA Hons English Literature, University of Leicester, 1988

MA/CQSW Social Work University of Leicester 1993
Certificate in Leadership, Management and Safeguarding at Nottingham Trent University.
Module 1 February 2016.
Registered as a social worker with the HCPC

Career:

1993-2004 Social Worker/Senior Practitioner Leicestershire County Council
2004-2011 Social Worker Adoption Team Leicester City Council
2011-2013 Senior Practitioner, Coram Adoption East Midlands
2014-2017 Deputy Adoption Manager, Coram Adoption East Midlands
2017 – present Branch Manager Coram Adoption East Midlands

iv) Julie Hall

Qualifications

BSc Hons Psychology University of Derby 1999
MA/ Dip Social Work University of Leicester 2003
Post Graduate Certificate/ Specialist Award in Safeguarding and Caring for Children and
Young People (BAAF/ Sheffield Hallam University) 2009
Registered as a Social Worker with HCPC

Career

2003 – 2017 Social Worker/ Senior Practitioner Coram Adoption East Midlands
2017 – present Deputy Manager, Coram Adoption East Midlands

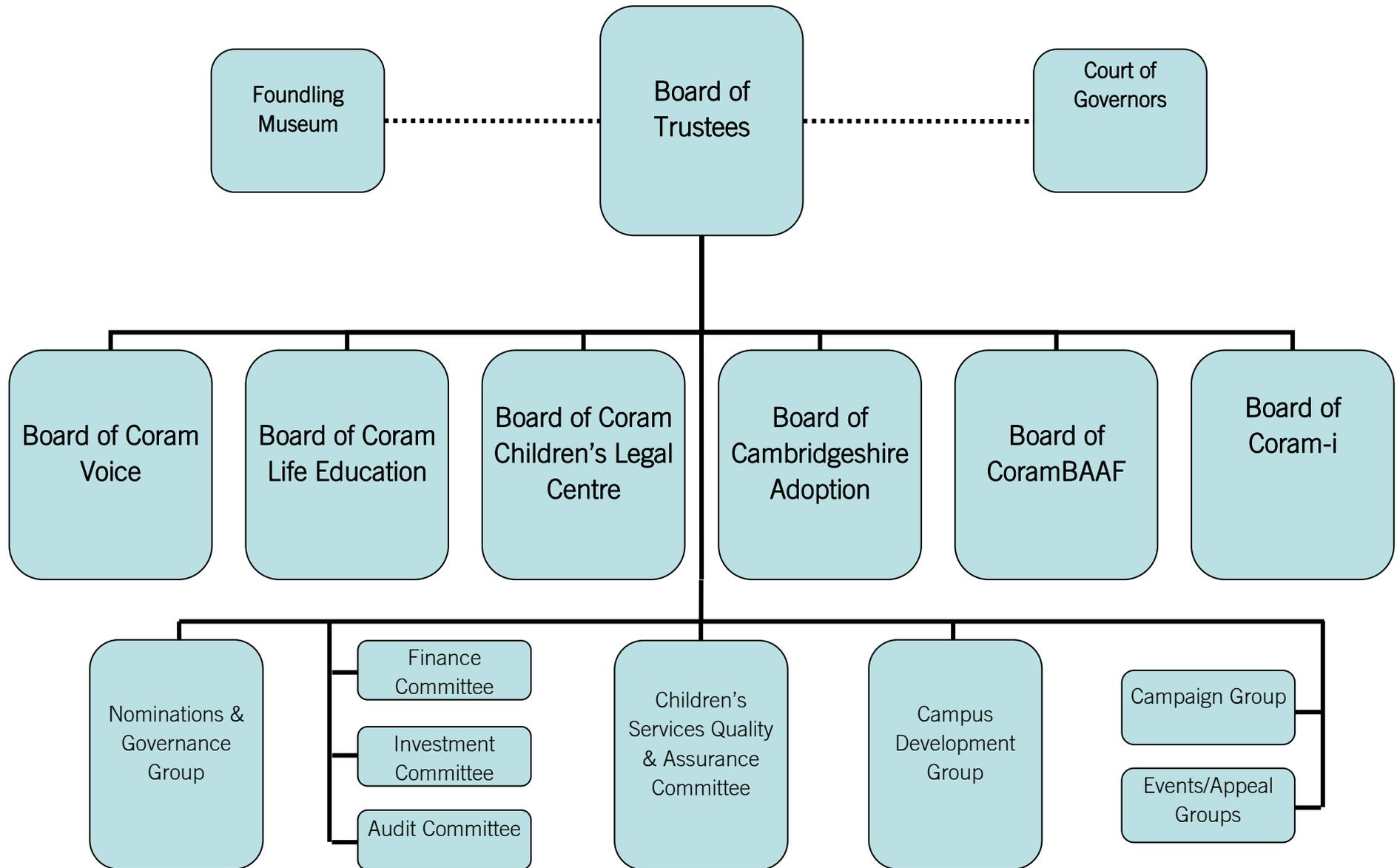
Qualifications and Experience of Staff

All the professional staff have CQSW's, DipSW or equivalent qualifications and all are registered with the Health Care Professionals' Council. Coram East Midlands has a Manager, a part time Deputy Manager, (there is currently a vacancy for a second half time Deputy Manager), 3 full time Senior Practitioners, 4 part time Senior Practitioners, 1 Research, Development & Participation Worker, and 1 Family Support Worker. Four workers have PQ1, two have PQ2, one PQ Specialist Award, one is a qualified practice assessor and one has a certificate in Training Practice. Four are Theraplay trained. Five are trained in running Webster Stratton based parenting skills groups for adopters. All have extensive experience of working with Adoptive Families.

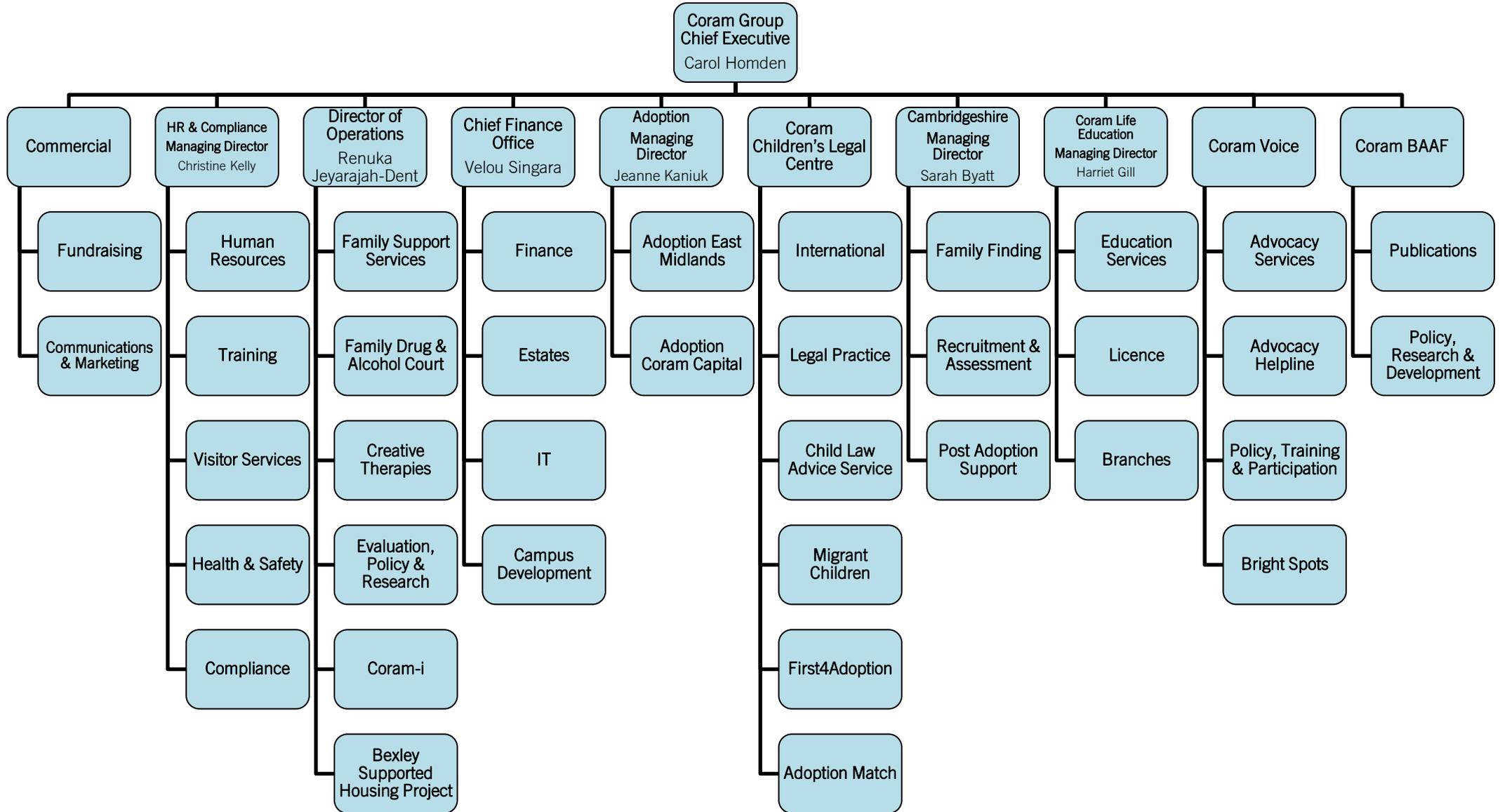
The Research and Development worker who is also responsible for the support and participation groups for children and young people graduated with a degree and PhD in Sociology and has undertaken volunteer management training.

The Family Support Worker has undertaken Webster Stratton Parenting Skills training and is also Level 1 trained in DDP and Theraplay. They have both undertaken STOP (parenting skills for teenagers) training.

Annexure C: Governance Chart - 2017



Annexure D: Organisational Chart - 2017



Annexure E: Coram Capital Adoption Management Structure - 2017

