

**CORAM CAMBRIDGESHIRE ADOPTION
STATEMENT OF PURPOSE 2017-18**



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Statement of Purpose

1 Introduction

This Statement of Purpose sets out the principles, values and aims and objectives of Coram Cambridgeshire Adoption (CCA). It contains information about the service, how it is monitored and operates to benefit children.

Coram Cambridgeshire Adoption, a Voluntary Adoption Agency was registered with Ofsted (SC476782) in March 2014. Our overarching aim is to provide secure and loving families for children in need of forever homes and to support children and families for as long as needed. We offer child-led and adopter-friendly services by an experienced and motivated professional team.

Coram Cambridgeshire Adoption Agency was established in collaboration with Cambridgeshire County Council, following several years of partnership between Coram and the Council to provide adoption services under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 and in accordance with the Local Authority Adoption Service (England) Regulations 2003, the Local Authority Adoption Service (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2005, the Adoption National Minimum Standards 2011, Statutory Adoption Guidance, Adoption and Children Act 2002, First Revision: revised Chapter 3 from July 2013, and further revision July 2014 following the Children and Families Act 2014, the Adoption Agencies (Panel and Consequential Amendments) Regulations 2012.

Coram Cambridgeshire Adoption staff complement comprises some Cambridgeshire County Council Adoption practitioners who were transferred to and staff transferred from a former branch of Coram Adoption based in Cambridge. **Annex C Organisational structure.**

A Framework Agreement, including a detailed service specification, is in place for the provision of specified services and delegated duties on behalf of Cambridgeshire's Adoption Agency. These services are specified below. Cambridgeshire County Council's Adoption Agency Statement of Purpose cites functions and services for which it remains responsible.

In January 2017, Coram Cambridgeshire Adoption registered with Ofsted as an Independent Fostering Agency called Coram Anglia Fostering (SC1247847) for the purposes of operating an Early Permanence Scheme. This has its own Statement of Purpose and is subject to a separate inspection by Ofsted (carried out October 2017). The fostering activity is integral to CCA's ambition to achieve early permanence for more children.

2 Aims and Objectives of Coram Cambridgeshire Adoption

We at Coram Cambridgeshire Adoption believe that children are best able to enjoy close and enduring relationships and 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 children who have suffered separations and adversity may require additional support at different times in childhood and beyond and see the importance of early decision making to enable continuity of care. Knowing about their birth family history and understanding of the reasons for the separation is important in developing a positive sense of identity and in forming new attachments. Our aim is to:

- Recruit, assess and approve a range of adoptive parents and concurrent carers in sufficient numbers to meet the assessed needs of children requiring permanent families, both those in the care of Cambridgeshire and nationally, including children with complex needs and sibling groups;
- Encourage applications from prospective adopters who are able to put children's needs first, including single people, couples who are heterosexual or gay, transgender, married, in civil partnerships or not married;
- Ensure assessments of prospective adopters are robust and of high quality to comply with the current legislation and be confident that approved adopters can provide the kind of lifelong nurture and parenting required by children who have suffered separation from their birth family and possible adversity such as abuse, neglect or exposure to substances;
- Place children in need of adoption with families where they will feel that they belong on a permanent basis and be encouraged to make secure attachments. This may be by adoption or with concurrent planning carers.
- Provide appropriate transition and post adoption support to children in their new families;
- Provide access to information, counselling, intermediary services and support in line with regulatory requirement to adults whose lives have been affected by adoption and who have been placed by this adoption agency and its predecessors or who live within Cambridgeshire including adopted adults and their birth relatives;
- Optimise delivery working in partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council to improve permanence planning reducing drift and delay, tracking a child's journey, ensuring speedy recruitment of sufficient adopters to meet the needs of the children requiring permanence;
- Actively monitor, evaluate and highlight best practice disseminating and reporting on outcomes to inform future developments and champion ideas and approaches that deliver for children
- To promote Early Permanence practice and work alongside sister agency, Coram Adoption and Permanent Families Service for benefit of children.

3 Principles

Our service is guided by the principles of the National Minimum Standards for Adoption and Foster Care:

- The needs, rights, safety and welfare of children are our paramount concern;
- We welcome all prospective adopters and carers and treat each with respect at all times, providing information and feedback in an honest and timely manner;
- We recognise the lifelong implications of adoption for all parties and offer sustained and effective support services to adopters, carers, and adopted children and adults;
- We treat birth families fairly, openly and with respect throughout the adoption process ensuring access to appropriate and timely support in line with good practice and statutory regulations;
- We offer birth parents and relatives support and counselling, including access to records and intermediary services.
- We work towards rehabilitation using concurrent planning if that is in children's best interests and achievable within the prescribed timescales including supervised contact and coaching to help the parents develop their parenting skills;
- We apply equal opportunities and value diversity welcoming adopters from all ethnic, religious, language, racial and social backgrounds;

- Children we place are amongst the most vulnerable and marginalised in society. We champion their right to family life and to enjoyment of health, leisure, education and therapeutic support to maximise emotional well being and enjoy and achieve to their full potential;
- We support families to prioritise children's needs, make a commitment, and persevere in difficult times and offer parenting training programmes;
- 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 children we place experience a profound loss, and may wish to contribute to their child's life, for example by providing photographs or a letter for the child to read in later life;
- We act in a spirit of openness so that children grow up with knowledge and understanding of their birth family. Where it is in a child's interest, we support direct or indirect contact with birth relatives; and
- Coram Cambridgeshire Adoption prioritises children's safety and welfare and implement Coram's Safeguarding Children Policy

4 Services Provided

4.1 Our business model is to provide a responsive service to support timely decision making and address children's needs. We aim to increase capacity by attracting new potential adopters, to prepare, assess, approve and support adopters, and to provide a loving home for children in the Cambridgeshire area and elsewhere. The Agency comprises the Recruitment, Assessment and Placement team, the Family Finding Unit and the Adoption Support Team. The service provides a holistic model of delivery that enhances the recruitment, assessment and training of adopters, the speedy and safe placement of children and appropriate follow-on support. CCA fully recognises the lifelong journey for children and adopters and undertakes to provide support throughout drawing on our wealth of experience within the wider Coram Group's work in adoption over the years.

4.2 We recruit, assess, prepare, train and approve adopters and place children who are looked after with loving families. Families may also be dually approved as foster carers and prospective adopters in line with concurrent planning and fostering for adoption practice. Since becoming registered as a Fostering Agency, prospective adopters can be dually-approved as foster carers also via Coram Cambridgeshire Adoption and Permanence Panel.

4.3 We are continuing to build on the developments in Concurrent Planning (CP) has proved successful for local children. Concurrent Planning is a specialist service to children aged 0-2 years who are subject of care proceedings and where in the view of the courts, on the basis of the past history, it is likely that the children will need a permanent placement outside the birth family. In all cases there is still a prospect of the birth parents or relatives being able to provide appropriate care within the child's timescales. The overall aim is to prevent drift and delay in achieving permanence for children and reduce placement moves by placing a child or siblings with carers who are dually approved as foster carers and as adopters. The service will benefit from the pioneering partnership between Coram Cambridgeshire Adoption and the County Council where concurrent planning is integrated and involves:

- During care proceedings the concurrent planning carers are the children's foster carers. They bring the children for contact and spend some time with the children's birth parents, 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, this will be facilitated supporting all the parties within the concurrent planning model;
- 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 (thus placing the child's needs at the heart of the service); and,
- If adoption is the outcome, Coram Cambridgeshire Adoption provides post adoption support to all parties.

4.4 CCA operates the Family Finding function for Cambridgeshire (as a Unit, to be consistent with the Council's model of service delivery), to ensure early permanence planning for children where this is a primary or parallel plan, identification of matching requirements for children and ensure a match with the most appropriate adoptive family in which they can thrive in order to meet their full potential. Provisional Family Finding starts prior to decision to place for adoption.

4.5 In keeping with a flexible and responsive service placement support strategies are tailored to identify needs and in accordance with best practice drawing on CCA's well developed programmes of support and guidance. Parenting skills groups for adopters are part of the support strategy to enable positive outcomes for children 3-8 years and upwards.

4.6 Adoption Support Services are integral to our delivery for adopted children, new adoptive families, and adults, recognising the life long journey for all parties. CCA are committed to supporting families in the early transition stages of a placement through to the making of an adoption order. Thereafter we recognise that new challenges may emerge requiring varying levels of tailored support. As it develops, the Adoption Support service may become a provider to other adoption services by agreement subject to fees and any other conditions necessary to ensure successful outcomes for children. All such services will be provided to the same high standard of professional care, as if they were being provided to direct placements of the service, and safeguarding children policy, equal opportunities, and complaints policy, all apply.

Since May 2015, Coram Cambridgeshire Adoption is able to access the **Adoption Support Fund** on behalf of Cambridgeshire children, a DfE initiative for therapeutic interventions with adoptive families. The Agency is both a provider and commissioner of such services via the fund.

5 Conditions of Registration

Domestic Adoption Services (i.e. not inter-country adoption).

6 Monitoring and Evaluation

A range of integrated systems are in place to monitor, track and evaluate services provided by Coram Cambridgeshire Adoption using Coram's Quality Assurance Framework and lines of accountability, together with CCA's Board of Trustees. There is a series of quarterly and annual performance monitoring and reporting requirements for Cambridgeshire County Council.

6.1 Supervision

- All social workers/senior practitioners/ managers will receive regular supervision. The frequency will depend on the needs of the supervisee, and will be offered not less than 4 weekly. Coram Cambridgeshire Adoption's supervision policy will be applied, alongside consultation and clinical oversight of work by experienced and suitably qualified professionals where appropriate;
- Individual Continuing Professional Development Plans will be in place for each staff member, with access to development opportunities and training to ensure a competent, skilled and talented workforce in tune with the needs of the service and flexible and responsive delivery;
- Staff performance will be managed including interim and annual performance reviews;
- All file record entries will be read and signed by the relevant manager for every area of the service;
- There will be an internal file audit as part of overarching quality assurance reporting to the Managing Director, Trustees and relevant partner stakeholders;
- Practice issues and assessment decisions will be discussed in group supervision as well as in individual supervision, and second opinion visits to adoptive applicants will be undertaken as appropriate, creating a wrap around shared learning for best practice to be achieved and sustained;
- There is a whistle blowing policy for the agency which all staff will have knowledge of and access to and be listened to; and,
- In addition to line management accountability through supervision, staff will have access to suitably qualified and experienced clinical experts on child development, welfare and the emotional well being supporting their professional development and in-depth specialism for confident practice.

6.2 Safeguarding

- All safeguarding issues or serious concerns about placements are discussed with the Head of Service/Managing Director and recorded by the social worker. Safeguarding reports and serious incident records are dealt with in accordance with the Safeguarding Policy as signed off by Cambridgeshire County Council and submitted to and responded to by the Coram Group Safeguarding Lead and actions and findings reflected in quality monitoring;
- There will be a quarterly return of safeguarding referrals to the Safeguarding lead and quarterly and annual summaries to review learning themes and take any action necessary for service improvement. Safeguarding Reports are also presented to the CCA Trustee Board and Children's Services Committee of Coram;
- Learning from safeguarding reports and analysis of practice will be shared with our partners to instil robust practices and keep children safe at all times ensuring their welfare is paramount;
- Where children are placed for adoption or with dually-approved carers, any safeguarding concern, incident or accident, serious illness, a child who is missing, death or serious injury of children or complaints, or incidents likely to impact on a child's welfare are recorded, regulatory bodies notified and appropriately investigated in accordance with statutory and safeguarding guidance and outcomes analysed;
- All staff, panel members, trustees and others involved in the service to children and vulnerable adults will have an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service clearance and references will be obtained and verified; and,

- Social Work Staff will hold current registration with the Health and Care Professions Council and are expected to adhere to the standards of proficiency and the code of ethics also integral to the professional standards of the agency.

6.3 Adoption and Permanence Panel

- The Adoption and Permanence Panel will consider all applications from prospective adopters and prospective concurrent carers and make recommendations to the Agency Decision Maker on their applications;
- The Panel will also consider recommendations on matches between Cambridgeshire children and an approved adopter(s), as part of the delegated functions from Cambridgeshire LA
- The Panel will consider reports on the progress of placements from time to time and give advice;
- The Panel will consider 'brief reports' on adoption or concurrent applications during the assessment if issues arise regarding suitability (e.g. re health or DBS checks);
- The Panel will consider reports of disrupted placements and of any cases referred to the IRM and lessons to be learned to inform future practice; and,
- The Panel performs a 'quality assurance' function, making six monthly reports available to senior managers and trustees, including the quality of assessment, matching and adherence to statutory timescales.

6.4 Service Feedback

Service user feedback is proactively sought and listened to so that our services continue to improve, including:

- Evaluation forms are completed by prospective adopters/ carers who attend preparation and training groups. Similarly feedback will be sought regarding their experience at panel;
- Feedback forms are sent out after the adoption order is granted, and at this stage service users are asked to comment on their experience of the service;
- Undertaking periodic user satisfaction surveys of adopters over a period of years asking for information on the quality of adoption support received and their overall experiences (both positive and negative) of the adoption and concurrent planning process, with an opportunity to make suggestions and improvements;
- Children and Young people are engaged with and openly encouraged to comment on the service, appropriate to their age and understanding, their views informing future delivery and incorporated into training of carers;
- We seek feedback and issue leaflets at all stages of delivery listening to complaints and compliments and ensuring our services continually improve.

6.5 Financial and Business Management

The Chief Finance Officer (Coram Group) oversees the financial and business management of Coram Cambridgeshire Adoption ensuring financial accountability reporting to the Chief Executive and Board of Trustees.

Practices include:

- Monthly finance returns to monitor and ensure the service is within budget including statistics of referral and placement trends;
- Monthly output data across the service covering all aspects of the service;
- Quarterly reports to trustees summarising the trends arising from the outputs data; planning is then tailored to changing circumstances;
- Bi-annual quality analysis of reports presented to Panel is made to the senior managers
- Annual reports of the work of the Adoption Panels will be collated and presented to Senior Managers and Trustees; and the,
- Monitoring and reporting of grant compliance with Department for Education and to Coram Cambridgeshire Adoption and attending milestones.

7 Procedures for Recruiting, Preparing, Assessing, Approving, Supporting and Training for Adopters

7.1 Enquiries

All enquiries will be handled helpfully and promptly– whether by telephone, letter or e-mail in line with timescales of the Two Stage Adopter Assessment Process which was introduced in July 2013 in statutory guidance. Enquiries are responded to on the same day if possible. A detailed information pack can be downloaded from the website www.coramcambridgeshireadoption.org.uk or is sent to enquirers which includes a copy of CCA's complaints procedure. Enquirers who live outside the area within which the team cannot provide a service will be informed of and referred to First4Adoption (www.first4adoption.org.uk), the national Adoption Gateway, to ensure their motivation as a prospective adopter is not lost.

CCA implements inclusive criteria whilst seeking adopters who have the capacity to provide a permanent home for children including those with who have complex needs.

Within 10 days enquirers who meet the eligibility criteria for prospective adopters, and who wish to proceed with their interest in adopting through us, are invited to an Information Meeting with a Social Worker. Some enquirers may be offered an initial interview if this is preferable.

At the initial interview enquirers will be given information about the adoption assessment process, including timescales and the range of children likely to be available for placement. At the initial interview the enquirer will be offered the Registration of Interest Form (ROI) with an information pack including information on statutory checks. A copy of the initial interview record is sent to the enquirer. The enquirer will be given a named contact for support in completing the form. The enquirer may be offered a follow-up interview with a manager to clarify any issues requiring discussion.

Once the enquirer returns the ROI form the manager will let each enquirer know within 5 working days whether CCA are 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 given 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.

7.2 Preparation and Training

Prospective adopters are offered preparation and training in Stages 1 and 2. The training is designed to help prospective adopters to assess their own capacity and motivation to adopt a child by providing information, stimulating discussion and meeting experienced adopters. Training and preparation is offered in a number of formats including an individualised programme offered by Social Workers in the team, and also the opportunity to attend group preparation training.

Prospective adopters who are applying to be concurrent planning carers will receive two additional full day training sessions on concurrent planning. This training is designed to help people understand the fostering commitment of concurrent planning including contact, work with parents and the role of the local authority. The training includes meeting with experienced concurrent carers, reflecting on their own capacity and motivation to adopt a child or to care for a child placed with concurrent planning carers including meeting with experienced concurrent carers. Because of this element of self-selection, there is an opportunity for applicants to decide whether or not to proceed with their interest in being concurrency carers.

None of the preparation training is formally assessed. However if specific concerns arise these will be shared with the individual after the groups, and with the linked 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 Report, submitted to Panel.

7.3 Statutory Checks

All statutory checks, including DBS checks and medicals are taken up as soon as the ROI is accepted. 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.

Other checks include employer's checks, contacting adult children of the applicant/s and former partners with whom the applicant has jointly parented a child will usually be done in Stage 2, unless the particular circumstances suggest it would be useful in Stage 1, in which case applicants will be advised.

7.4 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.

7.5 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 needs more time, to complete voluntary experience for example.

Stage 1 of the process is 'adopter led' therefore social workers will meet with prospective adopters to complete a Stage 1 agreement based on their individual circumstances and learning needs. They will be given a named social worker who they can contact for support during this stage of the process. CCA endeavours to support prospective adopters in Stage 1 to broaden their knowledge of adoption and children's needs and how they can build on this knowledge and experience.

If a decision is made by the agency during or at the end of Stage 1 that the prospective adopter is not suitable to progress to Stage 2 assessment, a written explanation of this decision will be sent. Information on the Complaints Procedure will also be given.

7.6 Stage 2

At the end of Stage 1, once statutory checks have been satisfactorily received, the prospective adopters will meet with social workers and a manager to discuss whether the agency will accept a formal application from them. This will be based on their potential suitability to adopt and the likelihood of their being able to meet the needs of the children whom the agency seeks to place for adoption. If the agency agrees that the prospective adopters can proceed, a Stage 2 assessing social worker is allocated and a Stage 2 agreement set up. This includes details of interviews and the expected date of Panel. 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. The timescale for Stage 2 can be extended at the request of the applicant.

It is explained to applicants that the whole assessment process is a shared responsibility between themselves and Coram Cambridgeshire Adoption.

During Stage 2 if issues arise which the assessing social worker or manager believe might mean an applicant may not be approved by Panel we may present a 'brief report' to Panel, setting out the concerns and their reasoning. 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 adoption panel, or to go the Independent Review Mechanism (IRM). The recommendation of the subsequent adoption 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.

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 five working days to complete this and may attend panel if they wish and address any issues personally.

In the course of the assessment, the topics listed in the PAR are covered, and if a couple, each applicant is expected to undergo at least one individual interview. Any children of the applicant/s will be involved in the assessment and their views obtained in an age appropriate manner.

7.7 Interviewing Members of Extended Family/Adult Children

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

Where possible adult children of the applicant(s), including those who live away from home, are interviewed. 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.

Where there are previous significant relationships or where applicants have jointly parented a child with a former partner, that partner will generally be contacted to request their view or concerns they may have about the applicant's ability to keep a child safe. If this is not possible/ appropriate, an attempt to seek corroborative evidence will be made and the reason will be explained in the assessment report and the Panel will take a view of all the circumstances.

7.8 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 our 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 we will treat them as such. Referees are asked to sign the summary of the interview which goes to Panel.

7.9 Second Time Applicants

Second time applicants may be eligible for a fast track process, depending on the time elapsed since their previous adoption. 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.

7.10 Adoption and Permanence 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 Agency 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.

8 Family Finding and Matching Children with Adopters

8.1 Our links with Cambridgeshire's Adoption Service requires CCA to prioritise matching adopters/carers to children looked after by Cambridgeshire County Council within the scope of our agreements. Finding more adoptive placements for local children is part of holistic delivery expected of Coram Cambridgeshire Adoption offering an integrated approach

8.2 Matches of children with prospective adopters are made on the basis of a child's holistic needs, including age, siblings, complex needs as well as ethnicity race and religion. A

placement will not be delayed in order to find an exact ethnic/religious match if a family is available who can meet the child's other needs. However, transracial adopters will need to demonstrate how they can promote a child's positive sense of identity.

8.3 CCA's work with the placing local authority to assess the needs of individual children within a sibling group to determine whether they are placed together or separately, and if to be separated how each child's needs will be met in terms of attachments within the sibling group/ings.

8.4 Any plans for post adoption order contact, direct or indirect, with the children's birth parents, siblings or relatives will be made after an assessment of the child's needs and welfare. The prospective adopter will be consulted about any proposed contact plan.

8.5 As part of its delegated responsibilities from Cambridgeshire, CCA operates the Birth Relative Counselling Service, with an independently supervised trained counsellor and the letter box service.

9 Review of Approved Adopters/Carers

9.1 CCA aims to match approved adopters and children at the earliest opportunity working proactively with adopters to enable safe and timely placements to be made. The clear focus is on placing children in loving homes but there may be occasions where there is an interval between an adopter being approved and a child being placed. In the first instance children who are looked after by Cambridgeshire will be considered for placement but if no suitable match is available for the child, placements from other local authorities will be actively considered in line with the national priority for children not to be left waiting when they could be matched with a suitable adopter albeit from another geographical area.

9.2 In line with the above any approved adopter waiting for more than three months where there is no active consideration being given to a local child the adopters are referred also to Adoption Match (previously National Adoption Register) and are encouraged to joint Linkmaker.

9.3 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) a review of their circumstances will take place by the relevant manager. If as a result of the review there is a recommendation to terminate the approval of an adopter, the social worker will write a report for Panel, detailing:

- Placements that have been considered and why no placement resulted;
- Significant changes in circumstances;
- Changes in the kind of child sought;
- The applicant's views and wishes;
- Information from updated statutory checks – DBS updates; and
- Making a recommendation as to whether to continue the approved status of the adopter(s) or not.

As with the original approval, adopters have the right to view 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.

10 Supporting Placements

10.1 Social work visits to concurrent/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.

10.2 Carers/adopters will have the office phone numbers of their social worker and line manager. Carers/adopters will also be given the emergency duty team phone number of the local authority who is the care authority for the child placed.

10.3 We will provide tailored access to support depending on needs. Adoption Support Services available to adopters include:

- Study days/evening seminars
- Annual activity/social or play events
- Newsletter
- Consultation and advice on behavioural problems/emotional difficulties
- Consultation and advice on talking to children about their history (Life Storybook Work)
- Liaison with and referral to specialist services such as Community Mental Health Services or local educational support.
- Support in arranging contact
- Books/dvd library
- Parenting Skills training
- Adolescent Parenting Skills training.
- Children's Groups
- Support Groups for parents

10.4 A support plan for individual children will be drawn up by the placing local authority and us with funding from the local authority for the child.

10.5 Families are entitled to support through the Adoption Support Fund which can be accessed by an assessment by the CCA Adoption Support team.

11 Adoption Support Service

The Adoption Support team has developed a full and comprehensive service to support adoptive families and birth family members, including a dedicated clinical service via Cambridgeshire.

- The team assesses the needs of any adoptive family living in Cambridgeshire for adoption support, including financial or education support. Adoption Support can be requested by contacting the CCA free phone number.
- The adoption support service works closely with their specialist adoption clinicians to support children and adoptive families in addressing difficulties experienced by adoptive and in accessing to counselling and therapeutic services.

Short-term and long-term specialist intervention is offered such as life-story work, contact mediation, family therapy, attachment and therapeutic support including therapeutic parenting work, Theraplay and creative therapies such as music, play and art therapy.

The adoption service runs specialist training and support groups for adoptive families and children including Foundations for Attachment parenting programmes, adoption support groups, stay and play groups and support groups for adopted children. These are activity based as well as providing opportunities for regular contact with others who may share similar experiences. Adoption support groups are organised regularly throughout the year.

The adoption support team has a specialist birth relative outreach worker providing the opportunity for support and counselling independent of the local authority.

The Adoption Support Services Adviser (ASSA) is Rob Geen. He can be contacted via the Freephone number and an Adoption Support Information leaflets and resource booklet is available which gives details of all adoption support via the CCA website.

Assistance with letterbox contact is provided when appropriate. This may include help with writing letters, and conveying and monitoring the letters that come through the post-box service. Assistance and advice is also available for birth relatives or adoptive parents in relation to direct contact arrangements for the child.

Services to adopted adults and their birth relatives include: counselling in preparation for search and reunion. Intermediary services between birth relatives and adopted people aged 18 and above, Birth record counselling and intermediary services for adopted persons seeking birth relative and birth relatives seeking adopted persons and referral to specialist local resources.

The Adoption Support service will provide information for children and young people who have been affected by adoption in different ways and specific advice, help or support is available for children and young people who: Have been adopted or had brother(s) or sister(s) adopted, or whose parents, may be considering placing a new baby for adoption or have already or are considering adopting a child. The adoption support team have a group for adopted children of different ages. These will be activity based as well as providing opportunities for regular contact with others who may have similar experiences.

12 Summary of Complaints Procedure

12.1 Stage 1: Informal Complaints

These should be referred to complaints@coramcambridgeshireadoption.org.uk and goes to Managing Director/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.

12.2 Stage 2: Formal Complaints

When a formal complaint is received, a member of the Senior Management Team will be appointed to coordinate this. An investigation will be completed within 18 days and the Complainant informed of the outcome and of any action to be taken. Complainants should be told about their right of appeal.

12.3 Stage 3: Appeal Stage

This will be dealt with by the Chief Executive Officer for Coram Group, who will appoint an Agency 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 member of staff concerned will report back to the Chief Executive within 10 days as to how the recommendations have been implemented.

Note: Complaints may be made by someone acting on behalf of a child, or by any user of the Service.

The Complaints Procedure is included in procedural guidance for staff and will be given to all prospective adopters and carers and other users. It includes the address of the Ofsted office responsible for inspecting the service.

12.4 Details of the Registration Authority

The Registration Authority is Ofsted whose address is:

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD
Telephone No. 0300 123 1231
Fax: 0300 123 3159
E mail: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
Web: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex A Registered Provider

Coram Cambridgeshire Adoption
Lincoln House 2nd Floor,
The Paddocks
Cherry Hinton Road
Cambridge CB1 8DH
Tel: 01223 275 300 / 0300 123 1093
Website: www.coramcambridgeshireadoption.org.uk

The Registered Company is Coram Cambridgeshire Adoption Limited. The service is led by Coram, a children's charity established by Royal Charter and Act of Parliament in 1736. It is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Coram Group with its own Board of Trustees. Coram Cambridgeshire Adoption is on the Register of Charities from 07.01.2015, no: **1,159,830**. This is reflected in the Board's Articles of Association.

Responsible Individual **Sarah Byatt** **Managing Director**

Qualifications:

1987 CQSW Suffolk College of Higher Education
2004 Certificate in Management Studies Open University
2011 Masters in Business Administration University of Loughborough

Experience:

1987-2000 Social Worker Fostering and Adoption Nottinghamshire County Council
2000-2009 Founder, Director, Registered Manager Fostering People Limited,
Independent Fostering Agency, East Midlands
2010-2011 Regional Manager, Pathway Care
2012 Operational Director Compass Fostering
2013-2014 Regional Manager interim Five Rivers Fostering
March 2014 Managing Director Coram Cambridgeshire Adoption

Registered with HCPC

Registered Manager (application submitted to Ofsted Jan 2015)

Jane Singh **Head of Recruitment, Assessment and Placement**

Qualifications:

1980 CQSW University of Glasgow
2000 Advance Award in Social Work/ Diploma in Supervision and Mentorship, University of Leicester

Experience:

1980- 1983 Social Worker, Dunbartonshire County Council
1984- 1986 Sessional Social Worker, St Francis Children's Society
1987- 1988 Social Worker, Oxford Diocesan Council for Social Work
1989- 2010 Social Work Manager, St Francis Children's Society
2010- 2014 Adoption Manager, Central Bedfordshire Council
January 2015 Head of Adoption Recruitment, Assessment and Placement, Coram

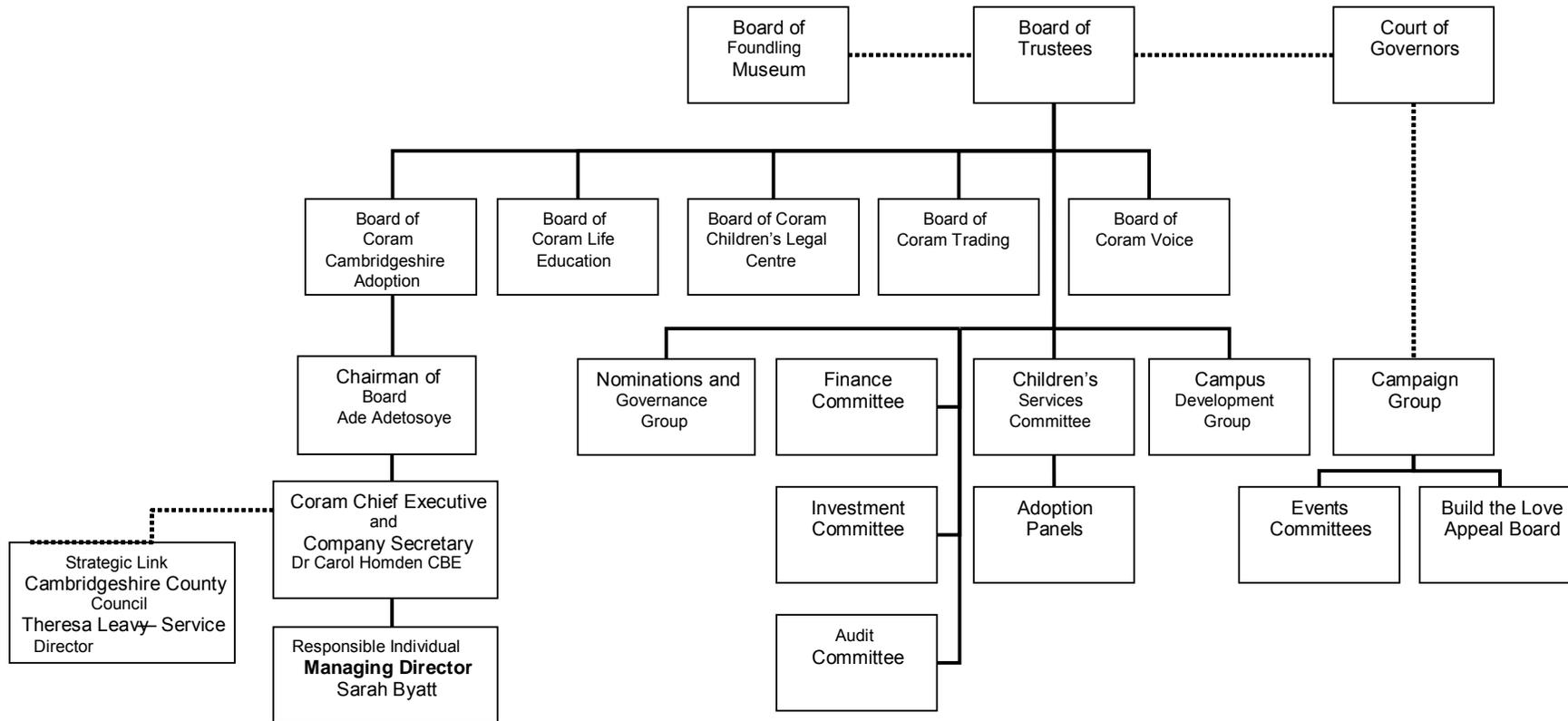
Cambridgeshire Adoption

Registered with HCPC

Qualifications and Experience of Staff

All professional staff have CQSWs, DipSW or equivalent qualifications and all are registered with Health Care and Professional Council (HCPC).

Annex B Structure Governance Coram Group



Annex C Structure Chart – Coram Cambridgeshire Adoption

