

# Adopters' Charter



**Children come first:**

- Adoption is first and foremost a service for children who cannot live with their birth family. Children should be helped to understand what adoption means and supported throughout the adoption journey and beyond.
- Adoption is a life-changing decision that affects the child, and his or her birth and adoptive families. It must be made with the child's best interests, wishes, feelings and needs at its heart and on the basis of sound evidence and high quality assessments

**Diagrama will:**

- Ensure that children are placed, with siblings wherever possible, within a timescale that is best for them and without unnecessary delay. Diagrama will recruit adoptive parents who can take sibling groups. Diagrama will advise and support adoptive parents regarding the possible placement of subsequent siblings.
- Ensure that adopters are treated with openness, fairness and respect. Diagrama will ensure at each stage of recruitment that feedback from adopters will be requested and practice will be amended where necessary.
- Ensure that the first contact with the Agency is informative and welcoming. All Diagrama staff will be recruited and trained to demonstrate to ensure a high level of informative and efficient responses. Duty calls will be responded to throughout the working day.
- Discuss adoption with anyone who feels they have something to offer the children who wait. The Agency's recruitment policy is one of inclusiveness and no-one will be automatically excluded.
- Recruit adopters who can meet all or most of the needs of children who wait. If for any reason Diagrama feels unable to accept an application from prospective adopters, Diagrama will explain its reasons honestly and, if appropriate, direct you to another Adoption Agency in your area.
- Explain to prospective adopters the needs and profiles of the children waiting to be adopted. Diagrama will continuously monitor the number and profiles of children waiting for an adoption placement. Prospective adoptive parents will be



advised regularly about the profiles of children waiting and offered advice accordingly. Adopters will be supported to join databases such as the National Adoption Register and Adoption Link at the earliest opportunity.

- Provide preparation and training for prospective adopters and ensure that the adoption assessment and the approval process are explained in detail and proceed efficiently. Diagrama will monitor assessment time scales and performance manage all aspects of the assessment.
- Provide a regular review process throughout the assessment.
- Ensure that progress on matching is reviewed regularly with prospective Adopters and information about the Adoption Register, Adoption Link, South London Adoption Consortium (SLAC), and the South Coast Adoption Consortium is readily available.
- Provide adopters and prospective adopters with information, counselling and support, as and when needed, throughout the adoption journey and beyond. Diagrama has its own dedicated Family Support Team to offer training, counselling, a range of therapies and advocacy.
- Diagrama will run family events such as summer picnics and Christmas parties to facilitate the opportunity for contact and socialising between adoptive families.
- Work in partnership with other Agencies and the Courts to ensure that all decisions are timely and “joined up”.
- Provide prospective adopters with information about the Independent Review Mechanism.

**Adoptive Parents must:**

- Be aware that adoption often brings challenges as well as joy, be realistic about the needs of children awaiting adoption, and accept that with support they may be able to consider adopting a child with a different profile to the child they originally envisaged adopting.
- Make the most of opportunities to develop their parenting skills, and seek support when needed at the earliest stage.
- Do all they can to enable their adopted child to feel loved and secure, and to reach their potential.

**A partnership:**

- Diagrama will seek children and young people’s views as appropriate on issues ranging from support, advocacy to policy development.



- Diagrama will provide children adopted through Diagrama with lifelong support.
- Diagrama will as appropriate provide opportunities for adopted children to meet other adopted children in a safe environment.
- Diagrama will seek the views of adoptive parents at all stages of the adoption process.
- Diagrama will seek the views of adoptive parents on all aspects on the running of the agency including staff recruitment, policies and procedures.

**Responsible individual:**

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