



Diagrama  
Adoption

## **Statement of purpose**



Diagrama Adoption (Ofsted number SC484605) is part of the Diagrama Foundation, a charity registered in the UK since 2009 which supports vulnerable children and adults through a range of services. Our registered charity number is 1128532. Our head office is based at Suite 20, Kent Space, 6-8 Revenge Road, Lordswood, Kent ME5 8UD.

**[diagramafoundation.org.uk](http://diagramafoundation.org.uk)**

# Contents

5	Introduction
6	Our aims
7	Our values
8	Our objectives
10	Organisational structure
11	Management and qualifications
14	Status and constitution
16	Our services
19	Stage one
20	Stage two
21	Adoption panel
22	Family finding
23	Post adoption support
24	Early permanence
25	Monitoring quality
26	Complaints and outcomes
27	Contacts



# Introduction

## We recognise the life-long nature of adoption

This document sets out the Statement of Purpose of Diagrama Foundation's Adoption Service, required by the Voluntary Adoption Agencies and the Adoption Agencies (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations SI 2003/367 and the Voluntary Adoption Agencies (Amendment) Regulations SI 2005/ 3341.

It sets out our vision and objectives, and describes the services we provide.

The Adoption Service is part of a range of services provided by Diagrama which seeks to promote the upbringing of children in accordance with, and within the spirit and provision of, the Children Act 2004.

The service undertakes to find permanent families in which a child is given the opportunity of a secure and stable environment, taking into account the child's specific needs and circumstances.

This Statement of Purpose is updated annually and reviewed by Diagrama's senior management and Board of Trustees.

It is available to:

- Adoptive parents
- Prospective adoptive parents
- Adopted children and young people
- Birth families
- Other interested parties, e.g. volunteers
- Local authorities and health and foundation and social care trusts
- General public

It is also available via our website at **[diagramaadoption.org.uk/about](http://diagramaadoption.org.uk/about)**

The Statement of Purpose can be made available, upon request, in a range of other formats.

Arrangements will also be made for those who are unable to understand the document to have it read, translated or explained to them.

# Our aims



The overarching aim of Diagrama Adoption is to provide a range of secure, sustainable and outstanding adoptive placements that meet the needs of vulnerable children in care who are likely to have suffered significant harm or may have additional and specific needs that make finding adoptive families a particular challenge.

Diagrama Adoption commits to providing post adoption support for all those impacted by our service, as well as working in partnership with other individuals/organisations in rolling out this provision to external individuals/organisations.

We recognise the life-long nature of adoption for adopted children, adult adoptees, adoptive parents and birth family members and the need to provide adoption support services to achieve positive long-term outcomes for children placed and their adoptive families.

Diagrama Adoption is also committed to continuous improvement, adding to the national debate about achieving adoption and permanence for children and maximising its achievements in the areas that make the most difference to children, young people and families.

# Our values



Promoting the wellbeing of vulnerable children and keeping them safe is at the centre of all our work.

We believe in the value and uniqueness of human life and seek to excel in our practice through listening to children, adoptive parents and adopted adults by actively seeking feedback throughout the adoption process to further develop our services.

As an agency we seek to employ experienced, skilled and knowledgeable social workers who undertake in depth adoption assessments that ensure adoptive parents are well prepared for the challenge of parenting and that children will be kept safe with their new families.

The Adoption Service will:

- Consider the child's age, gender, ethnicity, religion, culture, sexuality, language, disability and any other relevant characteristics when recruiting, training, approving and matching adopters.
- Respect and protect the right to privacy of adopters, adopted children and their birth families, including their wishes and feelings, their personal data and their right to pursue their own lives and develop successfully.
- Ensure that whenever children and families come into contact with our service they interact with experienced, skilled members of staff and panel members who are capable of understanding their needs and making the right decisions on the child's behalf.
- Provide a high quality service, monitored against a range of performance indicators and quality assurance standards to ensure consistent and sustained improvement.

# Our objectives



- To recruit, prepare, train and assess adoptive parents from a wide range of social, ethnic and cultural backgrounds, who demonstrate the skills and abilities necessary to meet the needs of children requiring adoption.
- To implement a recruitment strategy which seeks to positively attract potential prospective adoptive parents with the key skills, experiences and abilities necessary to provide permanency for children, irrespective of age, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, faith, disability, and/or socioeconomic background. More information about our recruitment procedures is on page 16.
- To recruit and train adoptive parents in a timely manner in line with the statutory guidance to ensure we are better able to meet the needs of looked after children. All expressions of interest in adoption are greatly valued and every enquirer will be treated with respect.
- To train, develop and support staff to maintain high standards of practice and support to our approved adoptive parents.
- To provide a positive experience of family life and a rich, enjoyable childhood to all children who are placed. We do this by offering ongoing support to adoptive families through the provision of services accessible to all adoptive parents such as regular workshops, buddying system, (when required), weekly phone calls and social events.

- To consult with adopter representatives with regards to policies, procedures, training and recruitment of staff.
- To respond to feedback from adopters and adopted children/adults to evaluate and monitor effectiveness and quality of the service.
- To ensure our practice is at the forefront of innovation and staff are trained and well placed to support those who use our services. In addition, to provide services appropriate to families with specific needs, such as specialised therapeutic support.
- To provide adoption counselling, information, support services and signposting either directly or via the relevant local authority or preferred Ofsted registered Adoption Support Agency/Intermediary Agency to:

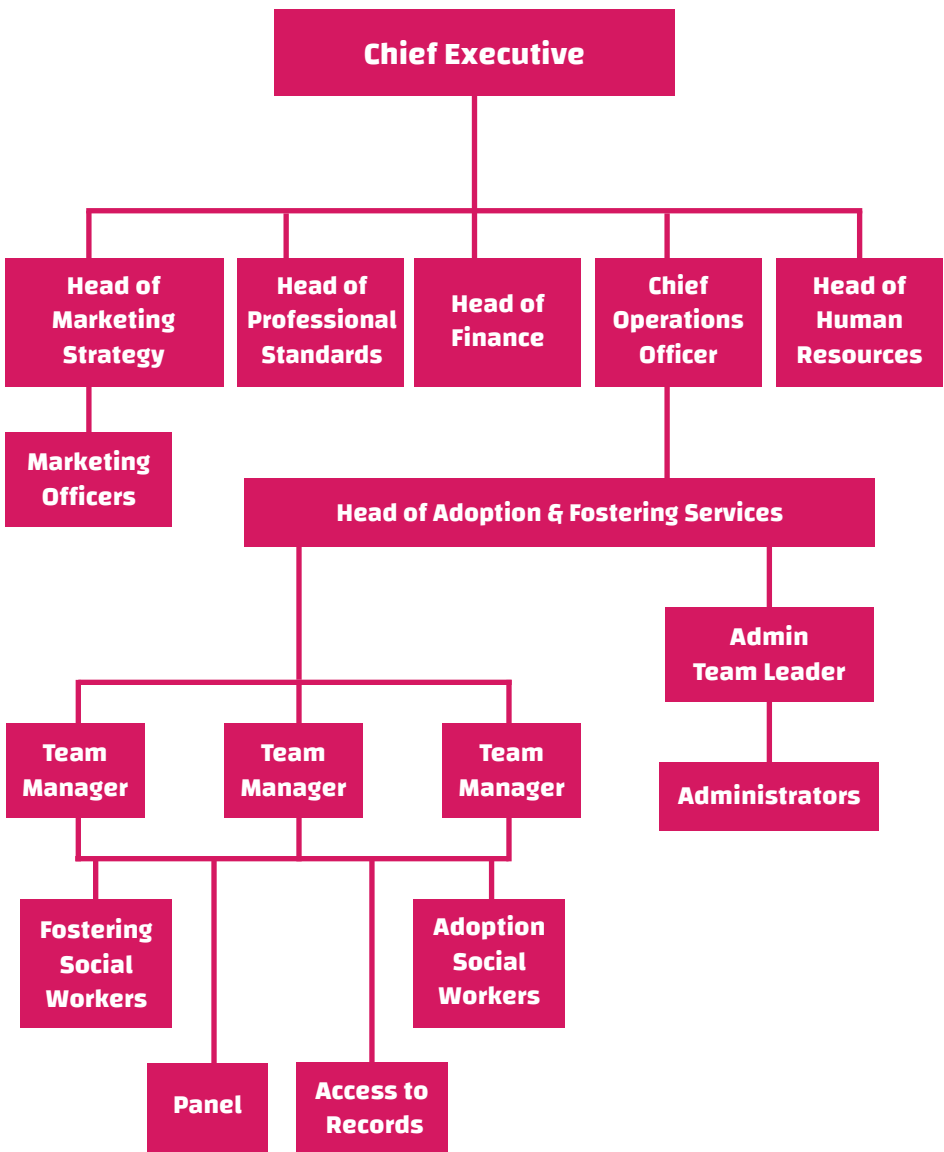
1. Adult adoptees, adoptive parents and birth family members where Diagrama Adoption was the placing agency.
2. Adopted persons requiring access to their birth records, where Diagrama Adoption was the placing agency.
3. Birth family members and descendants seeking information and/or wishing to establish contact with the adopted person placed by Diagrama Adoption.

4. To offer signposting and information and facilitate access to records for enquirers where Diagrama Adoption was not the placing agency, but inherited the records. Access to be provided either directly or via the relevant local authority or preferred Ofsted registered Adoption Support/Intermediary Agency. These former agencies include Cabrini Children's Society; The Southwark Catholics Rescue Society; The Southwark Catholic Children's Society; Portsmouth Diocesan Catholic Child Welfare.

In addition:

5. To offer access to records and information services to those who were cared for in residential care provided by Diagrama and its affiliated homes in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018.
6. To offer access to care records and support services to those and their descendants who were part of the child migrant schemes to Canada and Australia.
7. Diagrama currently offers a very limited intermediary service and we are looking to further develop this service in the future. Currently Diagrama is able to provide access to records for birth relatives of adopted adults who have passed away.

# Organisational structure



# Management and qualifications

The Trustees appoint, support and monitor the Chief Executive and delegate to the Chief Executive day-to-day management of the charity. The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for all the operational matters and reports directly to the trustees regularly.

The **Chief Executive** is David McGuire, who is also the **Responsible Individual** for the agency.

The Chief Executive is assisted by a Senior Management Team comprising:

**Chief Operations Officer** – Derek Milliken

**Head of Professional Standards** –

Position currently vacant

**Head of Human Resources** – Richard Dunn

**Head of Marketing Strategy** –

Martin Newton

**Head of Adoption & Fostering Services** –

Kate Patel

[adoption@diagrama.org](mailto:adoption@diagrama.org)

**Registered Office for Diagrama Adoption is:**

Diagrama Adoption,  
Airport House,  
Purley Way,  
Croydon,  
CR0 0XZ

020 8668 2181

## The Board of Trustees

The trustees meet at least quarterly to review the organisation's work and services, and to agree the strategic goals for the charity. The Board also reviews its own operation, effectiveness and governance annually.

## Chief Executive

The Chief Executive Officer and Responsible Individual is David McGuire. David graduated as a teacher in 1998, and then continued his training at degree level to qualify as a Social Educator, after which he specialised in Social and Juvenile Justice Mediation. In 2002 he joined Fundación Diagrama Intervención Psicosocial (Spain), where he was in charge of different functions at a secure/custodial centre for young people who have offended.

In 2006, David directed an integration programme financed by the European Social Fund (ESF), which supported more than 1,600 young people with judicial measures, achieving the integration of 80% of these. In 2008, David returned to England and began his work for Diagrama Foundation (UK) as Project Co-ordinator, and in 2009 he became Diagrama's Chief Executive Officer.

# Management and qualifications

## Head of Adoption & Fostering Services

Kate Patel joined Diagrama Foundation in March 2021 and took on the role as Head of Fostering and Adoption services in March 2022. She came to Diagrama with over 20 years professional experience as a children and family social worker. Kate started her social worker career in a duty and assessment team undertaking child in need assessments and child protection investigations. She then moved on to working with children who were looked after and spent time supporting them to have safe contact with birth family members and build secure attachments to their foster carers. It was during this time Kate's knowledge and interest in adoption and fostering work was shaped. Kate then went on to be based in an adoption and permanency team where she gained extensive experience of family finding for children in need of adoption or long term fostering placements and supporting prospective adopters and fostering families with the unique challenges they face. She was involved in the assessment and recruitment of prospective carers along with the management of social workers undertaking these assessments. She gained experience of providing preparation training to adopters and foster carers as well as bespoke training to social workers.

Kate later managed a post adoption service for three years supervising social workers who supported adopted children and

their families. Following this she became a fostering and adoption panel adviser, firstly for a Voluntary Adoption Agency and Independent Fostering Agency within a children's trust and latterly for Diagrama.

At Diagrama, Kate is responsible for all areas that fall within the fostering and adoption remit.

## Chief Operations Officer

Derek Milliken brings to Diagrama almost 30 years experience in a variety of sectors, the most recent of which have been as a senior executive in a FTSE 100 global organisation. His main career focus has been in the custodial sector, where he project managed the operational mobilisation of a large new build custodial centre, going on to successfully run this and an adjoining Management and qualifications 13 establishment.

Derek has overseen the robust statutory inspection requirements which are set by various regulatory bodies such as Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons, Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission and was proud to share with his team the achievement of external accreditation from Investors in People and the British Safety Council 5 Star Award, International Award, Sword of Honour. As a contract director, Derek oversaw the delivery of 24 hour Primary Healthcare Services including GP clinics, nurse clinics and emergency response, mental health,



dentistry, optician and various other health and well-being related services.

Derek has significant experience of building and maintaining customer and stakeholder relationships, in particular with public sector clients, and also brings extensive insight, knowledge and experience of cultural, social and health issues and challenges in complex environments.

Derek is responsible for the day-to-day management of Diagrama's UK operations.

### **Social work team**

All social work staff hold professional social work qualifications and are registered with Social Work England (SWE). Where possible, social work staff

are required to have extensive post-qualifying experience within a children and families setting. All staff members are supported with their professional development and have a yearly appraisal of their performance against agreed objectives. Regular supervision and staff meetings are undertaken.

### **All staff/sessional workers**

All Diagrama employees and sessional workers are subject to a rigorous vetting and selection process prior to appointment within the adoption team. All staff employed in permanent positions are subject to the satisfactory completion of a probationary period.

# Status and constitution

Diagrama Adoption is part of a registered charity, Diagrama Foundation (regulated by the Charity Commission in England and Wales; charity registration number 1128532).

Diagrama Foundation comprises of:

- A registered voluntary adoption agency (registered as Diagrama Adoption with Ofsted); service number SC484605.
- A registered independent fostering agency (registered as Diagrama Fostering with Ofsted); service number SC484575.
- A residential care provider for adults with learning disabilities in Orpington, Kent (Cabrini House 1, Cabrini House 2, Cabrini House 3), registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC).
- A residential care provider for elderly residents with nursing and dementia needs (Edensor Care Centre is based in Clacton-on-Sea and is registered with the CQC).
- A provider of support for adults with learning disabilities and mental health issues across nine small residential properties in the London Borough of Bromley (registered as Diagrama Supported Living with the CQC).

- A residential care provider for adults with learning disabilities – Duckyls Farm Centre in West Hoathly, near East Grinstead, Sussex, registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

The work and management of the charity is overseen by a Board of Trustees, who are also directors of the organisation.

Trustees do not receive remuneration for their duties.



# Our services

Diagrama Adoption provides the following services:

## **Recruiting, assessing, training and approving adopters**

We use a variety of methods to recruit a wide range of adopters to meet the differing needs of children in care.

Our Head of Marketing Strategy works with the adoption service to ensure our recruitment approach is aligned to our aims and objectives.

We welcome enquiries from:

- People of all racial/ethnic backgrounds.
- People of any or no religious faith.
- Couples, married, civil partnerships, or unmarried (whether heterosexual or same-sex) who can evidence that their relationship is "lasting, constant and enduring".
- Single people.
- People with or without children.
- People over 21 years. We have no upper age limit, but adopters' age will be relevant when considering the age and needs of a child to be placed.
- People who are normally domiciled in the UK.

Enquirers and prospective adoptive parents should be aware of Diagrama Adoption policies on:

- **Fertility:** We expect applicants to have explored their fertility status and be prepared to discuss this with their social worker. For applicants who have undergone infertility investigations and/or treatment we would strongly advise a sufficient period of time to process this significant loss before embarking on the adoption assessment since reaching the decision not to proceed with further investigations, before taking up an application.
- **Smoking:** We encourage all adoptive parent applicants to be non-smokers and, if a previous smoker, to have given up for at least 12 months. For children with respiratory difficulties and other health issues it would be inappropriate to place them in a household where people smoke whatever their age. (It is Diagrama Adoption's policy not to place children under the age of five in households where there are people who smoke).
- **Age gap:** Where there are other children in the family, we recommend at least a two-year age gap between any children placed.

The following areas are explored and clarified at an early stage with enquirers:

- Criminal offences or cautions: As part of the assessment process, criminal records references are requested from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). It is a legal requirement that no adult in the home over the age of 18 should have convictions or cautions for offences against children or have a history of violent behaviour.

Diagrama will not take up an application in these circumstances.

In respect of other criminal convictions, matters disclosed or included within DBS checks, these will be discussed with the Adoption Manager, who in these circumstances will decide whether an application should be progressed.

## **Pre- and Post-Adoption Support**

- Diagrama Adoption has access to a range of specialists who are able to provide support to staff, adopters and adoptees.
- We provide access to records in accordance with Schedule 2 and 98 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002, via the relevant local authority or preferred Ofsted registered Adoption Support/Intermediary Agency.

Adoption records are held securely and files are audited regularly. Diagrama Adoption has experienced social workers assigned to work specifically in this area.

Diagrama Adoption aims to provide stable, loving and secure adoptive families for children where a decision has been made by the local authority or court that adoption is in their best interests.

We target our recruitment towards finding families for children that local authorities have difficulty in placing and this includes: children over the age of four years, sibling groups of two or more brothers and sisters, children of mixed heritage or from ethnic minority groups, children who have significant development delay or uncertainty or who may develop this in the future and who may require additional education support, children with disabilities and early permanence placements.

We advertise our services and hold regular information evenings for those who may wish to know more about adoption, the agency and about the needs of children who are placed for adoption. Dates are published on our website and on social media.

**[diagramaadoption.org.uk](http://diagramaadoption.org.uk)**

 **Diagramafosteringadoption**

# Our services



Our administration team is available Monday to Friday during office hours to answer basic questions and can send out brochures in response to enquiries with details of the next information session so that potential adopters can hear more about adoption. They can also book a call with one of our adoption social workers who can provide more information and answer questions. This will help potential adopters establish whether Diagrama Adoption is the right agency for them.

At any stage in this enquiry process a potential adopter can request a Registration of Interest form (ROI). On receipt, the ROI will be sent to the team manager who will make a decision as to suitability to proceed. Occasionally the team manager will need more information to make an informed decision about whether the potential adopter has the qualities and experience we are looking for. Those deemed suitable will progressed to stage one of the adoption process.

If it is felt the potential adopters are not suitable, Diagrama will contact them regarding the decision at this time and what they might be able to do to strengthen their position. In the event that a potential adopter chooses not to proceed with their interest in adoption at this stage, the reasons for this are recorded and subsequently evaluated in order to inform the agency's recruitment programme.

# Stage one (two-month timescale)

Once we have accepted the ROI, prospective adopters move onto stage one. A social worker may complete a stage one initial call to establish applicant's readiness to proceed at this point and ensure the timing is right for them.

If we determine that applicants are ready to proceed to an initial home visit, we will allocate a social worker to complete a stage one initial home visit, which will be held in person and will include a home inspection to check health and safety requirements are met. The purpose of this visit is also to check the readiness of applicants to proceed with the stage one assessment at this point in time and for additional guidance on the portfolio (self assessment, family tree/s, ecomap, chronology and financial statement) to be provided.

The social worker will then complete a brief written summary of the visit with a recommendation to the team manager, who will make a decision on this. If the decision is stage one to be stopped at this point, this will be relayed both verbally and in writing within one week. A number of documents are sent via email following the initial home visit if the decision is to continue with stage one checks.

Stage one is an eight week process, so in order to avoid delay, on receipt of the ROI we request statutory checks including

local authority checks, Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) checks, personal and family references. Medicals will be requested following a team manager's decision to proceed after the stage one initial home visit has been made, given that applicants need to pay up front for this. We will also direct applicants to recommended reading, e-learning, DVDs, etc and ask them to keep a record of learning during this part of the process. Prospective adopters will be invited to our three day Preparation To Adopt training workshops and encouraged to link with more experienced adoptive parents.

The social worker will carry out a stage one review on completion of the checks, references and portfolio. The team manager will then decide whether applicants may be suitable to move to the next stage of assessment. We will inform applicants of this decision in writing and explain they must notify the agency within six months of the date of the agency's notification, if they wish to proceed to stage two.

Applicants can decide to take a break of up to six months in between stages one and two and Diagrama sometimes advises applicants to take a break for various reasons, such as gaining further childcare experience.

## Stage two (four-month timescale)

On receipt of notification from the prospective adopter that they wish to proceed, we commence stage two of the process. There is a process to 'fast track' some applications, for example, second time adopters and existing foster carers. These applicants will be able to fast track the stage one assessment process or adapt the process and move quickly to stage two. During stage two, an experienced social worker will undertake the home study assessment. The Coram BAAF Form PAR (Prospective Adopters Report) is used as the assessment format and applicants will be asked to explore:

- Family background and early life experience.
- Adult life – work, health and other issues.
- Relationships and support networks; including any previous long term partnerships.
- Home, financial circumstances and lifestyle.
- Motivation to adopt and expectations of placement.
- Understanding of the needs of adopted children and adoptive parenting capacity.

A second opinion and assessment review will be completed by the agency where there are any issues of significant concern or where clarification is needed. The agency in these circumstances will undertake an assessment review held with an Adoption Manager and the prospective adopters to examine the assessment from both perspectives. The outcome of this review may be to continue with the assessment or not. If a recommendation is made by the agency not to continue, the applicants will have the option to withdraw their application or to choose to go to the adoption panel with a brief report.

Once the social worker has written up the assessment, applicants will have an opportunity to read through this and comment on the accuracy of the report or make any other observations. The finalised report will be presented to our adoption panel.

# Adoption panel



Diagrama Adoption operates a panel in accordance with the Adoption Agency Regulations. The Prospective Adopters Report (PAR), is presented to the panel for recommendation of approval.

Applicants are invited to attend panel and to participate in the discussions. Panel members make a recommendation about the suitability of applicants to become adoptive parents. There are three options available to them at this stage:

- To recommend that applicants are approved as an adoptive parent/s.
- To defer the application and ask for more information.
- To recommend applicants are not suitable to adopt.

The panel recommendation is formally recorded. When minutes are agreed by all panel members they are sent to the Agency Decision Maker (ADM) for a decision. The majority of applicants will be approved, however, there may be

occasions when panel members and/or the ADM decide more information is needed or will recommend against approval.

- We notify the prospective adopter/s of that decision within two working days and written confirmation is sent to them within five working days.

## **In the event an application is not approved**

If an application is not recommended for approval at stage two, applicants can make representations to Diagrama Adoption or would have recourse to the Independent Review Mechanism (IRM) – details are provided at the end of this Statement of Purpose. Prospective adopters are provided with details about their right to access the IRM once they enter into stage two.

We encourage applicants to feedback after attending panel, which helps to evaluate and improve our service.

# Family finding



Once applicants have been approved to adopt, their social worker will start the 'family finding' process with them.

The adopter/s will be encouraged to be fully involved in this process. This can include attending exchange days throughout the UK, where local authorities provide profiles of children in need of adoption, following up direct leads from local authorities and utilising online search resources.

Diagrama social workers attend family finding events which offer the opportunity to meet and gain information about different children waiting for families via their social workers and foster carers.

Adopters will be supported and advised by Diagrama's social workers who will liaise with potential placing authorities and ensure adopters receive all relevant information on children being considered, as well as guidance to make sense of this.

When a potential match is agreed the social worker will support the adopters closely through the early stages of the matching process, introductions and placement.

**'Prospective adopters  
choose this agency  
over others'**

Ofsted

# Post adoption support

Diagrama recognises that children adopted from care can have on-going needs, and that adopters and child/ren may benefit from additional support either immediately after placement or in the future.

Prior to placement we liaise with the placing local authority, responsible for assessing your adoption support needs, to make sure a post adoption support plan is in place and any longer term support needs are identified.

This may include a financial assessment (which is means tested) or a settling-in grant for essential items such as a car seat or buggy.

Following the placement of a child/ren our social worker will continue to visit and support the adopter/s, alongside the local authority children's social worker.

Home visits usually occur weekly for the first month, then a minimum of monthly visits or more frequently, if required, for the following three months. The child/ren's social worker will visit in line with statutory guidance. The local authority will hold regular formal reviews of the placement in order to ensure children are feeling safe, settled and their needs are being met.

In addition, our social workers will support adopters in ensuring they understand and are meeting the needs of the child, as highlighted in the Child Permanence Report, as well as achieving positive outcomes.

The Reviewing Officer will also want to know the adopters have been provided with all the information they need, such as a life story book for the child/ren placed, later life letter and that any contact agreements are signed and set up.

As and when adopters feel ready to make an adoption application and this is supported by the local authority, Diagrama Adoption will support the adopters through this process, including contributing to writing a report for court.

The earliest an application can be made is 10 weeks after the child is placed. Following the making of the Adoption Order all parental responsibility will be passed to the adoptive parents and our role is likely to reduce significantly.

Adopters will no longer have regular visits from social workers, but can access our post adoption support services, this includes a weekday adoption support helpline and an out of hours service.

Diagrama Adoption encourages adopters to keep in touch via newsletters and events such as training, support groups and input into service development.

If adopters feel they have training or support needs, they will be encouraged to contact Diagrama Adoption in order that consideration can be given to providing or supporting the request.

# Early permanence



Diagrama Adoption has an 'Early Permanence' programme. This enables adopters to choose to become foster carers as well as adopters via panel and Agency Decision Maker (ADM) approval.

Following approval, adopters are supported to have children placed with them who the local authority is seeking a Placement Order for at a much earlier stage in the legal process.

This benefits the child as they have fewer placements and are able to form early attachments with their prospective adoptive parents.

If the court decides the child should be adopted and the adoption agency approves the 'match' between these carers and the child, the placement changes from fostering to adoption.

Early permanence carers will need to live with this uncertainty until the decision is made and be aware that, occasionally,

courts may decide that the child will move back to their birth family. Diagrama runs an additional two day training course for applicants who want to consider Early Permanency because we recognise the unique challenges that this role brings.

Prospective adopters who choose this route are approved as foster carers by Diagrama Adoption's sister agency, Diagrama Fostering. Their foster carer registration will then only relate to the provision of placements of young children on an Early Permanence basis. Although Diagrama Fostering is a stand-alone independent foster agency (IFA), it is also overseen by Kate Patel, our Head of Service for both Adoption and Fostering, and the Early Permanence service is an integral part of the operation of Diagrama Adoption. Kate Patel oversees the recruitment, training, assessment and approval of prospective adopters and foster carers and the post adoption support of families.

# Monitoring quality

The quality of Diagrama's Adoption Service is monitored (and inspected) by a number of qualified professionals.

**The Head of Adoption & Fostering Services** is responsible for the day-to-day management of the Adoption Service. Standards of care are measured and monitored against the Adoption National Minimum Standards 2014, National Adoption Standards for England, National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services 2011 and the UK National Standards for Foster Care. This is to ensure the standards are adhered to and the service is developing to meet the diverse needs of the children placed.

Diagrama's Adoption Service is inspected by Ofsted in accordance with regulations.

Complaints and allegations received by Diagrama Adoption are reviewed and considered individually at the time of receiving them. All complaints and allegations are taken seriously and reflection is made in regards to learning opportunities from this.

Diagrama Adoption will ensure working Together to Safeguard Children Guidance (2018) is followed when managing complaints and allegations. In addition, complaints are reviewed on an annual basis; this also includes any allegations made about staff/carers.

Diagrama Adoption works within a performance management and quality assurance culture. Statistical information, file audits, schedule 6 and 7 responsibilities and reviews of all work are embedded within the service. This includes the views of local authority social workers, children and young people looked after, adopters and their birth children where applicable.

There is a real commitment to involving service users in the development of the service, there are regular opportunities for adoptive families to be able to provide views and feedback on various aspects of the service, e.g. through surveys and support groups. The agency operates within clear guidelines for the supervision and accountability of staff which ensures the regular monitoring of services.

Diagrama Adoption offers a programme of training and support to staff in carrying out their responsibilities, this is reviewed annually following the review of staff performance.

The Board of Trustees and senior management team receive information about the Adoption Service in the form of regular management reports which enables effectiveness and outcomes to be reviewed on an ongoing basis.

# Complaints and outcomes

All users of Diagrama Adoption are advised of their right to make a representation or complaint. Adult users are issued with our complaints leaflet which provides them with guidance on what steps to take if they are unhappy with the service.

The agency has a two-stage complaints procedure which is as follows:

## Stage one

Any complaints about the service should initially be directed to the Head of Adoption & Fostering Services who will log the complaint in the complaints register and decide on a course of action to resolve the complaint.

Unless the matter is serious, the aim will be to resolve the complaint in an informal and problem-solving manner. In circumstances where the complaint is of a more serious nature, the Head of Adoption & Fostering Services, or another nominated manager, will undertake a formal investigation.

A resolution meeting involving all parties will be held to discuss the conclusion of any investigation and the decisions of the meeting will be drawn up in writing with copies being given to the complainant

**Timescale: 15 working days**

## Stage two

If the complainant does not agree with the decision they can appeal to the Director of Operations who will review the decision/s and may decide to refer the matter to an independent party (who has no direct line management responsibility within the local office). The decision of the Director of Operations will be final.

If an independent investigator is appointed, they will report back to the Director of Operations with a recommendation/s who will make the final decision taking into account the recommendations of the independent investigator.

**Timescale: 30 working days**

NB: Whilst the agency will strive to achieve timescales; timescales provided are intended as a guide and will at times depend on the complexity of the matter and or availability of individuals. Any complaints relating to the Head of Adoption & Fostering Services need to be directed to the Director of Operations.

If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint after exhausting this process, they can refer the matter to Ofsted.

# Contacts

## **Diagrama Adoption is registered with OFSTED**

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

0300 123 1231  
(about children's services)

0300 123 4666  
(to make a complaint)

[enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

## **Other useful contact details:**

Contract Manager:

Independent Review Mechanism (IRM)  
Unit 4, Pavilion Business Park  
Royds Hall Road  
Wortley  
Leeds  
LS12 6AJ

0845 450 3956  
0113 2022080

[irm@irm.org.uk](mailto:irm@irm.org.uk)  
[independentreviewmechanism.org.uk](http://independentreviewmechanism.org.uk)

Children's Commissioner for England:

Dame Rachel de Souza  
Children's Commissioner for England  
Sanctuary Buildings  
20 Great Smith Street  
London  
SW1P 3BT

020 7783 8330

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**NEXT REVIEW OF THIS  
STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:  
JUNE 2024**

# Contact us:

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# Like to know more?

If you would like to know more about  
Diagrama's other services please get  
in touch.

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