

CCS ADOPTION

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

2008/09

*Other documents to be enclosed with this report:-
Annual Report and Complaints Leaflet*

March 2009

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Statement of Purpose

1. INTRODUCTION

This document sets out the Statement of Purpose for CCS Adoption as required by the Voluntary Adoption Agencies and the Adoption Agencies (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations S1 2003/367 and the Voluntary Adoption Agencies (Amendment) Regulations S1 2005/3341.

CCS Adoption is the title of the Adoption Service provided by Clifton Children's Society.

The Statement of Purpose is updated annually by the Management Team and reviewed by the Board of Trustees. A copy of the document is readily available to all those working with the Adoption Agency:

- Adoptive parents
- Prospective adoptive parents
- Adopted children and young people
- Birth families
- Other interested parties e.g. volunteers
- Local Authorities and Health and Social Care Trusts
- General public

More detailed information is available in the Agency's Three Year Plan, which is available on request.

CCS Adoption is a voluntary, independent and registered adoption agency that seeks to promote the relief of poverty and the welfare of children in need from all backgrounds, cultures, and all faiths or none, by:

- Furthering their appropriate care and safety
- Providing assistance and support to them, their families and carers
- Advancing their physical, mental, social, emotional and spiritual development, respecting their racial cultural and spiritual heritage, so that they may grow to full maturity as individuals and members of society.

In carrying out these objectives the Agency will be guided by respect and love for all people and by the values of the Catholic Church. The Agency works with people of all faiths or none and covers the geographical areas of Bristol, Bath and NE Somerset, Somerset, North Somerset, Swindon, Wiltshire, Gloucestershire and South Gloucestershire.

The Society offers a comprehensive adoption service that includes recruiting, assessing and preparing adoptive families, supporting child and family throughout the adoption process and beyond, working with birth parents who may be considering adoption for their child in partnership with Local Authority Social Services Departments and providing a counselling service to adult adoptees and their relatives.

2. Status and Constitution

CCS Adoption is a registered charity (Reg No 286814) and a company limited by guarantee (No 1655971) as contained in its Memorandum and Articles (attached).

CCS Adoption's address is:

162 Pennywell Road
Easton
Bristol
BS5 0TX

Tel No: 08451 220077
Fax No: 0117 9350078
Email: info@ccsadoption.org
Website: www.ccsadoption.org

Responsible Individual (as required by Adoption Agency Regulations): Jadwiga S Ball
Manager: Jadwiga S Ball

3. Legal Context

CCS aims to operate within the following legal requirement:

- The Children Act 1989 and accompanying regulations and guidance
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child
- The Care Standards Act 2000 and National Minimum Standards
- The Adoption and Children Act 2002 and associated Regulations and Guidance.
- National Care Standards Commission Regulations 2003
- Adoption Support Services regulations 2003

- Voluntary Adoption Agencies and Adoption Agencies (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2003
- Working together to Safeguard Children (Under Associated Child Protection Guidance)
- Sexual Orientation Regulations
- Other relevant legislation and Regulations and Guidance issued to Local Authorities, which highlights good practice relating to services provided by both the Statutory and Voluntary Sector.

4. Aims

- To provide a high quality, independent and professional adoption service
- To build and retain close working relationships with other adoption agencies
- To ensure that our child care practice is in line with current legislation and developments in professional practice
- To sustain the loyalty and support of those with whom we work
- To publicise our services and the needs of children throughout the area and in particular to maintain close contact with parishes in the Clifton Diocese

5. Objectives

- Throughout every aspect of our work, to aim to place the child at the centre of our thinking and practice
- To recruit and prepare a diverse range of adoptive families who can respond to the differing needs of hurt and vulnerable children waiting for permanent families
- To support children and families throughout the adoption process recognising the long term implications of adoption for those involved
- To offer a sensitive and respectful service to birth parents considering adoption for their child and to adopted people and their relatives when they require support and assistance
- To develop a wide range of adoption support services that can help children and families to build positive and enduring relationships through adoption and beyond
- To ensure that our work is informed by the highest professional skills and standards, that our practice is open and reflective and that staff are appropriately qualified, experienced and well supported.
- To maintain a commitment to ongoing development, training and quality assurance in order to provide a service that is informed by theory, practice and research and is open to new learning and needs

- To work at sustaining links and networks, both local and national, with supporters, agencies, professional organisations, parishes etc so that our work can continue and develop and that our experience and learning might be exchanged with others

6. Priorities

The priorities of the Agency are:

- To recruit, prepare and assess prospective applicants from diverse backgrounds who have the capacity to offer a stable, nurturing experience of family life to children waiting for adoption both locally and nationally.
- Applications will be prioritised from applicants with the potential to meet the needs of:
 - Children likely to display significant emotional or behavioural difficulty as a result of earlier trauma/experience
 - Children with particular needs arising from ethnicity, religion, culture or language
 - Children with significant developmental delay who may require educational support
 - Children with health needs who are likely to require ongoing medical services
 - Children with physical or learning disabilities
 - Family groups of children that require joint placement
 - Children with background histories that present difficulties in family finding
- The Agency works with Local Authorities throughout the country but aims in the first instance to offer a service to authorities and children within the South West Region through its active participation in the South West Adoption Consortium.
- The Agency is committed to providing adoption support to all involved in adoption, recognising the long term implications and the challenges involved for adopters in parenting vulnerable children.
- A further priority for this Agency is its counselling and support service for birth parents, adopted people and/or their birth relatives seeking information, advice or contact. We aim to offer a prompt, confidential, personalised and skilled response and see this area of work as essential to informing our broader understanding of the impact of adoption on those involved.
- Every area of our work impacts on our thinking and practice and the Agency highly values the opportunity for mutual sharing, reflection and learning. The opportunity for case consultation within the staff group as well as

discussion of current practice and new developments are seen as priorities that support our professional development and our commitment.

- The Agency is committed to maintaining effective systems for recording, managing and keeping safe information about all those affected by adoption.
- In addition to working within the legal requirements as noted above (See 3) the Agency is also committed to the highest standards of social work practice. We therefore also seek to operate within the various practice guidance documents which relate to adoption work including Working Together to Safeguard Children (and other relevant child protection guidance) and The Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families which we have actively sought to integrate within our practice.

7. Principles and Values

- Individuals of all faiths or none and of any race, culture, language, ability and sexual orientation are respected and valued; discrimination of any sort has no place in our practice or workplace
- All human life is sacred and worthy of our care and concern so that it develops to its full potential
- Families provide the best environment for the nurturing of children towards maturity; for most children this will be within their family of origin but, where this is not possible, adoption can offer many the best chance of permanent, loving and life long relationships
- Children and all vulnerable people have the right to be protected from emotional and physical harm of all kinds
- The child's welfare is paramount in all decisions about their future and their wishes and feelings should be taken into account according to their age and understanding
- We welcome people of all faiths and none, while having a particular commitment to placing Christian children with Christian families.
- A child's ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic heritage is a crucial part of that child's identity and experience. The placement of choice will normally be with a family who can reflect that experience and help the child to develop a positive and integrated sense of self
- Every child has the right to information about their history and we will make every effort to ensure that this is available to child/family and that adopters are supported in helping their child to make sense of their experience
- We will strive to maintain good working relationships with agencies and to work in partnership with them in the interests of children and families
- We believe that effective practice is characterised by open and honest communication; clarity regarding expectations, responsibilities and process;

a shared assessment that underlines strengths as well as vulnerabilities, and mutual respect that allows concerns to be aired and addressed.

- As a registered adoption agency we are governed by legislation and therefore aim to work within the requirements of the current legislation and regulatory framework

8. Services

In addition to the core services outlined above, a post adoption service has been developed despite the loss of grant funding.

CCS has a service level agreement with BANES to provide non agency adoption and special guardianship services. This continues but with budgetary limits.

9. Policies and Procedures

The Agency's Policies and Procedures manual is regularly updated and revised in line with developments and changing guidelines and should be referred to for more detailed information.

- The Assessment and Preparation process for prospective adopters is spelled out in more detail within our written leaflets available for applicants at different stages of the adoption process (available on request) and the Agency's Procedures. In brief the process takes approximately 8 months and consists of the following:
 - Initial Enquiry
 - Social work visit
 - Information Group meeting
 - Application and taking up of references
 - Group preparation combined with home study (includes children of the family where appropriate)
 - Completion of Prospective Adopters Report (PAR) with applicant's contribution
 - Attendance at Adoption Panel and agency recommendation
 - Linking workshop to prepare applicants for matching and introduction process
 - Risk assessment meeting to consider potential matches
 - Ongoing social work support throughout preparation for placement and beyond including close liaison with child's agency.

The National Adoption Standards suggest a timescale of 8 months for the process. Timescales are discussed with all applicants taking into account particular issues and circumstances.

- Children's guides are available both for existing children in the family to help them consider the implications of adoption, and for children being placed to enable them to understand more about the role of CCS in their adoption plan.
- Policies and other procedures are detailed in our Guide to Policy and Procedures. In brief this document includes Policy Statements relating to:
 - Equal Opportunities
 - Confidential Reporting (Whistle Blowing)
 - Positive Parenting in Adoption: Our No Smacking Policy
 - Child Protection
 - Disclosure of Records
 - Complaints
- The Staff Manual also includes the Society's commitment to the GSCC Code of Practice in respect of both employer and employees as well as detailed procedures for the work of the Agency. For further information please see the relevant documents.

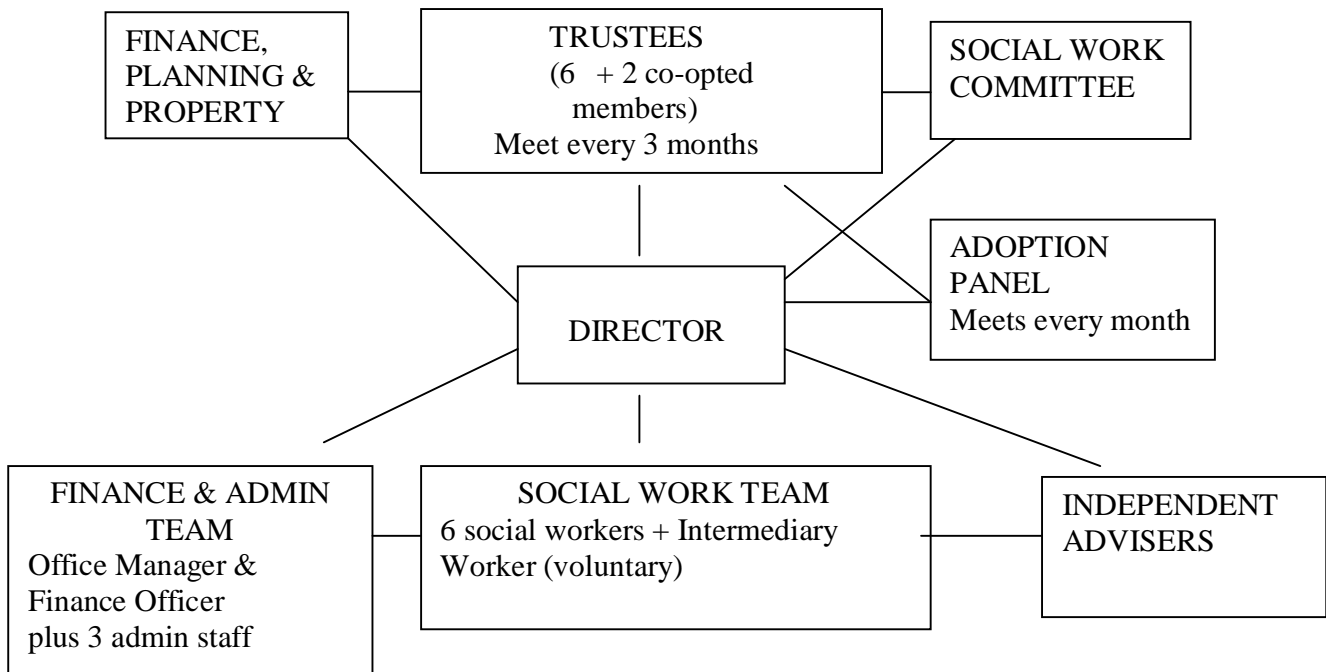
10. Strategy and Business Plan

The Agency's three-year plan is approved by the Trustees and regularly reviewed by them with the Director. The Agency aims to respond to ongoing issues and needs, especially those of local authorities with responsibility for providing adoption services, and to make a useful contribution to the welfare of children.

11. Organisation & Management

The Trustees of CCS are responsible for the Agency's policies, procedures and professional services. The Director is a member of the Social Work Committee. It is the responsibility of the Social Work Committee to assist the Director in her planning of the Agency's future strategic development. The Director is responsible for the management of the placement of children. The Chair of the Trustees, after first considering the recommendations of the Adoption Panel, acts as the Agency Decision Maker.

The Agency is organised and managed as outlined below:



- The Trustees are an autonomous self-appointed body operating within the governing documents.
- The two sub committees of the Trustees meet quarterly and feedback to the Trustees' Meeting.
- The Adoption Panel is scheduled to meet monthly. For further details of the current membership of specific groups, please see the Annual Report.
- The Director has overall responsibility for the day to day running of the Agency, for the standard of its work and employees.
- The Director supervises the social work staff as well as the Office Manager and Finance Officer and also conducts their annual appraisals.
- The Social Work Team and Admin Team meet every month and in addition the Social Work Team meets monthly with an external facilitator.
- External consultants are used for specific services including training, group support to the Social Work Team and individual support to the Director including her appraisal.

- The Agency maintains close working relationships with many agencies especially Local Authorities whose responsibility is to identify families for children they need to place. In addition, the Agency is a regular participant in various adoption related groupings which meet regularly to discuss practice, developments, legislation and collaboration e.g. South West Adoption Consortium; BAAF South West regional groups; Consortium of Voluntary Adoption Agencies; Caritas Social Action and People in Harmony.
- The Agency is also a member of other relevant organizations whose publications and materials inform its work e.g. Adoption UK, BAAF, Catholic Association for Racial Justice, Norcap, Children UK, VOSCUR, ATRAP.
- The Agency is conscious of its role within the Clifton Diocese and its debt to the Catholic community who support its work financially. Therefore, good relationships with parishes, priests, schools, volunteers and supporters throughout the Diocesan area are essential in order to promote interest in and awareness of our work.

12. Staffing

The **Adoption Agency Decision Maker: Ian Mackenzie**, Chairman of Trustees.

The Registered Provider:

The Responsible Person is Jadwiga S Ball, Director, CCS Adoption, 162 Pennywell Road, Easton, Bristol BS5 0TX

The Responsible Person has over thirty years experience in Statutory and Voluntary Child Care Services with over twenty years experience working in a specialist adoption setting.

The Responsible Person has a BA Hons in Social and Public Administration and obtained a Certificate of Qualification in Social Work in 1976. She also has a Management Qualification NVQ Level 5.

The Registered Manager is Jadwiga S Ball

6 Senior Adoption Practitioners (6 part-time)

All have a Certificate of Qualification in Social Work and significant specialist experience in adoption. Two have a PQ1 and one has a Postgraduate Certificate with Distinction in Management of Voluntary Organisations.

Intermediary Worker (Volunteer)

Degree in Social Science, Certificate in Religious Studies, an Advanced Certificate in Integrative Counselling and a Certificate in Couple Counselling.

Office Manager (part-time – 32 ½ hours)

RSA Stage 2 & 3 Shorthand & Typing
NVQ D32/D33 Assessor's Award in Customer Service & Administration 2002
Foundation Course in Counselling Skills 2007
Currently undertaking NVQ Level 3 in Management

Finance Officer (part-time – 20 hours)

BA English Literature
Institute of Chartered Accountants – part qualification
MA Japanese Studies
RSA 2 Typing

Social Work Administrator (full-time) & Social Work Secretary (part-time – 27 hours)

English for Business Communications Level 1, 2 & 3
Word Processing, Elementary, Intermediate, Advanced
Text Production Skills
Practical Data Processing Intermediate
Typing, Elementary, Intermediate, Advanced
Audio Transcription Intermediate
Teeline Shorthand
RSA Stage 2 Typing

Finance & Development Officer (part-time – 12 hours)

Banker's Foundation Course
Foundation Course in Accountancy

Association of Accounting Technicians MAAT - attained part qualified ACA (Chartered)

Current staffing

Director – Jadwiga Ball – 37 hours

6 Senior Adoption Practitioners – 6 part-time – total number of hours = 143 hours

1 Intermediary Worker (volunteer)

Office Manager– 32 ½ hours

Finance Officer – 20 hours

Admin support - 64 hours

Finance & Devt support – 12 hours

All Social Workers are registered with the General Social Care Council.

All social work staff at the Agency are required to have a minimum of two year's post qualifying **professional** experience within a children and family setting. An exception will only be made in the case of a relatively newly qualified social worker making a positive application and having significant experience whilst un-qualified within a children and family setting.

All the Agency's staff are subject to the Agency's appointment and employment procedures and training and appraisal protocol.

All social work staff are subject to enhanced CRB checks on a three yearly basis. Admin staff are subject to standard CRB checks on a three yearly basis.

Any sessional staff are subject to the same requirements.

All staff receive regular supervision and the Agency procedures offer clarity regarding roles and responsibilities within this process.

The Agency commissions a number of individuals and volunteers in relation to its organisation, fundraising and service delivery. These include:

- Diocesan Appeals and fundraising – adoptive parents, Trustees, volunteers
- Medical Adviser & Legal Adviser
- Experienced adoptive parents as co-facilitators in adoption preparation groups
- Specialist Consultants e.g. Clinical Psychologist, Adoption Specialist

All those who have a role in delivering the services of CCS Adoption are subject to an enhanced CRB check, this includes all volunteers, Trustees and Panel Members.

The majority of the Information, Tracing and Intermediary work is undertaken by the voluntary Intermediary Worker although a small amount is allocated to the Adoption Practitioners and the Post Adoption Support Development Worker. The Senior Practitioners work with adoptive applicants, birth parents requesting adoption, supporting placements and at times undertake specific tasks at the request of a Local Authority such as stepparent applications or independent assessments.

Several staff serve on the Adoption and Fostering Panels of other agencies and/or their management committees. This allows for a sharing of knowledge and expertise and the opportunity to bring back to the Agency an experience of different practice and developments.

Medical Adviser

The advice of the Medical Adviser will be sought on each occasion that health information is obtained with regard to any party to the adoption process.

Any child placed for adoption through CCS should have recorded as comprehensive a medical history as possible, and it is the Agency's responsibility through the Medical Adviser to ensure that such information is obtained from the appropriate source and interpreted in such a manner as to facilitate the prospective adoptive parents' successful parenting of the child.

The Medical Adviser, as a member of the Adoption Panel, will evaluate the health information available to the Panel about children, birth families, and adoptive applicants and advise Panel Members of its implications in relation to adoption. The Medical Adviser will advise the Agency's staff on arrangements for access to and disclosure of medical information which is required or permitted in the course of their duties.

The Medical Adviser may be called upon for advice in respect of staffing, complaints and other matters to do with the Society's work, as agreed with the Director.

13. Registration

The Agency is registered with Ofsted. No conditions are in force in relation to this registration.

14. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Agency is committed to monitoring and evaluating its services by seeking feedback from users and there are specific systems in place to ensure that views are recorded throughout the process.

Prospective adopters are asked to complete an evaluation form:

- Following the completion of group preparation programme
- Following attendance at Adoption Panel
- Following the making of an Adoption Order

All evaluations are scrutinized and used to inform the continuing development of the Agency's processes and procedures.

A further important aspect of the Agency's monitoring and evaluation is the review meeting, which occurs during the assessment process. This allows applicants to meet with their social worker and the Director to jointly evaluate their progress and to discuss any issues arising that are of concern to either applicants or Agency. This is recorded and applicants are sent a written copy for reference.

Birth parents/adoptees and/or their relatives are asked to complete an evaluation form if this is thought to be appropriate in their particular circumstances.

Adopted children are asked for feedback on the Agency's Adoption Support services and events.

The Adoption Panel has a remit to monitor the standard of Prospective Adopters Reports (PAR) and adherence to relevant timescales. Their comments are noted in the minutes. Exit questionnaires are given to all Panel Members leaving Panel and scrutinized and used to inform the continuing development of the Panel process.

Annual appraisals are carried out for all staff and Panel Members.

The Adoption Panel has an annual training day facilitated by an external consultant when it reviews its practice in the light of changing developments and requirements. The Agency Decision Maker and the Social Work Team also attend so that there is an opportunity for shared evaluation and dialogue.

Service users are represented on the Board of Trustees and the Adoption Panel.

The Social Work Team and Director meet regularly with an external consultant for case discussion, review of practice and discussion around the development of Agency materials and information.

15. Finances

A summary of the Agency's accounts is given in the attached annual report and last year's full annual accounts, as approved at the AGM in 2008, can be viewed on request.

16. Complaints

The Agency positively encourages comments and criticisms concerning its services. The Agency has a **formal** Complaints Procedure (attached) which is made available to all service users at their first point of contact with the Agency.

The Director and the Chairman of Trustees and relevant Committees monitor complaints.

Complaints may also be directed to:

OFSTED
Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA
Tel: 08456 404040
Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Agency has developed a child focused complaint form which is available for children and young people in placement and after adoption to encourage young people to share any worries or concerns they may have. If a child or young person wishes to make a complaint the Agency will seek to support them and

provide them with the appropriate information to facilitate the process of their complaint. If the matter cannot be resolved through the Society's informal or formal Complaints Procedure, a child or young person may contact:

The Children's Rights Director
OFSTED
Alexander House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE
Tel: 08456 404040
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Voice
Freephone: 0808 8005792
www.voiceyp.org
National Youth Advocacy Service
Freephone: 0800 616101
www.nyas.net
Children's Legal Centre
Freephone: 0800 783 2187
www.childrenslegalcentre.com

17. Details of the Registration Authority

Ofsted
Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA
Tel: 08456 404040
Responsible Individual: Jadwiga S Ball
Manager: Jadwiga S Ball