ccs adoption

INFO PACK







Adopting with CCS Adoption

Adoption is an important step in your life that needs a great deal of consideration from the head and heart.

We welcome conversations with people who are considering adoption. Whether you are in the earliest stages of exploring it or want to get started as soon as possible, you can always give us a call at 0117 935 0005 and talk to our adoption adviser, who is an adoptive parent. Alternatively, join us at one of our regular **Information Events** and talk with social workers and adopters there. Or email us at **advice@ccsadoption.org**.

At CCS Adoption, we have been awarded "Outstanding" by Ofsted in 2024 and five consecutive inspections since 2010. You can read the report **here**. We are 1 of only 3 Voluntary Adoption Agencies (VAAs) in the country to have had 5 Ofsted Outstandings. Adopters often choose us because of the ongoing support we offer throughout the adoption process and beyond.

We want to show you what Adoption looks like now, tell you a little about the children who are waiting for families and discuss what it takes to be an adopter. We also want to share with you the stories from some of our CCS adoptive families about how they made their families through adoption and why they particularly chose us.

Your age, ethnicity, faith, marital status, or sexual orientation do not determine your ability to be a good adoptive parent. Instead, we look for warmth, flexibility, a child-centred approach, stability, security, and resilience as the qualities that will most help you when you adopt your children. We hope to hear from you soon.

If you would like to read more about what we achieved in 2025, just **click here**.

Best Wishes,

Emma Simpson
CEO



Thinking about Adoption?

If you are thinking about adoption, then there is a lot of information available. However, it's sometimes difficult to know where to start. Here are a few ideas...

Anybody in the early stages of exploring adoption should have a look at the resources on **First4Adoption** or **You Can Adopt**, which are both official, national information services for people interested in adopting. You Can Adopt has some recent **podcasts** covering a range of issues in adoption that are well worth a listen. There are some interactive quizzes and modules in the **First Steps section** of the First4Adoption site.

Some people find it helpful to hear the adoption stories of others. We have a few of these **here** on our CCS website. Another website to explore is **Adoption UK**, which is a national membership organisation and charity focused on supporting adopted children and people.

There are whole worlds of conversations about adoption on various social media platforms such as Facebook, X (previously Twitter) and Instagram. And of course, you can follow our social media posts about adoption and post-adoption support on **Facebook**, **LinkedIn** and **Instagram**.





LGBTQ+ prospective adopters will find joining **New Family Social** and following their social media pages and forums a useful and supportive place to learn about adoption and hear the stories of other LGBTQ+ adopters. CCS has a good track record in working with LGBTQ+ couples and singles and runs a monthly **LGBTQ+ Coffee Morning**.

Our adoption adviser often recommends that people read the book ***No Matter What*** by Sally Donovan as an example of an adoption journey. Adoption blogs also give a great idea of the joys and challenges of becoming an adoptive parent.

If you have read our **Can I Adopt** page, then you will hopefully have realised that there are very few absolute barriers to someone being considered as an adopter. However, it's fair to say that the adoption assessment process is very thorough and requires a lot of self-reflection about your past, your present situation, and what your future might look like with adopted children. There is no such thing as the "perfect" adopter, but ultimately, we will be looking for evidence of these positive qualities.







It's a good thing when you are starting to think about whether you believe you have these qualities and how you can show evidence of them to your social worker.

Tenacity

Many adopted children have no stability or guidance in their early lives. They will need positive boundaries in their lives which need to be reaffirmed again and again.

Willingness to Learn

Parenting an adopted child is different from parenting a birth child. All adopters need to undertake learning around therapeutic parenting, and the needs of the children they care for. Adopters who are willing to learn will take the best of practice and make it their own – reading, watching, training, and listening.

Resilience

You will need to carry emotions for your child sometimes, and need to talk the difficult talk about why your child was adopted and what may have happened to them before they came to live with you. You will need to prove to them you can cope with anything, as they need your resilience to enable them to build their own.

Empathy

Adopted children come from a range of backgrounds, and many have experienced early traumas. Empathising with this and seeing the world through their eyes will support them to learn and grow into a positive understanding of themselves and others. Empathy towards their past and how it may shape their future will be essential.

Good Advocate

Your child may well have difficulties "out there" away from home, be it socially, educationally, physically, or emotionally. Your job, on occasion, will be to go out there and fight for what they need.

Flexibility

Flexibility is one of the key attributes of being a successful adopter. Flexible during your assessment, flexible about the type of child you may consider, flexible in how you approach parenting and flexible in meeting the needs of your child.

Good Sense of Humour

Although parenting a child through adoption is no laughing matter, it does not mean it has to be serious all of the time. The most successful adopters are those who can laugh at themselves and find humour in difficult situations.

You can find out about our next **Information Events** here, where you can come along and speak with adopters and social workers about what it is like to adopt and ask any questions you have about your particular situation.

What is Adoption?

Adoption gives a child a new family when living with their own family is not possible. It is a way of giving a child who has had a difficult start, a second chance at childhood – a legal process and permanent commitment which should be undertaken after careful examination of the head and heart.

Adoption is a way of providing families for children, creating a new relationship that can provide the long-term security and love that children need. In adoption, we always seek to put the needs of children first.

In 2024/25, there were a total of 3,070 Adoption Orders granted in England. You can find out more about the legal aspects on the **government website** relating to adoption. There are very few absolute barriers to adoption, but to hear the answers to some of the typical questions we are asked, view our **FAQs page**.

Besides the traditional route to adopting children who are currently in foster care, there is a growing practice called **Early Permanence** (sometimes also referred to as Concurrency, or Fostering for Adoption), which CCS has been at the forefront of promoting and developing. We were the first adoption agency in the country to be awarded a quality assurance mark for our work in developing Early Permanence.

We know from research that it is damaging to children if they are moved any more than is absolutely necessary around the care system from carer to carer. Permanence is needed for children to thrive. Early Permanence is a practice that aims to reduce the number of moves a child in the care system potentially makes. A young child or brother and sister group, but often a baby, is placed with adopters who are also approved foster carers, and when a legal decision is finally made about the child's future and adoption is the plan, then these adopters will go on to become the child's new parents. However, if the courts decide that the child should go back to their birth family, then they will return the child, happy in the knowledge that they have given them a secure start and built a positive attachment. Early Permanence takes a very child-centred approach, where the adults take the risk, but it has huge benefits for the children. For more information, read this book of **Early Permanence** stories we compiled.

If you choose to adopt with CCS, you will be asked to explore whether Early Permanence might be a route you would consider taking, alongside the more traditional route to adoption. If, after discussion with your social worker, you decide that this route is not for you, then that is absolutely fine; we just ask you at this point to keep an open mind.



Why Choose CCS Adoption?

If you have decided that you want to apply to adopt, you then have a choice about who you do this with.

You can choose between adopting with your Regional Adoption Agency (RAA)/Local Authority (LA), or with an independent Voluntary Adoption Agency (VAA) like CCS. If you want to find out which agencies might cover your postcode, then visit the **You Can Adopt** agency finder. The process and guidelines are laid down by the government and are the same for both, although there are some **differences** that you should be aware of:

- LAs/RAAs have children in care whom they are looking to place with adopters. Their team will, in the first instance, look at the children in their care and then, if there is not a suitable match, will look to other agencies.

- A VAA, like CCS, trains, assesses and approves adopters and then finds children for these adopters from across the country. At CCS, we work with you to find your children, whether they are near or far and have experience working with LAs across the country. As a Charity, we are able to fundraise for extra funds in order to provide an Outstanding Adoption Support Service, which includes our own therapeutic services, and we know this enables adopters to successfully parent priority children. We also promise to provide tailored support.





Since 1904, CCS has found new homes for over 2,300 children.

Here are the main strengths that we offer:

- CCS is only one of three VAA in the country that has been graded as Outstanding 5 times in a row (since 2010).
  You can find our most recent Ofsted report **here**.
- When you adopt with CCS, you will be assessed and supported by a social worker who, once you are approved, will likely be the same person who then finds your children and takes you through all the stages of them joining your family.
- CCS employs a large number of adopters and people whose lives have been touched by adoption. Many of us have been where you are now, and we understand how it feels.
- CCS families can call on not only "their" social worker for support but also, should they need it, our **Therapeutic Services Team**, run by CCS and funded through the government's **Adoption Support Fund**.
- CCS runs **CCS Adoption Support Services**, which all our families have access to its wide range of activities, all designed to support you and your adoptive family.

Why Choose CCS Adoption?



Becky is our adoption advisor and brings her own experience of being an adoptive parent to her role. She is available to help you explore adoption, answer questions and provide guidance. To get in touch, please call **0117 935 0005** or email **advice@ccsadoption.org**.

Who are the Children Waiting for Families?

The children who are waiting for families have all had a difficult start in life. They have been removed from their birth families by social services because of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse and neglect. They are living in foster care until a permanent adoptive family can be found for them.

Over 2024/25, there were 2,910 Children with a Placement Order who waited to be placed for adoption. 20% of the children were aged over 5 years, 41% were looking to be placed with brothers or sisters and 18% were ethnic minority children. Their additional needs, ethnicities and cultural backgrounds vary. Children from minority ethnic backgrounds wait the longest for families which is why we are particularly keen to talk with prospective adopters who are also from a minority ethnic background, or who are in a position to adopt transracially. What all the children have in common is that they have had unsettled, difficult early lives and have been taken into foster care while they wait for their new families.

In 2024/25, the average age of the children that CCS found new families for was 3 years and 3 months. And we found families for 19 children. Below are some example profiles of typical children. Their names and some of their details have been changed to protect their identity. If you would like to read further profiles of children, then click through to our **About the Children page**.

Read here some of our adopters' adoption stories.

Watch here some adoption videos.



Understanding the Adoption Process





Post Adoption Support

Once a child's adoption is finalised, the parents have a choice to request help and support as and when they need it. This could be anything from needing a listening ear after a difficult time, to help with choosing schools or finding therapy for a child.

We hope that, having built a relationship with us, you will trust us and value our experience to ask for this support as you need it.

CCS also runs many **activities and social events** for adoptive families throughout the year, giving them opportunities to connect with each other. Our **Therapeutic Service** works in partnership with local authorities and the **Adoption Support Fund** to provide a range of therapies for adoptive families as and when they are needed.

At CCS, our social workers stay with a family from assessment through family finding and introductions to after adoption, wherever possible. We are always here for you and your adopted child from the early years to much later on in life, since we recognise that the impact of adoption can be lifelong.

Next Steps?

We hold regular online **Information Events**, where you can hear from and speak with adopters and social workers about what it might be like to adopt. You can book yourself into one of these by following the booking process online or contacting us.

Additionally, we offer adopter chats with Becky, our adoption adviser, before or after these events, which provide the opportunity to discuss any particular and personal aspects in a 1-1 environment.

You can always call us on 0117 935 0005 and speak to Becky, our adoption adviser, who is also an adoptive parent, about any aspect of adoption or your situation as a prospective adopter.

If you want to continue with your enquiry now, please contact us at **advice@ccsadoption.org**. Becky will then be in touch with you as soon as possible to discuss the next steps.

Adoption can seem daunting, and it is certainly one of the most important decisions you will make in your lifetime. That's why we take our responsibility seriously to ensure that you are as well prepared and supported as possible.

We hope to offer you every opportunity to think, reflect, learn, and share, both with other applicants and with experienced adopters, so you can make the best decisions for you and your family.



Our key achievements in 2024/25

13 new families approved to adopt
19 children placed for adoption
90 families accessed our therapeutic services
159 families accessed adoption support activities and social events

Our values

- Child Celtric
- Accepting & Inclusive
- Leading & Pioneering
- Responsible & Sustainable

Our Mission

Our mission is to create a positive future for children by building families and enabling them to grow and thrive.

Our Vision

A world where every child grows up in a safe, loving family.



Finding Families for Children

In the last 6 years, CCS has found homes for 175 children. In 2024/25:

- CCS received enquiries from 208 households, making their first enquiries about adoption.
- We held 12 information events, 2 for the LGBTQ+ community. 100 households attended these events in total.
- CCS held 34 preparation courses for potential adopters.
- We found new homes with adoptive families for 19 children, all aged between 1 and 9 years old.

CCS Adoption Support

IN 2025, 159 FAMILIES ATTENDED ACTIVITIES AND SOCIAL EVENTS

Tots Group
A playgroup for new adopters to bring their children, two mornings a week, to play in a safe and friendly environment.

Children and Young People
Regular 6-week activity programmes for adopted young people. Partnering with local organisations such as Empire Fighting Chance, HorseWorld and All-Aboard.

Wild 'n' Free
Half-day sessions run with Bristol Forest School allow parents to develop healthy attachment with their children in a relaxed and outdoor space.

LGBTQ+ Coffee Mornings
Monthly meet-ups for LGBTQ+ adopters and prospective adopters to meet, chat and share experiences of adoption.

Family Fun Afternoons
6 times a year, there are opportunities for the whole family to come together in a supportive environment with activities. These events also run 4 times a year for single adopters, to network and extend their support group.

Therapeutic service – key achievements

43 Consultations
Completed by associate Clinical Psychologists

Clinical Assessments
Completed by our psychologists

Therapeutic Interventions
Therapeutic support to adoptive families

Therapeutic Training
Hearts and Minds is our 6-week specialist therapeutic parenting programme



Some Useful Reading about Adoption

"No Matter What" by Sally Donovan is written by the author about her own experience adopting two young children and highlights, the challenges, and joys of adoptive family life.

"Big Steps for Little People" by Celia Foster. Parenting your adopted child.

"Proud Parents" by Nicola Hill. Lesbian and gay fostering and adoption experiences.

"Looking After Our Own" tells the stories of adopters from an ethnic minority background, edited by Hope Massiah. Explores their motivation to adopt, what their social workers had to offer, the roles of their friends and family and what adoption has meant to them.

"Adopting a brother or sister" by Heidi Argent, a guide for young children. Helpful for families who have a birth child or children.

"Therapeutic Parenting in a Nutshell" by Sarah Naish of the National Association of Therapeutic Parents.

"A Child's Journey Through Placement" by Vera Fahlberg.

"First Steps in Parenting the Child Who Hurts: Tiddlers and Toddlers" by Caroline Archer.

Other well-respected authors of adoption books include **Dan Hughes, Dan Siegel, Bruce Perry, Kim Golding, Margot Sutherland,** and **Karyn Purvis**.

Give Us Your Feedback

CCS welcomes feedback, so please get in touch if you have any comments or complaints at **0117 935 0005** or email **info@ccsadoption.org** or post CCS Adoption, The Park Centre, Daventry Road, Knowle, Bristol, BS4 1DQ.

For further information, please read the **CCS Adoption Complaints Procedure**.

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Ofsted Outstanding Provider

Registered with FUNDRAISING REGULATOR

early permanence Quality mark

The Park Centre, Daventry Road, Bristol BS4 1DQ
0117 935 0005 info@ccsadoption.org www.ccsadoption.org
Registered charity no. 286814 Registered company number 1655971
Registered charity: CCS Adoption