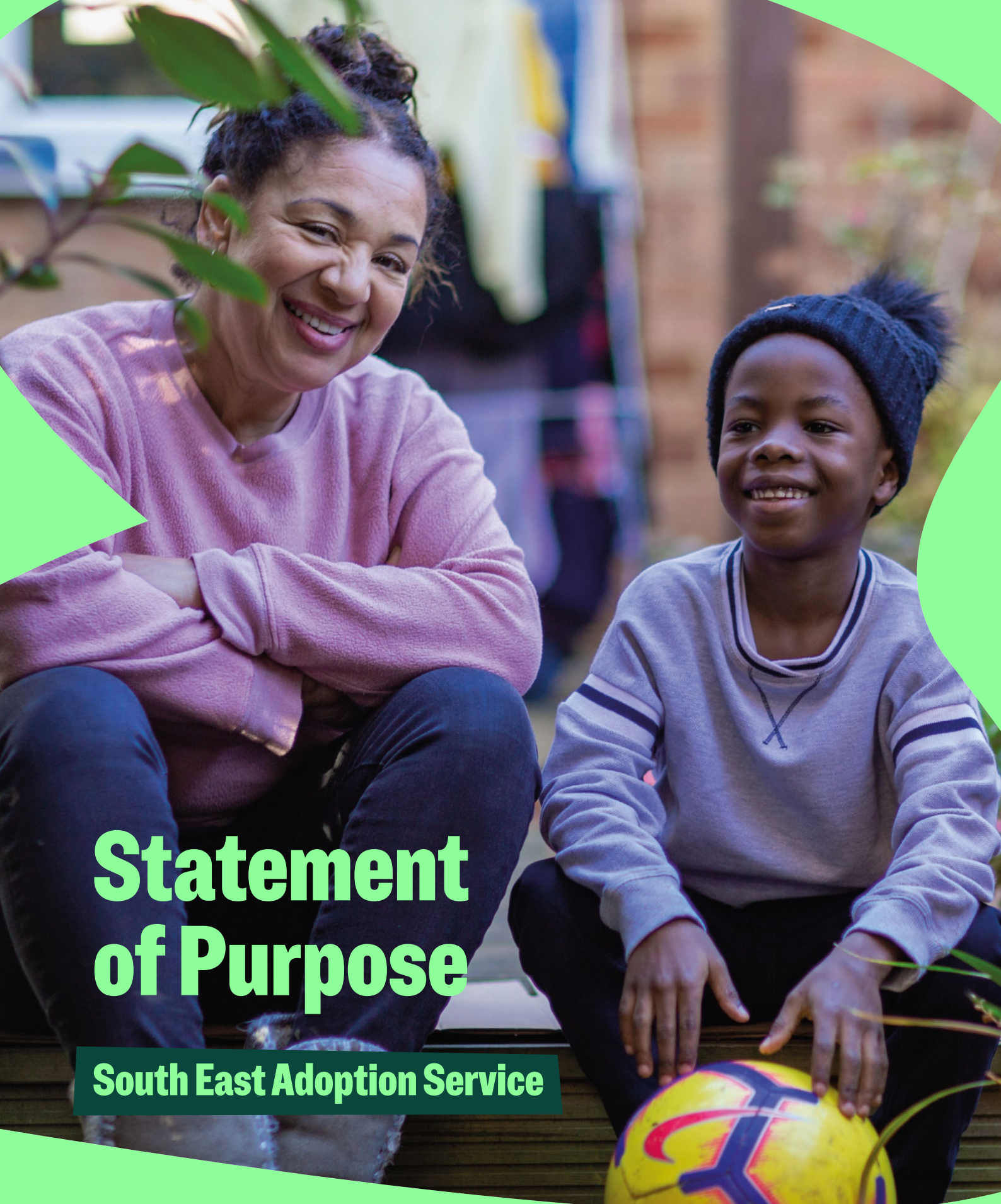




Statement of Purpose

South East Adoption Service

July 2026

Ofsted URN SC051838

Our **Adoption Service** address:
Tanners Lane, Barkingside,
Iford, Essex, IG6 1QG

This branch also provides one
adoption support service:

LINK Service -
Tanners Lane, Barkingside,
Iford, Essex, IG6 1QG



Changing childhoods. Changing lives.

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“Adoption provides children with stability, routine and a safe environment, and it doesn’t just change our lives, it changes our families life.”

Barnardo’s Adopter



Legal Framework

It is a requirement of the National Minimum Standards for Adoption that an adoption agency produces a Statement of Purpose. This Statement of Purpose has been written in accordance with:

- The Adoption Agency Regulations 2005 (amended 2011)
- The Voluntary Adoption Agencies and the Adoption Agencies (miscellaneous amendments) Regulations 2003 – England and Wales as amended by the Voluntary Adoption Agencies (Amendment regulations 2005)
- The Adoption National Minimum Standards (2011)
- The Care Planning Regulations 2010
- The Care Standards Act 2000
- The Children Act 1989
- The Adoption and Children Act 2002
- The Adoption Agencies and Independent Review of Determinations (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Adoption Agencies (Panel & Consequential Amendments) Regulations 2012
- The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review and Fostering Services (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2013.

A copy of this Statement of Purpose has been provided to Ofsted and is accessible on the Barnardo's website and is also available on request.

This Statement of Purpose is reviewed and updated on a regular basis, and at least annually.



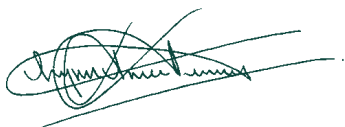
Message from CEO

For more than 150 years, Barnardo's has been changing childhoods and lives, including through our work helping hundreds of thousands of children and young people to live with loving foster families and adoptive parents.

Barnardo's supports around 370,000 children, young people, parents and carers each year through our services and partnerships across the UK.

We believe in all children and young people, and their potential. We support them, stand up for them and bring out the best in each and every child and young person.

We support adoptive parents to welcome children and young people who need a loving and supportive home. We provide over 20 fostering, adoption, and planned break services for families with children and young people of every age, gender, race and ability. Our comprehensive preparation, training and 24/7 support to adoptive parents makes us a trusted choice across the UK.



Lynn Perry MBE
Chief Executive, Barnardo's



Service Registration Details

Barnardo's is a company limited by guarantee (registered in England under number 61625) and a registered charity (numbers 216250 and SC037605). It was also registered as a trust corporation on 16 December 1926. Its governing instrument is the Memorandum and Articles of Association, most recently amended by special resolution passed on 17 July 2001.

Barnardo's South East Adoption is part of Barnardo's UK Fostering & Adoption Services.

Barnardo's Board of Trustees, by way of the Children and Young People's Committee, governs Barnardo's Adoption Agency. This committee meets every four months and receives reports from the UK Adoption Manager and Responsible Individual.

An annual report which provides an overview of Barnardo's adoption activity is presented to Barnardo's Board of Trustees. The Director coordinates the work of the Agency between Corporate Management and the Adoption Service.

The Responsible Individual is Brenda Farrell, Head of Fostering & Adoption, Barnardo's.

The UK Adoption Manager and Adoption Agency Decision Maker for Adoption and Early Permanence in Barnardo's is Jo-Ann Swanston-King.

Jo-Ann Swanston-King

Jo-Ann qualified as a social worker in 1995 and is registered with Social Work England. Jo-Ann has worked in both Local Authority and in the voluntary sector. She has worked in adoption services since 2005, in various roles as a practitioner, Practice Manager, Service Manager and Adoption Agency Registered Manager. This has also included acting as Adviser to adoption panel. Jo-Ann was the Operations Manager for Barnardo's Adoption North West between April 2019 – March 2021.

Jo-Ann holds the following qualifications:

- BA Honours degree in Applied Social Studies (1995)
- Diploma in Social Work (1995)
- Post Qualifying Award in Social Work (2010)
- Certificate In Professional Studies – Management and Leadership (2013)

The Responsible Individual and Agency Decision Makers can be contacted via:

Adoption England Registered Office:
Ofsted Registration is SC051836.

Barnardo's Adoption
Unit 9 – Regent Building 1st Floor
Pavilion Business Park
Royds Hall Rd
LS12 6AJ

This is the main office for Barnardo's Adoption UK management purposes.



Adoption Branches England:

There are three branches that place children for adoption and two offering dedicated adoption support services.

- Barnardo's Adoption Service South East - Ofsted Registration SC051838
Tanners Lane, Barkingside, Ilford, Essex, IG6 1QG

This branch also provides one adoption support service –

LINK Service - Tanners Lane, Barkingside, Ilford, Essex, IG6 1QG

- Barnardo's Adoption North England – Ofsted Registration SC051836
Unit 9, Pavilion Business Park, Royds Hall Road, Leeds, LS12 6AJ
This branch also has an office base in the North West and North East of the region.
- Barnardo's Adoption Midlands and South West - Ofsted Registration SC434885
The Granary, Tickenham Court Farm, Washing Pound Lane, Tickenham, Clevedon, BS21 6SX

Barnardo's CAFIS -

Ofsted Registration – 27627 10
Jubilee Way, Faversham, Kent, ME13 8GD

Adoption Support Branch England:

- Making Connections - Ofsted Registration SC051840
Barnardo's Making Connections, 140 Balaam St, London, E13 8RD
- Both birth records counselling and intermediary services

Adoption Branch Wales:

- Barnardo's Cymru Adoption - CIW Registration CS2005095655
Barnardo's Cymru, Britannia House, Van Road, Caerphilly, CF38 3GG

Adoption Branch Scotland:

- Barnardo's Scotland Adoption Service (incorporating both the Adoption Placement Service and Adoption Support Service).
SCSWIS Registration CS2005095655
Academy Park, Building 10,000, Gower St, Glasgow, G51 1PR

Adoption Branch Northern Ireland:

- Barnardo's Adoption Northern Ireland - RQIA Registration 020764
230B Belmont Road, Belfast, BT4 2AW

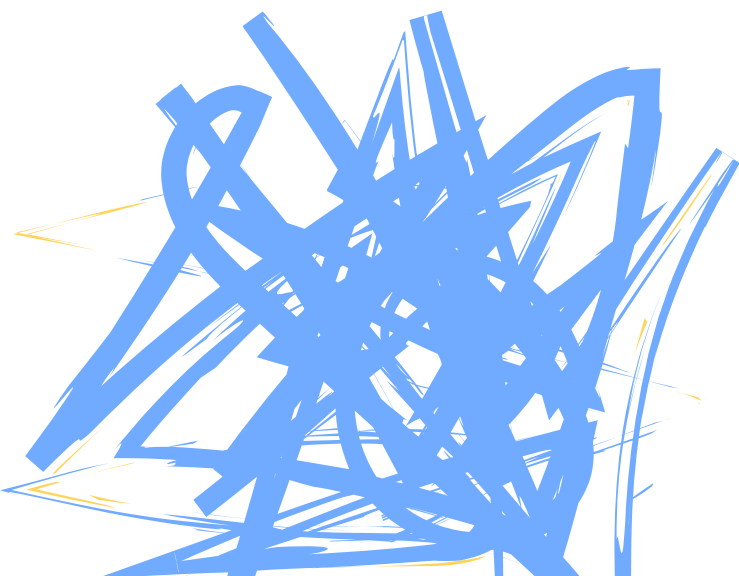
This is the statement of purpose for the South East Branch

The services are managed by Judy Allen (Operations Manager), Darren Johnson (Interim Manager) (LINK)

Any conditions for the time being in force in relation to the registration of the registered provider under Part II of the Care Standards Act 2000 - None.

The branch is registered to provide:

- Domestic adoption services and adoption support services
- Adoption support services to children and adults



Aims, Objectives and Outcomes

Aims

At Barnardo's, we believe that a child's future should never be defined by their past; every child deserves the chance to fulfil his or her potential.

We recognise that the children we seek to place are among the most vulnerable in our society. Children's views, wishes and feelings will be acted upon, unless it is contrary to their interests.

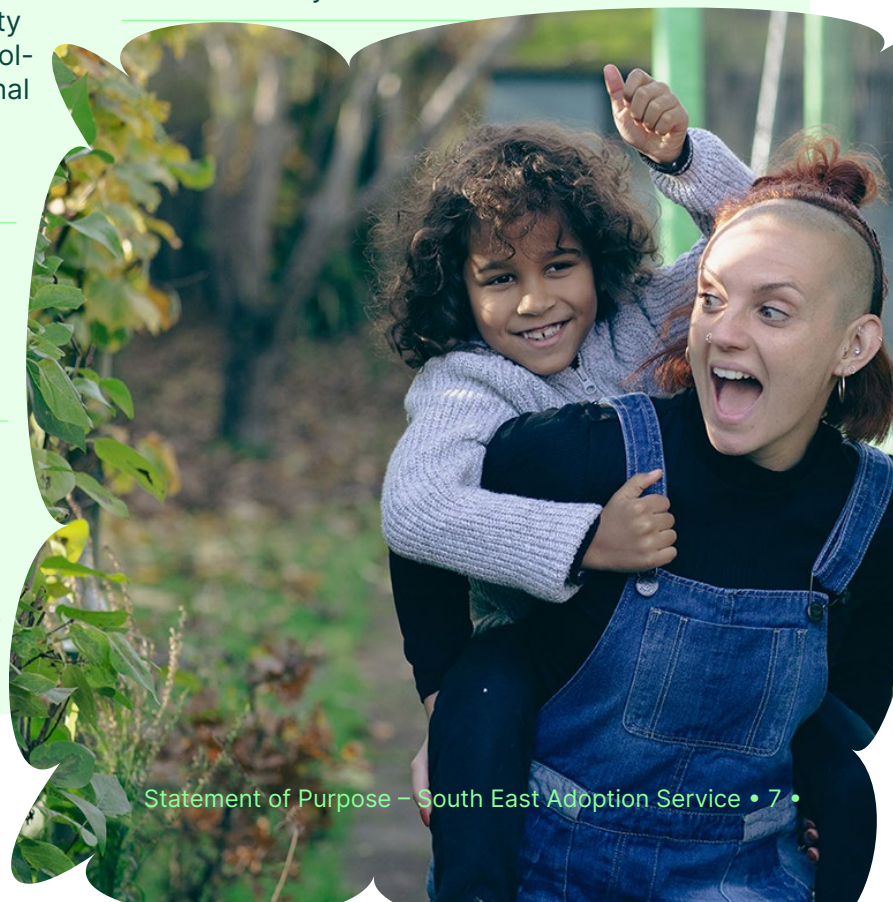
Barnardo's believes that good parents come from many different backgrounds and are as varied as the children we seek to place. Prospective adopters are required to demonstrate that they can safely and skilfully parent a child to independence and beyond. Adoption is a lifelong commitment and Barnardo's is committed to remaining responsive and supportive throughout that journey.

Barnardo's understands the importance of ethnic and cultural identity in its family placement work and aims, where possible, to achieve placements with adopters who reflect and/or promote the ethnic origin, cultural background, religion, and language of the children to be placed.

Appropriate support will be offered to each family to enable them to address the child's particular needs. This will include enhancing the parents' ability to understand and promote the child's positive self-esteem, confidence, and identity. Barnardo's has access to a wide spectrum of support services which can be accessed to respond to individual need.

Objectives and Outcomes

1. To provide children with safe, secure, and lasting adoptive families and our policies and services are directed towards achieving this outcome for children in need of adoption.
2. To increase placement choice and to reduce delay in the adoption process for children. The children most likely to need our service are those of black and minority ethnic backgrounds, sibling groups, school-aged children, children who have additional needs arising from learning or physical disabilities and children with emotional and behavioural difficulties.
3. To recruit, prepare, assess, and support prospective adoptive families. Potential adoptive families will be considered based on their capability to meet the needs of the identified children.
4. To seek and provide a high level of emotional, practical, and legal support to children and families post adoption. The agency will support families to access appropriate adoption support.
5. The agency offers support and counselling to adults who have an adoption connection and offers an intermediary service to adults for whom Barnardo's is the relevant adoption agency.
6. Barnardo's can offer a range of training and consultancy.



Service & Staff Structure

The branch is structured as an adoption placement service and two adoption support services, with overall responsibility held by an Operations Manager for each. The relevant qualifications and experience of the Operations Manager are:

Placements

The adoption placement service is managed by Judy Allen, Operations Manager.

Judy has experience as a Social Worker, initially within Local Authority front-line teams and, since 2002, has been specialising in adoption. Judy holds a CQSW and Diploma in SW and is a qualified Practice Teacher. Whilst working within Local

Authorities she had experience as a manager and as a practice educator, involved in student seminars and lectures. Judy has been employed by Barnardo's since 2014 initially as a Practice Manager, before taking on the role of Operations Manager in December 2019.

Adoption Support

Operations Manager is currently a vacant post. Darren Johnson Acting Head of Business is overseeing the service.



Job roles and qualifications

Placements Service Management Team

The service management team comprises of the Operations Manager and 1 full time Practice Manager. The Operations Manager is the registered manager of the adoption service and is responsible for the overall operation of the service. She is responsible for budgetary control and the development and implementation of the strategic aims and objectives of the organisation.

Both the Operations Manager and Practice Manager are qualified Social Workers registered with Social Work England and are responsible for the supervision, development and management of the Social Workers and Project Workers within the team. They have significant experience in adoption and wider children's services and a proven track record of delivering successful outcomes for children and adopters. The Practice Manager takes responsibility for developing training and support services for adopters and coordinating training alongside responsibilities for recruitment and assessment.

Social Workers

There are 3 full time and 3 part time qualified Social Workers within the team who are all registered with Social Work England. There is currently a vacant part-time social worker post. They undertake the preparation, assessment, and support of adopters. All social workers undertaking assessments of prospective adopters will either have a minimum of 3 post-qualifying years of social work practice, which includes adoption work, or they will be supervised by a manager who has significant experience of adoption.

Project Workers

There are 3 full time project workers within the service whose focus is on linking and matching children with our approved adopters. This includes working with newly approved adopters to draw up a family finding profile, liaising with other family finders throughout Barnardo's adoption service nationally, developing relationships with Local Authorities to share information about and promote Barnardo's waiting families and representing the service and supporting prospective adopters at regional and national family finding events. They also have a key role to play in the service's support package leading network and support groups and managing the post preparation training package alongside the Operations Manager.

Administration

The service is supported by an experienced and efficient administrative team who ensure that systems run smoothly and that all who contact the agency have a positive experience. The Senior Service Administrator manages and supervises the Administration team.

Services Provided

The recruitment, preparation, and assessment of prospective adopters

Early permanence placements

Family finding for approved adopters

Pre and post approval workshops and training days

Early Placement Therapy at the point of matching with a child

A high level of emotional, practical, and legal support to children and families post placement

Therapeutic parenting courses for adoptive families

Out of hours telephone support and advice

Adopter support groups and regular social events

Mentoring scheme where an experienced adopter provides support to another adopter

Assessment of need for post-adoption support, including supporting applications to the Adoption Support Fund

Post adoption counselling and psychotherapy services provided by Barnardo's LINK adoption support

Play therapy

Dyadic developmental therapy

Support and counselling to adults who have an adoption connection and an intermediary service to adults for whom Barnardo's is the relevant adoption agency

LINK Adoption and Family Support Service

For more than twenty years Barnardo's LINK has been providing therapeutic services to anyone affected by adoption.

This includes therapeutic services for prospective adopters, adoptive families, adopted children and young people, adopted adults, birth family members and, in recent years, families where children are placed under a Special Guardianship Order (SGO).

We have accredited independent therapists based across London, East Anglia, South East and South West England, who can meet with adoptive families face-to-face in their own homes to work together on the principles and practice of therapeutic parenting.

Our Attachment Focused Therapy (AFT) service is designed to encourage the attachment or bonding between the adoptive parent/s and their child/ren in order to build the beginnings of a trusting relationship, one which gives mutual attachment, predictability, esteem, and pleasure.

This therapeutic parenting model is underpinned by Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy, promoting the principles of PACE (Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, Empathy), as developed by Dan Hughes.

Funding for these services is available through the Adoption and Special Guardianship Support Fund [ASGSF], up to £3,000 per child per year. You can either ask your Social Worker about how to apply to the ASGSF.

The LINK team comprises: an Operations Manager (vacant post), 2 Practice Managers, 2 Senior Therapy Coordinators, 3 Therapy Coordinators, a Senior Service Administrator and 4 Administrators.



Recruitment & Support for Adoptive Families

Barnardo's policies, procedures and standards for the recruitment and assessment of prospective adopters are in line with required regulations and standards for adoption services.

Initial enquiry

On receiving an adoption enquiry, we will respond and take enquirers' initial details to ensure that they live within our geographical recruitment area. We will answer questions enquirers have about the adoption process and send them an information pack which will include further details about adoption and the processes.

Information meeting

If an enquirer wishes to proceed, they will be invited to an information meeting. This may be an online or face to face event. They are usually held monthly, and the dates will be available to view on our website. Here enquirers will be given more information about adoption and particularly the adoption process, the children who need adoption and how we can support them.

Initial visits

We can also offer initial visits, these can be face to face at your home or virtual usually using video technology. These visits provide more information and help enquirers decide if they feel adoption is for them. This is an opportunity for enquirers to find out more about the adoption process and allows us to find out more about enquirers. After this, the enquirer will have time to consider whether adoption is right for them at this time.

If the enquirer wishes to move to the next stage, they will be required to formally complete the Registration of Interest form.

Registration of Interest form and checks

The Registration of Interest form will request consent from an enquirer for us to make the following checks:

- DBS checks to obtain information about criminal behaviour and convictions. Not all offences will create difficulties regarding an application, but it is essential that any concerns are discussed when we take up the Registration of Interest.
- References from other agencies such as Local Authority (LA) Children Services, mortgage providers or landlords and employers.
- We will request details of personal references, and these will normally include both family and friends who know you well. This will be discussed further with you.
- We will also request consent for a full medical check.

When a Registration of Interest has been submitted to the agency, we will let you know within five working days our decision and, if accepted, we will request that the enquirer be able to commence the Stage One process.



Stage One - The Pre-Assessment process

It is expected that Stage One will normally be completed in two months. During this stage, the prospective adopter will be exploring the extent of their interest in and capacity for adoption, prior to the agency making the decision on whether to proceed to Stage Two assessment. For this reason, Stage One will focus on initial training and preparation, and on ascertaining, through prescribed checks and references, whether there is any absolute reason why the enquirer should not proceed further.

Part of this stage will involve the enquirer to complete tasks in their workbook such as describing their family, learning about children who may be adopted, sharing their experience with children etc.

We recognise that people come to adoption from many different circumstances and life experiences. We will fully guide an enquirer so that they can discover the strengths and vulnerabilities they may bring to the task of adoptive parenting. We will together draw up a Stage One agreement which will clearly set out what needs to be done in a way that feels right for the enquirer.

Preparation training

During this stage we will invite the enquirer to start a preparation course. This involves a series of sessions with other people who are also in stage 1 and specialist staff. This will give the enquirer information and opportunities to thoroughly explore their expectations of adopting.

They will meet other people at the same stage of the process, as well as people who have already adopted and will be given the chance to think more about the children in need of adoption. This is a compulsory part of the adoption process.

During Stage One, we will complete the formal checks and ask the enquirer to visit their GP for a medical check. We will keep in touch with the enquirer throughout Stage One and prior to completion will review progress with them and highlight any concerns or need for further enquiries.

Stage One ends with the decision as to whether the prospective adopter is suitable to proceed to Stage Two assessment. If so, and they also wish to continue, the enquirer will be asked to confirm their acceptance within six months and will need to be fully available to engage in Stage Two at that point.



Stage 2

When we receive a prospective adopter's acceptance of the invitation to Stage Two, a social worker will meet them and together they will complete a Stage Two plan (Agreement). This will indicate a timeline for undertaking the prospective adopter's individual assessment and this stage would normally be completed within four months.

Adoption assessment process

During the assessment process the prospective adopter's worker will spend more time with them, getting to know them better and exploring their life story and family history. If the enquirer has children at home, their social worker will also need to get to know them as part of the family unit.

Towards the end of this stage the worker will complete an Adoption Assessment Report (AAR) to be presented to the Adoption Panel.

The prospective adopter will have an opportunity to see and comment on this report before it is presented to the panel. The Adoption Panel is made up of experienced individuals from a range of professions working with children and may also include someone who has previously adopted and someone who has been adopted. The panel will consider the information provided and the prospective adopter will be invited to meet them in person after which the panel will make a recommendation as to whether the prospective adopter is suitable to adopt. The final decision is then made by the Barnardo's Adoption Agency Decision Maker.

Family finding/matching

Once the prospective adopter has been approved as 'suitable to adopt' we will assist them in family finding. We will meet with the prospective adopter and complete a Matching Plan Agreement which outlines the process in identifying a child/ren for whom the prospective adopter may be suitable. We will also assist them to draw up a short profile of themselves which will be shared with family finders for children in Local Authorities. We ask that all prospective adopters prepare a book or DVD about themselves to share with the child who may eventually join their family. The prospective adopter will also be registered on Link Maker which supports linking approved adopters with children who have an adoption plan. There is currently no active National Adoption Register in England.

Children needing adoption are referred in several ways and the prospective adopter's social worker and Project Workers will support them in looking at

profiles of children and expressing an interest in children whose needs they feel they can meet. If the child's social worker feels that the prospective adopter may be the right individual/family then meetings will take place to discuss the child in more detail allowing the prospective adopter to get as much information as possible.

When the prospective adopter and the workers agree that all seems right, a formal 'matching' recommendation will go to the Local Authority's Adoption Panel. This will also involve recommendations about any additional support the adopter may need.

If the 'match' is agreed, then a meeting will take place with the prospective adopter to plan the introductions and placement. At Barnardo's we will work closely with prospective adopters throughout these processes and support them in settling the children into their family.

Once a child is placed, the child's social worker and the prospective adopter's social worker will continue to visit the family regularly to make sure all is okay. The prospective adopter will be supported throughout the placement and through to the adoption order court hearing and regular review meetings will take place until the child is legally adopted. The prospective adopter will have the opportunity to attend further training, adopter support groups and social events and be part of our mentoring scheme. Once everybody is confident that the placement is going well, the adopter will be able to apply for an Adoption Order. The timing of the application will be discussed at the review meetings.

Post-adoption support

Adoption is a lifelong journey and Barnardo's will support adopters every step of the way including in the years that follow. Post-adoption support is assistance or support required for the purpose of ensuring the continuance of the relationship between an adoptive child and their adoptive parents. When a child is placed with an adopter, there will be an adoption support plan drawn up which will reference both of their support needs. Many families need additional support and there are several services available to help as the adopter and child build their relationship. Barnardo's offers a range of support and the right option for an adopter will depend on their individual situation. When the adopter gets in touch with us, we will work with them to identify their adoption support needs.

Quality Monitoring & Governance

There are a range of systems in place to monitor and evaluate the provision of Barnardo's adoption services, to ensure they are effective and that the quality is of an appropriate standard -

All Social Workers are registered with Social Work England and all staff are subject to DBS checks and references.

- All staff receive regular formal supervision and an annual Performance and Goals Review (PGR).
- All adoption panel members will be formally appraised on an annual basis.
- The agency will produce an annual report about the activity and performance of panel including statistics, membership and issues of interest or concern
- Panel will receive a half yearly update from the agency on the progress of approved adopters in family finding and placements made.
- Panel will provide feedback on the quality of reports to the agency every six months.
- All prospective adopters and social workers will be asked to provide written feedback following attendance at panel.
- Panel considers reports of disrupted placements and cases referred to the Independent Review Mechanism to advise on lessons to be learned.
- All approved prospective adopters who do not have placements will have an annual review.



- The service request that all approved adopters complete the feedback survey.
- The service collects children and young people's feedback at events.
- Quarterly Performance reviews of the service are carried out by the Assistant Head of Business.
- A report on the adoption service is presented three times a year to the board of trustees.
- Our initial enquiry service is periodically subject to 'mystery shopping' carried out by First4Adoption.
- The adoption service is inspected by Ofsted.



Complaints, compliments, allegations & whistleblowing

Complaints

The aim of Barnardo's complaints process is to resolve a complaint at the most informal level possible. Complaints can be made in writing or orally to any member of staff up to and including the CEO.

The stages to managing any complaint are:

Initial Stage- Early Resolution

A worker or manager listens to the complaint and agrees a course of action to resolve the situation. It is an opportunity to resolve concerns or complaints without recourse to a formal process.



Stage 1- Formal Complaint

When the worker or manager has been unable to resolve concerns at the early resolution stage or the complaint is such that the manager considers a stage one would be the first step.



Stage 2- Final Complaint

When the complaint has been investigated at Stage One and the complainant remains unhappy with the outcome. Decision to investigate at stage two is made by the complaints lead manager. Another manager will be the investigating officer and an independent person will shadow the investigation.

Complaints contact:

Barnardo's Head Office, Tanners Lane, Ilford, Essex IG6 1QG

Telephone: **020 8550 8822** Email: **cs.complaints@barnardos.org.uk**



Compliments

We celebrate our work and achievements with compliments and commendations being recorded. Here is a selection of comments made about our staff and the services we offer:

Young Inspectors (Jan 2025) say -

"Adopters receive an extensive training package and feel the assessment process and early permanence training is excellent. Adopters feel that the service always puts the child at the forefront"

"The service is very child focused and offers young people the chance to attend events and networking activities to obtain children's views. Adopters are encouraged to support young people in making the right choices"

Ofsted Inspection Jan 2026:

Inspectors said –

"The voluntary adoption agency provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standard of good. The actions of the voluntary adoption agency contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences, for children, young people and adults."

"Extensive support is offered to people affected by adoption through the agency's Making Connections service). This work is undertaken with skill and sensitivity. It makes a significant difference to people's lives by helping them to understand the impact of adoption on their lives and family."

"The views and wishes of children are listened to and taken seriously. Children record questions to ask prospective adopters at the panel. The agency has formed a 'Young Inspectors' group, which invites children to give their views about the quality of the service being provided by the agency."

"Leaders and managers show an ambitious vision and are child-focused. They ensure very high standards of comprehensive adoption support for adoptive families, which is a strength of the agency."



Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is the reporting of a concern in the public interest that something is happening within Barnardo's that should not be, or not happening that should be. It is based on the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (PIDA). Barnardo's is committed to the highest standards of openness, integrity, accountability and practice and concerns can be raised via the Whistleblowing process.

Safecall is our Whistleblowing service provider, and their details are below. The link [here](#) also takes through how we handle any reports we receive. You can contact Safecall on 0800 915 1571 or online through the '**Report a Whistleblowing Concern**'. Your report won't be traced and Safecall has trained operators to support you. The service is free, confidential and open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Other routes of complaint

Where a service is registered with an external body (e.g., Ofsted or Care Inspectorate), complainants may directly approach the relevant regulatory body. The regulatory body has the power to investigate the complaint itself or require Barnardo's or the relevant local authority / trust to do so.

Contact details:

**Ofsted,
Piccadilly Gate,
Store Street,
Manchester
M1 2WD**

Ofsted Information Helpline: **0300 123 1231**

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

You can also contact the Children's Commissioner
www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk

The Ombudsman - Complainants have the right to contact the Inspecting body for adoption work Ofsted or the Local Government Ombudsman if they remain dissatisfied. The Ombudsman can be contacted at:

**Local Government Ombudsman,
PO Box 4771,
COVENTRY,
CV4 0EH**

Telephone: 0300 0610614 (Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5.00pm) Email: advice@lgo.org.uk

**IRM -
Independent Review Mechanism (IRM),
Unit 4, Pavilion Business Park,**

**Royds Hall Road, Wortley, Leeds, LS12 6AJ,
Telephone: 0845 450 3956**

**[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/
independent-review-mechanism](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/independent-review-mechanism)**



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barnardos.org.uk

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Northern Ireland 542–544 Upper Newtownards
Road, Belfast BT4 3HE. 028 9067 2366.

Scotland 111 Oxfords Road North, Edinburgh
EH14 1ED. 0131 446 7000.

Barnardo's Cymru Ely Family Centre,
Grand Avenue, Cardiff CF5 4LE. 029 2049 3387.

