

**STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

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**Region: London, East and South East**

**Date:** **June 2019**

**Registered: Adoption Agency**

**Registration Body: Ofsted**

**Registration Number: SC051838**



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**Introduction**

#### 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.

**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 on the basis of 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 look to help families in accessing the 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 Registration Details**

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

Barnardo’s Board of Trustees, by way of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee, governs Barnardo’s Adoption Agency.

This committee meets every four months and receives reports from the Responsible Individual.

An annual report is presented to Barnardo's Board of Trustees with an overview of the agency adoption work. The Commercial Director coordinates the work of the Agency between Corporate management and the Family Placement Business Line.

The Responsible Individual is Brenda Farrell, Head of Business, Family Placement.

The Adoption Agency Manager is Carolyn Oliver, Assistant Head of Business – Adoption.

The Adoption Decision Maker is -

* Carolyn Oliver, Assistant Head of Business, who is a qualified Social Worker with a CQSW and B.A. in Social Studies (1977). She also has a Certificate in Management (2004). She has worked in Family Placement since 1977, specialising in Adoption since 1981.

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

**Adoption England Registered Office**

Barnardo’s

Barnardo’s Youth Village

Hudson St.

North Shields

NE30 1DL

**Telephone**: 0191 2963355

This is the main registered office for Barnardo’s Adoption in England and Wales and for UK management purposes. The Ofsted registration number is SC048403.

In Scotland, the Social Care and Social Work Improvement registration number is CS2005095655.

**Branches - England and Wales**

There are six branches that place children for adoption and an additional branch offering dedicated adoption support services. An Operations Manager manages each branch.

The Adoption Branches are:

* Barnardo’s Adoption Service South East

54 Head Street, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1PB

This branch also provides adoption support by contract to Kent Local Authority and from an office base at 10 Jubilee Way, Faversham, Kent, ME13 8GD.

* Barnardo’s Adoption Midlands

Brooklands, Great Cornbow, West Midlands, B63 3AB

* Barnardo’s Fostering and Adoption Yorkshire

Unit 6, Pavilion Business Park, Royds Hall Road, Leeds, LS12 6AJ

This branch also has an office base at 222 Eccles Old Road, Salford, M6 8AL.

* Barnardo’s Fostering and Adoption North East

1 Lumley Court, Drum Industrial Estate, Chester le Street, Durham, DH2 1AN

* Barnardo's Cymru Adoption and Fostering

Trident Court, East Moors Road, Cardiff, CF24 5TD

* Barnardo’s Adoption Services South West

The Fulford Centre, Gatehouse Avenue, Withywood, Bristol, BS13 9AQ

The Adoption Support Branch is:

* Making Connections

Barnardo's Making Connections, 140 Balaam St, London, E13 8RD

Registration number SC051840

The Scotland Service – registered with SCSWIS is:

* Barnardo’s Scotland Adoption Service (BSAS) (incorporating both the Adoption Placement Service and Adoption Support Service) Academy Park, Building 10,000, Gower St, Glasgow, G51 1PR

**This is the statement of purpose for the London, East and South East Branch.**

Name and address of the Manager:

Hayley Phillips & Sarah Wilkinson (Please note this is a job share role)

Barnardo’s

54 Head Street

Colchester

CO1 1PB

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
* Both birth records counselling and intermediary services
* Adoption support services to children and adults

**Service staff**

**Job roles and qualifications**

The relevant qualifications and experience of the branch managers are:

**The senior manager is**

Charanjit Kang is a qualified social worker with over 25 years post qualifying experience. HCPC registered. Considerable experience of strategic leadership, service management, extensive experience of service delivery in local government of which 10 years has been in management. 15 years of social work experience in children and family services and care proceedings, with Cafcass in private proceedings. Experience of successfully managing change working at a supervision/managerial level to develop high performing social work teams. Experience of Practice Teacher and Social Work lecturer, teaching/lecturing in DipSW and PQ Child Care Award.

**Agency Decision Maker is**

Carolyn Oliver, Assistant Head of Business, who is a qualified Social Worker with a CQSW and B.A. in Social Studies (1977). She also has a Certificate in Management (2004). She has worked in Family Placement since 1977, specialising in Adoption since 1981.

**Management team**

The branch is structured as an adoption placement service and an adoption support service with overall responsibility held by an Operational manager for each.

**Placements**

This service is managed by Hayley Phillips and Sarah Wilkinson, Operations Managers. Hayley commenced this post in September 2017 having previously acted as Panel Adviser.

Hayley has twenty-five years’ experience as a social worker and holds a Diploma in Social Work, a Postgraduate Diploma in Children and Families Social Work, a Certificate in Children and Young Peoples Management, and a Postgraduate Certificate in Management. Hayley has extensive knowledge and experience of fostering and adoption services and has held posts in Local Authorities as Head of Service, Professional Advisor and Panel Advisor.

Sarah commenced her role in October 2018. Sarah has worked as a qualified Social Worker with children and families for 15 years. She holds a Diploma in Social Work and a graduate degree in Children and Families Social Work. Sarah has worked in adoption services for 12 years, as a practitioner and more latterly, as a manager for both a Local Authority and a Regional Adoption Agency.

**Support**

The LINK support service is currently managed by Sarah Wilkinson and Charanjit Kang on an interim basis. Lesley Singleton is the Manager for CAFIS.

The Operational managers are responsible for budgetary control and the development and implementation of the strategic aims and objectives of the organisation.

The Operational managers oversee 4 Practice Managers (Placements)

and 3 Practice Managers (Support).

All placement service team managers are professionally qualified Social Workers registered with the HCPC and are responsible for the supervision, development and management of the senior practitioners and social workers within the teams. All have significant experience in adoption and wider children’s services and a proven track record of delivering successful outcomes for children and adopters. Team Managers take responsibility for developing training and support services for adopters and coordinate training alongside responsibilities for recruitment and assessment. They are responsible for the supervision, development and management of the social workers within their teams.

Three practice managers oversee the adoption support service (LINK). They are both qualified and experienced therapists registered with the BACP

**Social Workers**

There are 10 qualified Social Workers within the teams who are all registered with the HCPC. 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.

The service also engages a small pool of independent consultants, all of whom are professional qualified social workers, registered with the HCPC, who are available to carry out assessments and provide training and therapeutic services for adopters.

The Kent CAFIS adoption support team consist of four qualified social workers, all HCP registered and one of senior adoption experience. The team also have two project workers that assist with managing the large 1200 cases letterbox service, and is supported by three Administrators. This Unique project runs Birth Family Support Groups. Supporting birth relatives who have lost a child to adoption as well as supporting adopted adults and birth relatives access information and re-connect. The service is managed by Lesley Singleton who was a Senior Social Worker within the team having worked with CAFIS since 2011. She has over 20 years’ experience of working with children and young people, in youth offending and children and families, as well as within private proceedings. Within all of these roles she has undertaken, parenting, protective, and risk as well as Prospective adopter assessment reports. Lesley has post qualifying awards in Child Care and Practice Teaching and has supervised over fifteen Student Social Workers.

**Family finders**

The service has 2 family finder posts focusing 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. We ensure prospective adopters are logged on Adoption Match and LINK maker and encouraged to be actively engaged.

**Administration**

There are two Service Administrators (Placement and Support) who manage and supervise the Administration teams and take responsibility for finance and budgets monitoring.

**Services provided**

The branch provides:

* The recruitment, preparation and assessment of prospective adopters.
* Early permanence placements.
* Family finding for approved adopters.
* A range of 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.
* Adopter support groups and regular social events.
* Mentoring where an experienced adopter provides support to another adopter.
* Assessment of need for post-adoption support, including supporting applications to the Adoption Support Fund.
* Therapeutic 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 (via referral to our Making Connections branch).
* Direct and indirect contact support to families referred by Kent
* Independent support of birth parents and relatives on referral from Kent and other Adoption services.

**Recruitment, approval, review and support for adoptive parents**

*This section provides information on the procedures for recruiting, preparing, assessing, approving and supporting prospective adoptive parents.*

**Initial enquiry**

On receiving an enquiry from a prospective adopter, 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 via our daily duty service and send them an information pack which will include further details about adoption and the processes.

**Information meeting**

If a prospective adoption enquiry is deemed suitable and the enquirer wishes to proceed, they will be invited to an information event Here the prospective adopter will be given more information about adoption and particularly the adoption process with Barnardo’s and how we can support them. The will also have opportunity to meet with experienced adopters who are happy to share their experiences and to answer questions.

**Initial home visit**

The next stage, should the prospective adopter wish to continue and we wish to consider their enquiry further, will be for one of our social workers to visit the enquirer at their home. This is an opportunity for them to find out more about the adoption process and also allows us to find out more about them. After this, the prospective adopter 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 preliminary 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 with regard to 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 landlord and employer.
* We will request details of four personal references.
* We will also request consent for a full medical check.

When a Registered of Interest has been completed, we will respond within five working days and, if accepted, we will request that the enquirer be in a position to commence Stage One preparation.

**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 a firmer decision on whether to proceed to Stage Two. 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 prospective adopter to start a preparation course. This involves a series of sessions with other prospective adopters 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 also ask the enquirer to visit their GP for a medical check. We will keep in touch with the enquirer throughout Stage One and towards its completion will review progress with them and highlight any concerns or need for further enquiries.

Stage One ends with the agency decision as to whether the prospective adopter is suitable to proceed to Stage Two. 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.

**Application to Stage Two**

When we receive an enquirer’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 a Prospective Adopter’s Report (PAR) 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 they will make a recommendation as to whether the enquirer is suitable to adopt. The final decision is then made by the Barnardo’s Adoption Decision Maker.

**Family finding/matching**

Once the prospective adopter has been approved by the agency as

‘suitable to adopt’ we will assist them in family finding. We will meet with the approved adopter and complete a Matching Plan Agreement which outlines the process in identifying a child/ren for whom the approved 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 approved adopters prepare a book or DVD about themselves to share with the child who may eventually join their family. The approved adopter will also be referred to a national register, Adoption Match which acts to link approved adopters with children who have an adoption plan.

Children needing adoption are referred in a number of ways and an approved adopters social worker and family finder 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 approved adopter may be the right individual/family then meetings will take place to discuss the child in more detail allowing the adopter to get as much information as possible.

When the approved 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 adopter to plan the introductions and placement. At Barnardo’s we will work closely with adopters throughout these processes and also support them in settling the children into their family.

Once a child is placed, the child’s social worker and the adopter’s social worker will continue to visit the family regularly to make sure all is okay. The adopter will be supported throughout the placement and through to the court hearing where regular review meetings will take place until the child is legally adopted. The adopter will also 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.

**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 placement and post order 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 a number of 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.

**The Adoption LINK Support Menu of Service**

The branch delivers a range of therapeutic support services to adopters both those families approved by the branch and also through L.A. commissioned contracts and individually purchased support packages to families, birth relatives and Special Guardians.

Barnardo’s encourages LAs/RAAs placing children with families approved by the Branch to access our Early Placement Therapy.

Non agency referrals for support from the menu of service attached as Appendix 1 are made through the LINK service helpdesk.

LINK recruits, trains and supports therapists with a range of specialist training and with membership of the relevant professional body. They are independent therapists who all access regular clinical supervision in addition to the case oversight provided by our practice managers and counselling co-ordinators. All therapists accepted by us receive our specialist adoption support and attachment focused training.

**Monitoring and evaluation**

* All Social Workers are registered with the HCPC and all staff are subject to DBS checks and references.
* All therapists are registered with their professional body and receive independent clinical supervision.
* All staff receives regular formal supervision and an annual Performance and Development Review (PDR).
* 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 IRM to advise on lessons to be learned.
* All approved prospective adopters who do not have placements will have an annual review.
* 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.
* The adoption service is inspected by Ofsted.

**Feedback and Compliments**

We are always looking at ways to improve our service and therefore we always welcome your feedback, comments and compliments about any aspect of the service you have received. These will be used to ensure continuous service improvements.

**Representation Complaint**

Children placed with Barnardo’s have access to a complaints procedure and children will be encouraged and supported to raise any concerns and make a complaint when they wish to do so. An advocate, either their Social Worker, adoptive parent or a children’s rights worker, or a friend will help and support them in being heard. Children’s personal wishes are taken into account, where appropriate, as are their age, ability and understanding.

All prospective adopters have access to Barnardo’s complaints procedure and will be given information on how to contact /complain to the relevant inspectorate body.

In England and Wales, once a prospective adopter’s application has been considered by a Panel which does not recommend approval, applicants have access to the Independent Review Mechanism through the Panel Representation Procedures (copies of which are available in branches).

In addition to prospective adopters’ rights to have access to the IRM if appropriate, adopters can also access the Barnardo’s complaints procedures.

**Complaints and Representation Policy - summary**

## *Who is the Complaints Policy for?*

* Prospective or approved adopters who have reached at least Stage 2 of the assessment process.
* Children and young people who are unhappy with the way they have been treated by Barnardo’s.
* Other adult service users.

## *Who are complaints made to?*

* To a worker or manager in the service – verbally or in writing.
* To a senior manager in the region – verbally or in writing.
* To the complaints officer at the national headquarters – in writing.

## What happens next?

*Stage 1 – local resolution of the complaint:*

* The complainant is contacted to clarify the complaint.
* The complaint is investigated by an appropriate person within the service or another worker from the service.
* The investigator and complainant meet to discuss the conclusion and any action that may be advised to put things right.
* The investigation will normally be completed within:
  + - 10 working days from receipt of the complaint by the responsible manager.
* If the complainant is unhappy with the outcome they have the right to have their complaint re-examined under Stage 2 of the Procedure. The complainant has 20 days after being informed of the outcome of Stage 1 to request a Stage 2 investigation.

*Stage 2 - resolution, using someone independent of the service to investigate the complaint:*

* An independent person is appointed by a senior manager within the region to work with an investigating officer from Barnardo's (not the investigator from Stage 1).
* They re-examine the complaint after speaking to the complainant.
* They produce reports for the Head of Business for Barnardo’s Family Placement services who after considering them will contact the complainant to inform them of his/her decision concerning the outcome and any action if needed.
* A Stage 2 investigation is completed within 25 working days
* If a complainant remains unhappy with the outcome a request to progress to a Stage 3 can be made and this must be made within 20 working days of receipt of the outcome of the Stage 2 investigation.
* A Stage 3 is a review of the complaints process and can make recommendations for resolutions.
* A Stage 3 review is undertaken at director level independent of the Barnardo’s Adoption Agency and will normally be completed within:
* 45 working days of the request being made and agreed.

**Other routes of complaint**

Complainants may directly approach the relevant regulatory body; Ofsted at any stage. Ofsted has the power to investigate the complaint itself or require Barnardo’s or the relevant local authority to do so.

**Registration Authority Details**

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

Ofsted Information Helpline: 0300 123 1231

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

Website: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted)

**Other relevant contact details**

**Barnardo’s Head Office**

Tanners Lane

Ilford

Essex

IG6 1QG

Telephone: 020 8550 8822

Mobile: 07917 187718 *(for text or voice mail about complaints)*

Email: [cs.complaints@barnardos.org.uk](mailto:cs.complaints@barnardos.org.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

Email: [advice@lgo.org.uk](mailto:advice@lgo.org.uk)

Telephone: 0300 0610614 *(Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5.00pm)*

**The Children’s Rights Director**

A further source of help for a child or young person may be found through the Children’s Rights Director;

Ofsted

Alexandra House

33 Kingsway

LONDON

WC2 6SE

Telephone: 08456 404040

Website: [www.Rights4me.org.uk](http://www.Rights4me.org.uk)

