

Further information

For more information about adopting a child from the City of Edinburgh Council, please contact the Permanence Team.

tel: **0131 556 6787**

e-mail: **familybasedcare.east@edinburgh.gov.uk**

Staff in the Permanence Team will be pleased to answer your questions and provide support and advice.

You can also find out more about caring for Edinburgh's children online at: **www.edinburgh.gov.uk/fostering**



HAPPY TO TRANSLATE

ترجمہ کے لئے حاضر ہمسعدنا توفیر الترجمة 很乐意翻译
MOŻEMY PRZETŁUMACZYĆ আনন্দের সঙ্গে অনুবাদ করব

You can get this document on tape, in Braille, **large print** and various computer formats if you ask us. Please contact the Interpretation and Translation Service (ITS) on 0131 242 8181 and quote reference number 08806. The ITS can also give information on community language translations. You can get more copies of this document by calling 0131 556 6787.

Caring for our Children

A Loving Home for Life ...

Now you're approved,
what happens next?



Information for approved adopters
wishing to adopt a child or children
from the City of Edinburgh Council



Edinburgh's approach

When it has been identified that adoption will be in the best interests of a child* looked after by the City of Edinburgh Council, the Council is committed to finding a suitable adoptive family that can meet the child's needs, as soon as possible. Where available, we will consider more than one adoptive family in order that the best match can be found for a child.

We recognise that the linking and matching process can be stressful for families who are being considered. We aim to be open about the process and, as far as possible, to avoid delay.

* 'Child' is used throughout this leaflet to denote 'child or sibling group'.

Linking and matching

Linking is the process by which we identify one or more adoptive families likely to be able to meet the needs of a child awaiting adoption. The social worker of the child considers the home studies of approved adopters identified as a possible link for the child. Unless there are any obvious reasons to rule all the identified adopters out, for instance living very close to the birth family, a linking meeting is then held.

This is a professionals' meeting involving the child's social worker and the adopters' liaison worker or workers.

A detailed discussion takes place as to which family or families are most likely to meet the child's needs. Often there is one family that has particular attributes which make them a clear choice. Sometimes two families are equally, but occasionally quite differently, suited to the child. Dependent on the outcome of the linking meeting, one or two adoptive families will go forward to a matching

panel. The matching panel is similar to the adoption panel where your approval took place – if you are adopters approved by the City of Edinburgh Council, it is usually the same panel membership. You will be invited to attend to express your views about the child you are hoping will be placed with you and to answer questions. Where more than one family is to be considered, you attend separately. You will be told within 24 hours of the panel whether or not the panel has recommended to the agency decision maker that the child should be matched with you. The agency decision maker must let you know his or her decision in writing within 14 days of the panel.

Information provided about a child

You will receive information about any child who is a possible link for you, before a linking meeting to check that you are interested. From experience, it is important at this time to give you enough information to make an informed expression of interest but not so much that you begin to become

attached to the child. Once the linking meeting has taken place, if you have been chosen to go forward to a matching panel, you will receive full information about the child. You will also have the opportunity to meet with the child's social worker, the panel's medical advisor and the current carers of the child. It is important to consider all the information and impressions you receive carefully and, if you have any concerns or uncertainties, to discuss them fully. It is easier, and much better for the child, to pull out at this stage than when introductions have started or a child is placed with you.



The time taken

An important question all approved adopters ask is, "How long will it take until a child is living with us?" Because individual families all have unique attributes and some are approved for a wider range of children than others, it is not possible to give a definitive answer. Where adopters have been approved by the City of Edinburgh Council, most adopters will be linked or matched within six months of approval. Where this has not proved possible, we can help you to find information concerning children from other local authorities waiting for adoption. Once your home study has been sent to a child's social worker, we aim that a linking meeting is held within four weeks and a matching panel held within a further four weeks.

Service Level Agreements

The City of Edinburgh Council recruits its own adopters. We are also in Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with two voluntary adoption agencies – The Scottish Adoption Association and St. Andrew's Children's Society. The SLAs state the number of adoptive placements that the voluntary adoption agencies intend to provide for the Council. It is our intention that through our own recruitment of adopters and through the SLAs we can provide enough families for children needing them and that we will have a



choice of adopters available for most children. We have agreed a protocol between the three agencies which describes in detail how we will ensure that adopters are treated fairly and equitably – a copy is available on request. Occasionally, because of particular matching factors for an individual child, we have to look more widely for families. We usually do this through British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering resource networks and newsletters.

If you have any questions about the contents of this leaflet, or want a copy of the protocol, please speak to your liaison social worker from the agency that approved you.



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