

What is adoption?

Adoption is the legal process whereby children are brought up in a new family, who take on all the legal rights and responsibilities for a child.

Sometimes children are placed for adoption at the request of, or agreement with their birth parents. On other occasions children can be placed following Court processes which remove parental rights and responsibilities from their birth parents.

Within East Dunbartonshire Council we usually place children for adoption from birth to primary school aged children. Occasionally older children can be adopted, though many of them remain in permanent foster care.

Children who are placed have lots of needs, including health, development and the need to remain with their brothers and sisters. Over the past few years we have seen an increase in children who have a background of parental substance misuse and neglect. This can lead to their future development being unclear, and/or their behaviour being complex.

Who can adopt?

Criteria

Each member of a relevant couple is aged 21 or over, and a couple is defined as:

- (a) Persons who are married to each other
 - (b) Persons who are civil partners of each other
 - (c) Persons who are living together as if husband and wife in an enduring family relationship for a period of 2 years prior to application. However if one partner is employed in a job where this has meant that they spend significant time apart and away from the home address this will be taken into account
 - (d) Persons who are living together as if civil partners in an enduring family relationship. See above for definition.
- A member of the couple is domiciled in a part of the British Isle.
 - Each member of the couple has been habitually resident in a part of the British Islands for a period of at least one year ending with the date of the application.
 - There be no more than 45 years between the youngest adopter and the age of the child to be adopted.
 - The applicants will normally live within the East Dunbartonshire Council boundaries or within reasonable travelling distance. In exceptional circumstances to meet the needs of particular children we will accept applications outwith the Council boundaries.
 - Normally if applicants have opted for medical interventions in seeking to become parents these must be concluded for a period of 6 months prior to

application. We acknowledge that the emotional journey may never be resolved but this will be fully discussed as part of the assessment.

- If wishing to apply to adopt for a second or subsequent time a period of one year must have elapsed following the placement of the previous child.
- Applicants who wish to adopt children under 12 must be non-smokers. If either applicant has ceased smoking then this should be for a period of more than one year prior to application.
- Applications will not be accepted if there is a dog in the household from a breed registered under the dangerous dog act.
- Applicants must undergo enhanced Disclosure Scotland checks and some offences will preclude any applications from being accepted.
- Applicants must also undergo a medical assessment and some health conditions may suggest that at that point applicants would not be suitable for proceeding. If this is the case this will be discussed fully with yourselves and it may be that if your health concerns are addressed you may be able to reapply at a later date.

We are looking to recruit adopters from all walks of life. Adopters need to be open and flexible in their willingness to help children to build trust and emotional security in their new family. You will also need to be able to help a child make sense of their background.

Assessment

Once your application is received you will be allocated a Social Worker who will be with you throughout the process.

The assessment usually takes about six months and will include home visits, references, police and social work checks, a medical and attendance of preparation groups. The assessment aims to gain a full picture of you and your family and allows you to discuss in depth the kind of child/ren you could adopt.

Once your assessment is complete and you have had the opportunity to read over and comment, your assessment paper will be presented to the adoption panel for approval.

Matching you with your child

Once you are approved, your social worker will keep in touch with you and begin to discuss any children for matching with you. Within East Dunbartonshire we usually place children for adoption from six months to primary school age. Occasionally older children can be adopted though many of them remain in permanent foster care.

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Post Adoption Support

When a child is placed with you they will have a Post Adoption Support Plan. This plan will identify the areas that you, your child or other family members may require some support with in the future. The plan lets you know what supports will be available to you.

If you have adopted from East Dunbartonshire Council it is our responsibility to ensure that you have the support you require. If you have adopted a child from outwith East Dunbartonshire Council we will liaise with that authority to arrange support.

Support can be given in the form of a worker meeting with you, your family or individual work with the child. Support can also mean referral to a specialist service eg health.

Whatever the area of support required we will provide you with a full assessment and endeavour to offer you the help that you need.

Useful Contacts and Links

A list of useful contacts for you to contact which covers all aspects of adoption.

Websites

www.adoption.co.uk

Offers valuable information relating to adoption and runs support groups for adopters.

www.baaf.org.uk

Offers advice and support to adopters as well as up to date information in relation to changes in legislation and practice. BAAF also organise the Adoption register and a tracing service for children and young people wishing to trace both their parents.

www.carecommission.com

offers information about the quality of the adoption service delivered in your area. This service is inspected annually and the report published on this website. The care commission will also be available for independent advice if you wish to make a complaint about the service you receive.

www.barnardos.org.uk

Information and advice about fostering and adoption.

www.afteradoption.org.uk

Helps adoptive families and adoptive people by providing information and support including a helpline for adults and young people.

www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/adoptions

Adoption Contact Register to put adopted people and their birth relatives in touch with each other if that is what they both wish. The Contact Register cannot help an adopted person to learn of the whereabouts of a birth relative or to know their birth relative's wishes unless the relative has also chosen to be entered on the Contact Register.

www.norcap.org.uk

Norcap is a registered charity to offer support to adults affected by adoption.

www.adoptionsearchreunion.org.uk

First port of call for anyone thinking about searching for or making contact with birth and adopted relatives.

www.birthlink.org.uk

Provides services for people separated by adoption in Scotland, including Scotland's only post-adoption contact register

Recommended Books

First Steps in Parenting the Child Who Hurts

Tiddlers and Toddlers Caroline Archer and Jessica Kingsley, 1999 (Available from Permanence Team)

Attachment

Trauma and Resilience, K Cairns, BAAF, 2002 (Available from Permanence Team)

Why Love Matters, How affection shapes a baby's brain

S Gerhardt, 2004

Building the Bonds of Attachment

D Hughes and Jason Aronson, 1999

The Post Adoption Blues, Overcoming the Unforeseen Challenges of Adoption

K J Fole and JR Thompson, 2004

Children Exposed to Parental Substance Misuse

BAAF, 2007

Adopted Children Speaking

C Thomas and Verna Beckford, , BAAF, 1999

Seven Secrets of Successful Parenting

L Docherty and G Coleridge, 2008

"Why Was I Adopted?"

Carole Livingston, 1978 (Available from Permanence Team)

Explaining Adoption to your Adopted Child

BAAF, 1987 (Available from Permanence Team)

Tyler's Wishes Helen Kahn

BAAF, 2003 (Available from Permanence Team)

Nutmeg Gets Adopted

Judith Foxon, 2001 (Available from Permanence)

Have Your Say

East Dunbartonshire Council is committed to providing a good quality service that meets the needs of people who use our services. If you are unhappy about any aspect of the service you receive we want to hear about it.

We are committed to involving Service Users in our Service Participation Strategy.

In the first instance please contact the person you are dealing with and/or their line

manager.

Adopted Adults

Information for adopted adults wishing to seek information from their birth / adoption records.

We provide a service to adopted adults who are seeking information about the circumstances which led to their adoption. An adopted adult, who lives in East Dunbartonshire and irrespective of where they were adopted, is entitled to receive a service. An adult adopted through East Dunbartonshire Council (or dependent on the year possibly (Strathclyde Regional Council) but now living in another area is also entitled to a service from us although it may be easier to initially make contact with their local adoption agency.

Because adoption is a lifelong experience, adopted people may seek information about their origins at different stages in their life. It is recognised that wanting to find out more about family origins is an important part of identity. In Scotland anyone over the age of 16 years is entitled to access their adoption records. We provide a support service for people wishing to seek information and or trace birth relatives.

We do not provide a tracing service but can provide advice and guidance on how people can undertake this themselves or refer them on to other services who can do this on their behalf.

In the first instance you will be offered the opportunity to meet with a social worker when you will be required to provide proof of your identity. Your adoption certificate, passport or driving license can provide this.

Legislation

- [Adoption and Children \(Scotland\) Act 2007](#)
- [The Adoption \(Scotland\) Act 1978](#)
- and [The Children \(Scotland\) Act 1995](#).

Adoption Support

Under the Adoption and Children's (Scotland) Act 2007 and the Adoption and Support Services and Allowances (Scotland) 2009 Regulations adoption agencies must provide an adoption support service to people who are adopted or are affected by adoption. Relevant persons as designated by the Act can request an assessment of their needs.

Further sources of information

Adoption UK

Linden House ,55 South Bar Street, Banbury OX16 9AB 01295 752240

<http://www.adoptionuk.org/>

Adoption Register for England and Wales

Unit 4 , Pavillion Business Park, Royds Hall Road, Wortley, Leeds, LS12 6AJ 0870 750 2173

Birthlink at Family Care

21 Castle Street , Edinburgh, EH2 3DN, 0131 225 6441, <http://www.birthlink.org.uk/>

British Association for Adoption and Fostering (BAAF)

113 Rose Street, Edinburgh, EH2 3DT, 0131 226 9270 Scotland@baaf.org.uk

General Register Office for Scotland (GRO)

New Register House, Princes Street, Edinburgh, EH1 3YT, 0131 334 0380

National organisation for the counselling of Adoptees and Parents (NORCAP)

112 Church Road, Wheatley, Oxfordshire, OX33 1LU, 01865 875000 ,

<http://www.norcap.org.uk>

Scottish Adoption Advice Service (SAAS)

Barnardos, Suite 5/3, Skypark SP5 , 45 Finnieston Street, Glasgow , G3 8JU, 0141 248 753

The General Register Office

PO Box 2, Southport , England, PR8 2HH

Useful Websites

www.baaf.org.uk

www.adoptionuk.org

www.education.gov.uk

www.192.com

www.ancestry.co.uk

www.findmypast.com

Reading Material

The Primal Wound, Verrier, Nancy Newton, Gateway Press, Baltimore

Adopted Children Speaking, Thomas C, Beckford, V, Lowe, N, Murch , M, BAAF

Adoption Reunion – Ecstasy or Agony? , Robinson, Evelyn, Birthlink, (2009)

Love child: A memoire of Adoption and Reunion, Loss and Love – Elliot, Sue. Birthlink (2005)

Half a million Women : Mothers who lose their children by adoption, Howe D, Sawbridge, P & Hinnings, D (1992) Penguin