

Simon Kerr-Edwards Adoption Support Agency SC462458 Statement of Purpose

This document has been informed by:

- Children's Act 1989 & 2004 (and accompanying regulations and guidance)
- Data Protection Act 1998
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- Care Standards Act 2000
- Adoption and Children Act 2002 (and associated regulations and guidance)
- The Adoption Support Agencies (England) and Adoption Agencies (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2005
- The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 with 2005 amendments
- Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children 2015, updated 2017
- Statutory Guidance on Adoption: Chapter 9: Adoption Support Services (updated 2013)
- Adoption National Minimum Standards 2011, updated 2014

1 Values, aims and objectives

The child's welfare, safety and needs will be at the centre of the adoption support provided.

The child's wishes and feelings will be actively sought and fully taken into account at all stages of the provision of adoption support.

The child's ethnic origin, cultural background, religion, sexuality and language will be fully recognised and positively valued during the provision of adoption support.

A child adopted from overseas and their adoptive family will receive a comparable service to a child adopted from within the UK.

The particular needs of adopted disabled children will be fully recognised and taken into account during the provision of adoption support.

The role and value of adoptive parents in offering a permanent family to a child who cannot live with their birth family will be valued and respected.

Adoptive parents will be at the heart of any planning for adoption support provided to them and/or their children.

The views of adoptive parents will be actively sought and fully taken into account at all stages of the adoption support that is provided to them and/or their children.

Adoption has lifelong implications for all involved and requires lifelong commitment from many different organisations, professions and individuals who have to work together to meet the needs for services of those affected by adoption.

2 Philosophy and ethos of service

To provide an adoption support service to enable a child to remain (where appropriate) with an adoptive family and ensure that the child reaches their full potential.

To ensure that at all times, the Adoption Support Service complies with relevant legislation, regulations and guidance.

To increase the Adoption Support Agency's knowledge in new research and developments in adoption support by seeking training and development opportunities with other agencies in the adoption support field of knowledge.

3 Facilities and services provided

The Adoption Support Service will be a part of a wide ranging Play Therapy service offered to birth parents and their children, schools, educational establishments and Local Authorities.

To offer a quality and bespoke Play Therapy service for adopters and their children in order to help maintain the family integrity.

To offer a quality and bespoke Play Therapy service for adopters and their children that enables both adults and their children to achieve success and stability in their lives.

These Play Therapy services will include individual Play Therapy for children and young people, therapeutic life-story work for children and young people; joint attachment-based Play Therapy or therapeutic life-story work with a child or young person and their adopters together and Therapeutic Parental Support Consultations with adopters on parenting and psychological issues of their children.

To offer quality training opportunities to adopters and other professionals in the field of adoption.

These services will be offered from agency's studio in Bledlow Ridge or at another suitable office establishment and at times in the family's home when appropriate.

4 Named manager and their qualifications and experience

The registered provider and named agency manager will be Simon Kerr-Edwards. Simon has worked in child and adolescent services for 35 years within local authorities, health services and now independently. He is a Play Therapist on the accredited register with the Professional Standards Authority. From 1991 he focused on working with children and families where there have been child protection concerns as well as children who are looked after, and their carers. Since 2000 he has worked therapeutically with children and families where there has been an experience of adoption. He has supervision, teaching and training experience for other child mental professionals as well as providing training for teachers and social work staff and students of Social Work and Play Therapy.

5 Organisational structure of Service

Simon Kerr-Edwards will be the registered provider, named agency manager and principal therapist in the organisation. He will at times seek assistance from other specialist Therapists or Social Workers in the field of adoption termed 'Associates', who can be incorporated in some areas of the work as and when necessary to enhance the service to adopters and their children. This would happen under the supervision of the agency but they will remain self-employed and not be employees of the agency.

6 Number, relevant qualifications and experience of staff

As stated above any other staff will only be included on an associate basis as or if required. These members of staff will either be qualified and registered Social Workers at degree level or above or qualified and registered Play Therapists with diplomas or above. Other psychological professionals may be included who have appropriate qualifications, experience and registrations. All 'Associate' staff will have experience of working with adopted children and their families. Students of Play therapy may also be considered for placement with the backing of their academic establishment.

7 Supervision, training and development of staff

Any associate staff will be clinically supervised by Simon Kerr-Edwards and be principally responsible for their own training and development. Simon may provide particular training when necessary.

8 Referral and assessment criteria for service

Referrals will be recorded on a referral form and the details of this will be an initial screening as to whether the clients meet the adoption criteria and whether the issues are best addressed through Play Therapy or Therapeutic Parental Consultations with adopters. There will then be an initial meeting with the adopters and a more detailed assessment be carried out to see whether Play Therapy is required or whether their needs are met by other professionals either within statutory organisations such as health services or by other independent services such as other Play Therapists, Occupational Therapists etc. An initial period of therapy will be offered and following a review a decision will be made on whether to continue the work or not. At any point a referral to another more appropriate service will be considered in consultation with adopters.

9 Policies and procedures

- Safeguarding

A comprehensive safeguarding policy has been developed in consultation with Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board and will be reviewed yearly.

See Safeguarding Policy July 2015

- Fire

All equipment will meet fire safety standards. A smoke detector is fitted and maintained regularly. Evacuation procedures will be explained to all children and adults who will always remain under the supervision of someone from the agency.

- Health & Safety

All premises used will be suitable for the safe use of children and adults. Rooms will be accessible for anyone with a disability. Toys used will that will be safe for the age of the child and equipment will be regularly inspected for any defects and replaced if necessary.

Children will be told at the beginning of therapy and be reminded at appropriate times during, that they, the toys and building and the therapist will kept be safe during therapy.

Children will be encouraged to express a range of feelings, some of which are very powerful. Alongside this they will be discouraged from behaving in a manner that may be injurious to themselves. If a child appears unable to keep them themselves safe during therapy then therapy will be halted and the situation reviewed with their parent and further boundaries set if necessary. Similarly if any parent appears to behave in a threatening or uncontained manner then work will be halted and a review of the events will take place.

Any Health & Safety issues will be recorded in an Accident Book and signed by Simon Kerr-Edwards and the need for any actions noted.

See Risk Assessment and Health and Safety Policy October 2016

- User consultation

User consultation will be divided into 2 sections:

1. Evaluation of therapeutic work

There is an imperative to ensure that all therapeutic work is focussed on the needs of the child and their family. Therefore evaluation of the work will be needed at different stages of the process. This will be undertaken through the use of an evaluation format for children and for parents/adults/carers.

2. Review of service

Also there is a vital need to review the service as a whole and gain feedback on wider delivery issues that are not specifically about the content of any therapeutic issues. A 'Review of Service' document will be given to parents at the outset of work with the instruction that it can be completed at any time during the work and a specific form will be sent to the family at the conclusion. At times during the work they may be encouraged to complete the form. Children will also be given a feedback form at review stages in the work.

- Complaints

Complaints about Simon Kerr-Edwards or any 'Associate' of the agency can be made at any time through the 'Review of Service' document provided to families at the beginning of work or by raising the complaint verbally or in writing with Simon Kerr-Edwards. This is considered as Stage 1 of the complaints procedure. Any complaint about Simon or any 'associate' will aim to be dealt with verbally as and when they arise by Simon himself. A verbal or written acknowledgement of the complaint will be made within 2 working days and a request for further information if needed. An initial written response detailing of any action taken will be sent to the complainant within 10 working days.

A Record of Complaint form will be completed and this record and associated literature will be securely stored together as well as individual complaints being part of the relevant client files.

If the matter is not satisfactorily resolved then the complainant can contact the Agency's Business Supervisor for arbitration at Stage 2. Her name is Jean

Milsted and her contact details are Jean@adoptionsservicesforadults.org.uk and work telephone number is 01628 481954.

Again, a Record of Complaint form will be completed a meeting will be set up to discuss the matter and this record and associated literature will be stored together as well as individual complaints being part of the relevant client files.

If after Stage 2 has been explored and the matter is still not resolved to the satisfaction of the child or family then the complaint can be forwarded to either the British Association of Play Therapists (in the case of Simon) info@bapt.uk.com Their address is: **The British Association of Play Therapists, 1, Beacon Mews, South Road, Weybridge, Surrey KT13 9DZ UK** and information is on the website www.bapt.info or the relevant therapeutic or Social Work body (in the case of an 'Associate'). Complaints can also be sent to OFSTED Enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk Their address is **OFSTED, National Business Unit, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD** telephone number 0300 123 1231 for either of the above.

Information about this complaints procedure will be given to parents at the outset of work on their Parental Agreement Form.

- Equality and diversity

The Adoption Support Service will treat all service users fairly, openly and with respect throughout the provision of adoption support. Adopters and their children will be considered for a service regardless of age, marital status, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, maternity status or disability.

Every effort will be made to accommodate referrals where English is an additional language of the family and who meet the criteria and are deemed able to benefit from this service. Information will be translated into other languages if necessary.

The viability of using the services of an interpreter for work with such families will be examined, bearing in mind the issue of confidentiality within a therapeutic relationship.

Children with communication difficulties will be accommodated and appropriate play will be used as a means of enabling them to express themselves and be understood.

Materials used in therapy will be non-discriminatory and will originate from a wide ranging number of sources and attempt to represent families from different cultural backgrounds. These resources will be non-stereotyping and expectations will be that all children may benefit from all the toys.

Any premises used will have access for those with a disability.

- Storage, access, maintenance and security of adoption records

The Adoption Support Service acknowledges the need to ensure all records are maintained in accordance with the Data Protection Act and the National Minimum Standards for Adoption.

All files are held in lockable, secure storage within premises owned and managed by the Agency.

10 The system for reviewing the Statement of Purpose

The statement of purpose will be annually reviewed to ensure that the parameters of the service meet the service as set out in statement.

11 The address and telephone number of OFSTED

Head office functions operate from the following address:

Ofsted

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD
Telephone: 0300 123 1231
E-mail: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

12 Children's Guide requirement outline

Regulations require that each agency shall produce a written guide to the adoption support service (the children's guide) that shall contain a summary of what the adoption support agency sets out to do in a manner appropriate to the child's understanding. Information will also include how to contact the Children's rights director, Ofsted and how to access an independent advocate.

This guide will be available in under 11 and over 11 formats and be available in print as well as electronically via Simon's website. This will be given to the family at the outset of any work. Along with this, a child's guide to Play Therapy will also be available in print form as well as a guide to Play Therapy for parents.

They will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis.

March 2017