

Leicestershire and Rutland Adoption Agency

Annual Report

2011/12

Introduction

1. The 2011 Statutory Adoption Guidance and the 2011 Adoption National Minimum Standards place a requirement on local authority adoption services to ensure that the executive side of the Council receives a written report on the management, outcomes and financial state of the adoption agency every 6 months to satisfy themselves that the agency is effective and is achieving good outcomes for children and/or service users. They must also satisfy themselves that the agency is complying with the conditions of registration (Minimum Standard 25.6; Statutory Adoption Guidance 3.3, and 5.39). This report has been prepared to enable them to do so.
The 2011 Adoption Minimum Standards can be accessed at <https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/Adoption-NMS.pdf>
The 2011 Statutory Adoption Guidance can be accessed at <http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/a/statutory%20guidance.pdf>
2. The Adoption Agency for Leicestershire and Rutland commenced on the 1 October 2011. For the first six months of the year Leicestershire and Rutland were part of a joint arrangement for adoption services. The first six months of 2011/12 were focused on actions to separate the service. The majority of this was completed successfully with the archive left to resolve.
3. The launch of the service attracted national and local media interest and the adoption team tweeted a day in the life of an adoption social worker team during National Adoption Week. The service launched its new agency with a new Statement of Purpose and work to produce a children's guide is underway.
4. The new adoption service is located with the fostering service and a key development area is to share resources and make wider use of recruitment opportunities.
5. The service has invested in new recruitment material providing key information on adoption and fostering and new branding "Space for a child" has been developed with a revised website.

Staffing and Resources of the Adoption Team

6. The adoption team consists of an established experienced team who work across recruitment, assessing, training and supporting adopters as well as family finding for a number of children. An additional worker joined the team in January which brings the total assessing workers to 5 full time equivalent.
7. Post support work is provided by 1 Social Worker and a part time Support Worker. Birth Records Counselling is provided by 2 Social workers equivalent to 1 full time worker.
8. Leicestershire has a contract with Family Action who provide post adoption support to children and families.

Budget

9. In 2011/12 the adoption team had a total budget of £1,035,660 compared to a spend of £980,509. The underspend of £55,101 was due to an underspend in adoption allowances. Staffing costs accounted for £355,900.
10. Leicestershire has a commissioning agreement with Rutland County Council to provide an adoption service which brings in an income of £49,000. This funding was used to recruit an additional adoption social worker to support more assessments.

Children placed for adoption

11. Twenty eight children were placed for adoption between 1 April and 31 March 2012. Twenty three children were from the county and five were from Rutland. Six inter agency placements were purchased this year.
12. At the 31 March 2012 sixteen children were still waiting for placements and active family finding is ongoing for these children.
13. Significant work is invested in matching children appropriately to their adoption placement and this is evidenced by no disruptions of placements prior to the adoption order this year.

Adopter households

14. Seventeen adopter households were presented to panel and approved by the Agency over the year. This is from a total of 210 enquiries. Six information evenings were held with 119 people attending to hear more about adoption and the process. Four preparation groups were held with 39 people attending. This is a lower number of approvals than expected which is due to a higher drop out rate than normal which was felt to be due to the particular needs of the cohort.
15. Thirteen assessments were still in the process of being completed by the adoption team.
16. The Adoption team monitor performance against the 2011 National Minimum Standards. Completing assessments within eight months has proved challenging for 2011/12 and the team have now reviewed their processes to ensure compliance. A significant change has been the introduction of completing the home assessment whilst checks are undertaken.

Inter-county enquiries and Referrals

17. Eight enquiries were dealt with by the Yorkshire Adoption Agency who provides an inter-county adoption service for Leicestershire and Rutland. Initial enquiries are received by Leicestershire and forwarded to the agency. This contract costs £5,000 per annum.

Development of the Service

18. Investment for 2012/13 has been agreed to support the recruitment of a family finding team which will work across fostering and adoption with the aim of achieving

permanence for children in care. Recruitment is currently underway for the post of part time Adoption and Permanency Team Manager and two family finding social worker posts. This resource will support permanency work for children in care by actively seeking families for children in need of adoption or long term fostering. By linking the team we hope to maximise the opportunity to seek adoption and permanency for all children in care as appropriate. This team will support the permanency tracking work and look at creative family finding opportunities including activity days, use of videos and targeted recruitment for individual children.

19. A vacancy in the service has released funding for the recruitment of a full time recruitment officer to support the work of fostering and adoption teams to ensure a presence at the community events to raise the profile of the fostering and adoption service in Leicestershire and manage the recruitment initiatives.

Caroline Walsh
June 2012

ADOPTION TEAM ANNUAL REPORT OF ACTIVITY FOR 2011/12**1. NEW REFERRALS TO TEAM**

	2011/12	2010/11	2009/10	
1/04/11-30/9/11	439			
01/10/11-31/03/12	264			
Total Number	703	599	913 for city and county	

2. CHILDREN**a) Children referred by child care teams for permanence**

Total 49 (10/11 total =27)

b) Children presented to Panel for adoption placement

County 29 (10/11 total =42)
Rutland 0

c) Children placed for adoption with adoptive families

(including foster carer adoption)

Total Number **28**

County 23 (10/11 total =19)

Rutland 5

d) Details of children placed for adoption

- **Ages of children placed**

	COUNTY	RUTLAND
0-1	5	0
1-5	13	3
5-10	5	2
10+	0	0

- **Sibling groups**

	COUNTY	RUTLAND
Single	15	1
Groups of 2	4	2

- **Ethnic Origin**

	COUNTY	RUTLAND
White / British	22	5
White / Asian	1	

- **Length of time the children waited for placement**

(calculated from date the child first presented to Panel to date of "matching" Panel)

	COUNTY	RUTLAND
0-3 months	6	0
3-6 months	4	0
6-12 months	7	5
12-18 months	2	0
18-24 months	4	0

- **Inter-agency placements**

(children placed with other agency approved adopters)

County 4 Rutland 2 (10/11 total = 1)

- **Disruptions**

(Pre-adoption order)

County 0 Rutland 0 (10/11 = sibling group of 2)

- **Children whose plan was adoption waiting longer than 12 months**

6

(A sibling group of 3, white children age 5, 4 & 3 and a sibling group of 2, dual heritage White / African Caribbean, age 8 and 2, one baby, dual heritage with complex health needs)

e) **Adoption Orders Made**

Total	22	(10/11 total=22)
County	20	
Rutland	2	

3. **ADOPTIVE FAMILIES**a) **Enquiries/referrals from people interested in adoption**

	<u>01/04/11-30/9/11</u>	<u>01/10/11-31/03/12</u>	<u>Total</u>
County	76	119	210
Rutland	2		
Out of Area	<u>13</u>		
Total	91	(10/11 total =187)	

b) **Inter-Country enquiries/referrals**

8

c) **Information Evenings**

Number held	6	
Number attending	119	(10/11 total=121)

d) **Preparation Groups**

Number held	4	
Numbers attending	39 (38 couples, one single)	

(10/11 total=37 households)

e) **Home Study Assessments**

Number started	28	(10/11 total=15)
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f) **Adopters presented to Panel and approved by Agency**

Total Number	18	(10/11 total=25)
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g) **Details of approved adopters**

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICE OF LEICESTERSHIRE & RUTLAND

- Foster Carer adopters 4
- Single adopters 1
- Couples 17
- Same Sex 1

- **Ethnic Origin**

- White British 17
- White/African –Caribbean 1

4. BIRTH PARENTS INDEPENDENT COUNSELLING

County	6
Rutland	0

5. POST ADOPTION ORDER SUPPORT SERVICES

a) Referrals for Support Services (post adoption order)

01/04/11-30/09/11 (when part of the joint arrangement)

Total 162 (10/11 total=279)

	Adopted Adults	Birth Rels	Adopters
City	12	19	6
County	39	18	30
Rutland	2	0	0
Out of Area	15	10	11

01/10/11-31/03/12 (the new Adoption Agency of Leicestershire & Rutland)

	Adopted Adults	Birth Rels	Adopters
	54	15	42
<u>Total</u>	<u>216</u>		