

# **ADOPTION AGENCY ANNUAL REPORT**

## **For Cambridgeshire County Council**

**For the period**

**1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>3</b>
1.1 STAFFING/SERVICE STRUCTURE.....	4
1.2 THE ADOPTION PANEL .....	5
1.3 ADOPTION PANEL MEMBERSHIP .....	6
1.4 PANEL AND ADM ACTIVITY .....	6
1.5 CCA PANEL TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT .....	7
<b>SECTION 2 CHILDREN AND ADOPTION .....</b>	<b>7</b>
2.0 CHILDREN REFERRED FOR ADOPTION.....	7
2.1 OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN WITH PLANS FOR ADOPTION .....	8
2.2 PLACEMENTS OF CHILDREN .....	8
2.3 TYPE OF ADOPTION PLACEMENT .....	8
2.4 ETHNICITY OF CHILDREN PLACED FOR ADOPTION .....	9
2.5 AGES OF CHILDREN PLACED FOR ADOPTION .....	10
2.6 GENDER OF CHILDREN PLACED FOR ADOPTION .....	10
2.7 ADOPTION ORDERS .....	10
<b>SECTION 3 ADOPTERS .....</b>	<b>10</b>
3.0 RECRUITMENT OF ADOPTERS .....	10
3.1 THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS: ENQUIRIES, ASSESSMENTS AND APPROVALS .....	11
3.2 POST APPROVAL AND POST PLACEMENT SUPPORT .....	11
3.3 TRAINING FOR ADOPTERS .....	12
<b>SECTION 4 ADOPTION SUPPORT .....</b>	<b>13</b>
4.0 POST ADOPTION SUPPORT TO FAMILIES .....	13
4.1 SERVICES TO ADOPTED ADULTS AND BIRTH RELATIVES .....	14
<b>SECTION 5 OTHER INFORMATION .....</b>	<b>15</b>
5.0 CAMBRIDGESHIRE ADOPTION SCORECARD 2014-17.....	15
5.1 KEY SCORECARD MEASURES FOR CAMBRIDGESHIRE 2017-18 .....	17
5.2 CCA SIBLINGS PROJECT .....	17

## SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.0.1 This report is provided to the Children's and Young Person's Committee as part of the monitoring of the adoption agency required under the Local Authority Adoption Service Regulations 2003 and Adoption National Minimum Standards 2011.
- 1.0.2 Since August 2014, under a Framework Agreement, Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) transferred the staff, operation and delivery of its adoption service to Coram Cambridgeshire Adoption (CCA), a Voluntary Adoption Agency (VAA) first registered with Ofsted in March 2014, (SC476782). The establishment of the VAA for the LA's adoption service arose from a pre-existing partnership since 2011 between the Council and Coram, with the assistance of DfE grant funding made available in 2013 to expand adoption provision.
- 1.0.3 CCC remains a registered Adoption Agency. It has not devolved its corporate parenting responsibility, nor the Agency Decision Maker (ADM) role for making adoption plans for children. CCA does not hold any cases for children who are looked after.
- 1.0.4 This report describes the activity of Coram Cambridgeshire Adoption during the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 ('the period') as it relates to the provision of adoption services to the Council.
- 1.0.5 Coram Cambridgeshire Adoption was inspected as a Voluntary Adoption Agency by Ofsted in January 2018. A rating of Good was given with the following comments:

*"The Voluntary Adoption Agency was good because*

- Children make good progress in their adoptive families. They start to form positive attachments and their outcomes improve as a result of stable and secure care.*
- Prospective adopters are welcomed. They undergo a thorough assessment to ensure that they are prepared fully for the task of adoptive parenting. They are supported well during the matching and introduction of children to their families, and as a result, placement stability is good.*
- Adoption support is a strength. Adoptive families are able to access a variety of support, including therapeutic interventions, from a committed team of professionals. This helps children and young people understand and manage their emotions while being supported by parents who are guided to use therapeutic strategies in response.*
- Adult service users receive a good service that has positive outcomes for their lives.*

- *Safeguarding has a high priority. This is promoted through rigorous assessments of adopters, good support, multi-agency working and strong managerial oversight.*
- *Leaders and managers are ambitious and committed to improving the lives of children, young people and adult service users. They inspire and support the staff, who are similarly committed and passionate about their work.*
- *Partnership working is embedded into practice to ensure that adoptive families receive the services they require to support their children's educational, emotional and health needs. The collaboration with Cambridgeshire County Council is particularly effective in supporting prompt and good adoptive placements for its children."*

## **1.1 STAFFING/SERVICE STRUCTURE**

- 1.1.1 CCA's structure at the end of the period comprised a Recruitment and Assessment team; a Family Finding Unit and Post Adoption Support Team, all supported by a Director of the VAA; 1 Service Manager; 1 Adoption Manager for the VAA; 1 Adoption Support Manager; 1 Agency/Panel Advisor and other social work practitioners plus a number of administrators. The service is supported by 1.5 clinicians seconded from the Council. In consultation with CCC, CCA has appointed a number of posts in addition to those in the original contract, in order to meet the increasing demand in all areas of the adoption service.
- 1.1.2 The main office for CCA is at Lincoln House, The Paddocks, Cherry Hinton, Cambridge CB1 8DH. The Family Finding Unit is based at Scott House, Huntingdon, co-located with their LA colleagues in children's services.
- 1.1.3 All staff are permanent and the social workers are registered with HCPC and have the required levels of post-qualifying experience for adoption work.
- 1.1.4 CCA also has a fostering arm (registered as an independent fostering agency as required by current regulations, called Coram Anglia Fostering) for the purposes of offering Early Permanence Placements (i.e. fostering for adoption and concurrency.)

## **1.2 THE ADOPTION PANEL**

- 1.2.1 CCA's Adoption and Permanence Panel contributes to the running and quality assurance of the Local Authority's adoption service, as delegated to CCA. It receives reports on the service and its performance and in so doing it has an overriding

responsibility to promote good practice, consistency of approach and objectivity in all aspects of the adoption service's operation.

- 1.2.2 CCA's panel prepares a six monthly report for its Board in accordance with regulations, some of the contents of which is included within.
- 1.2.3 As part of its function, the CCA Adoption and Permanence Panel makes recommendations as to the following:
- The suitability of applicants to adopt (the approval);
  - The suitability of applicants to foster and adopt simultaneously (dual-approval as foster carers and prospective adopters)
  - Whether a child should be placed for adoption with particular prospective adopters (the match)
- 1.2.4 The LA Adoption Agency retains an Adoption Panel (also operated by CCA) to make recommendations to the LA ADM regarding:
- Whether a child should be placed for adoption (only for children voluntarily relinquished by a parent)
  - There were two such cases heard in this period.
- 1.2.5 The Panel meets approximately 2-3 times a month. Within this period the Adoption Panel met on 23 occasions.
- 1.2.6 The Adoption Panel makes recommendations, not decisions. about the cases referred to it to the agency. It is the role of the agency to make a decision. For this purpose a senior person within the agency is appointed as the Agency Decision Maker (ADM). The LA has delegated the ADM responsibility both for approvals of adopters and matches of CCC children with particular prospective adopters to CCA. Sarah Byatt, Managing Director of CCA undertakes this role.
- 1.2.7 The ADM for the decision in regard to whether a child should be placed for adoption remains the responsibility of the Local Authority. In this period, this was first Theresa Leavy, Interim Children's Service Director and since October Lou Williams, Service Director, Children and Safeguarding, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.
- 1.2.8 Formerly, the CCC ADM undertook the decision for prospective adopters to be dually approved as foster carers for the purpose of having children under concurrent planning arrangements. Since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017, CCA is registered with Ofsted as a Fostering Agency and will be able to make decisions regarding the dual approval of prospective adopters as foster carers.

### 1.3 ADOPTION PANEL MEMBERSHIP

1.3.1 As at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017, CCA Adoption and Permanence Panel central list was as follows:

KN - Panel Chair, Independent, SW background
LC – Panel Chair, Independent, SW background
LH – Deputy Panel Chair / Birth Parent
Dr RB – Medical Adviser (CCC)
MdVR – Independent Member / Educational Psychologist (Retired)
RW – Independent Member / Adoptive Parent
SC – Independent Member/Adopted Person
EW – Independent Member / Social Worker
JA – Fostering Senior Social Worker (CCC)
AW – Independent Member/ Social Worker
YM – Independent Member / Adopted Person
DW – Independent Member / Social Worker
LB – Senior Social Worker, Post Adoption Support Team (CCA)
HA – Independent Member / Social Worker
Dr DP – Medical Adviser (CCA)

1.3.2 In attendance but non-voting members are:

AC – Professional Adviser
EW – Panel Administrator

1.3.3 The Legal Advisors to the Panel are from Coram Legal Centre on behalf of adopters and Cambridgeshire County Council Legal Services on behalf of their children for adoption.

### 1.4 PANEL AND AGENCY DECISION MAKER ACTIVITY

1.4.1 Between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018, the CCC ADM decided that adoption should be the plan for 77 children. This compares to 72 in 2016/17 and 65 in 2015/16.

1.4.2 In this period the CCA Adoption Panel met on 23 occasions, hearing a total of 67 cases of approvals and matches plus 3 resignations/withdrawals of approved adopters were presented.

1.4.3 In relation to the approval of prospective adopters, the Panel recommended that 25 households were suitable to adopt. No applications were not recommended for approval and no qualifying determinations were made by the CCA ADM. One

application to adopt from the previous year received an ADM decision not to approve in April 2017, following the required time to allow for representation.

1.4.4 4 of the 25 households were approved as concurrent carers.

1.4.5 In terms of matching children with prospective adopters, the Panel considered matches for 42 children and all received positive ADM decisions.

## **1.5 CCA PANEL TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

1.5.1 A day's training was provided in January 2018 on the impact of neglect and considerations for adoption. Panel chairs have taken up opportunities for training and practice forums with CoramBAAF. They also receive independent supervision.

1.5.2 All panel members have been appointed with relevant references and up-to-date enhanced DBS checks. Annual group appraisals took place in November 2016 with the Panel Advisor and the Chairs, where individual and group development needs are identified. The Panel Chairs' appraisals with the ADM took place in November 2017.

## **SECTION 2 – CHILDREN AND ADOPTION**

### **2.0 CHILDREN REFERRED FOR ADOPTION**

2.0.1 In 2017/18, there were 123 new children from Cambridgeshire referred to the Family Finding Unit for permanence planning and tracking where adoption would be the alternative plan if no other options were available. This was slightly fewer than the previous year, however not all those referred do result in a final Care Plan for Adoption.

2.0.2 At the end of the period, over 60% children referred to Family Finding are still in care proceedings. Once final court dates are known, some early searching is started to minimise delay if a Placement Order is granted. Seventeen children with Placement Orders have no active links and are subject to parallel family finding with CCA and external agencies. Nationally adopter supply is insufficient which is causing particular difficulty in matching children who are older, in sibling groups or with additional needs and complexity.

2.0.4 Cambridgeshire's permanency strategy is to avoid case drift or delay for children, social workers are expected to refer children for family finding when adoption is a possible, even if unlikely, outcome for that child. In CCC's Permanence Monitoring

Groups, all children in care are considered which ensures robust care planning is undertaken. In many cases, children return to parental care or are placed under other legal orders, with extended family members.

- 2.0.5 Every child looked after, who may need a new permanent family via adoption, has a social worker from the Family Finding Unit allocated to take lead responsibility for finding a suitable family. The Family Finding social worker calls regular permanence planning meetings with other professionals involved with the child. Should a child not be able to return to parents or extended family, adoption or long term fostering will be considered. The social workers are active in identifying suitable adoptive families who are able to meet the majority of a child's needs without delay to ensure a child is able to move to a permanent family in a timely manner. This includes consideration of whether concurrency or Foster for Adoption is appropriate for the child.
- 2.0.6 Early permanence planning had been a strong feature of the partnership between Cambridgeshire and CCA. Six children were placed under these arrangements in the period compared with 3 in 16/17 and 12 in 15/16. It is CCA's observation that since the reorganisation in Children's Services and the demise of the Permanence Units, focus and expertise has been diverted from this permanency planning to other pressure points. However there is some indication that early placement practice is getting back on track with the establishment of Unborn Baby Panels, which CCA attend.

## **2.1 OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN WITH PLANS FOR ADOPTION**

- 2.1.0 58 children were made the subject of Placement Orders in the year. This was less than the number of order expected due to delays being experienced in proceedings. An analysis of children placed for adoption in 2017/18 compared to the previous year found that these children were on average waiting 29 weeks, which was 5 weeks longer between becoming looked after and their Placement Order being granted. In 2016/17 38% of care proceedings for this cohort had exceeded 26 weeks however in 2017/18 this had risen to 59%.
- 2.1.1 Of the 77 children with plans for adoption agreed by the Agency Decision Maker during 2017/18, 17 have been placed for adoption, with a further 2 children matched awaiting placement. As of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018; 10 children with Placement Orders had been linked with matches progressing, 17 children with Placement Orders have are 'waiting' with active family finding ongoing including a child with Autism. Twelve children have plans to be placed as part of a sibling group. Family finding for these children include local, regional and national searches and children are featured at Adoption Activity Days, National Adoption Events, Adoption Link Maker and Adoption Match.



17 children have Care Proceedings ongoing including 12 children who are part of sibling groups. Plans for adoption were declined by the courts for a 9 children in the period, 4 of these children have returned to care shortly following the end of their proceedings. These children are now the subject of further proceedings.

- 2.1.2 Of the 39 children placed with adoptive families, over 60% were deemed complex under the DfE 'harder to place' categories (i.e. over 5 years; in a sibling group; BME; disability; or waiting over 18 months since court approval to place for adoption).
- 2.1.3 A total of 39 Cambridgeshire children were placed for adoption in the year. 33 of these were placed with CCA adoptive families and 6 were placed with other agency adopters. A further 4 were with dually-approved families (approved for fostering and adoption) at the end of the period.
- 2.1.4 There have been no disruptions of placements in the period.

## **2.2 PLACEMENTS OF CHILDREN**

- 2.2.1 7 sibling groups were placed within the year, 6 x groups of 2, and 1 x group of 3.
- 2.2.2 One child placed had a recorded disability

## **2.3 TYPE OF ADOPTION PLACEMENT**

- 2.3.1 Of the 39 children placed with prospective adopters, 33 were placed with adopters approved by Coram Cambridgeshire Adoption Agency (effectively internal) 6 children were placed with prospective adopters approved by other agencies and subject to an inter-agency fee.
- 2.3.2 Within this period 6 children have been placed via early permanence, 3 under dual approval arrangements with prospective adopters also formally approved as foster carers and others under Fostering for Adoption regulations
- 2.3.3 Fostering for Adoption (Early Permanence) places a child during the period that they are looked after and undergoing care proceedings with adopters who are also approved as foster carers. If the court agrees that the child should be placed for adoption the child can then be matched for adoption with those carers. This ensures that the child benefits by experiencing consistency of care during the first few months of their life.

## **2.4 ETHNICITY OF CHILDREN PLACED FOR ADOPTION**

- 2.4.1 Of the 39 children placed for adoption 36 children were of White British heritage, 3 children were of British Minority Ethnic heritage.

## **2.5 AGES OF CHILDREN PLACED FOR ADOPTION**

- 2.5.1 Of the 39 children placed for adoption by Cambridgeshire, 13 were under the age of 1 year; 6 children were under 2 years; 15 were between 2 and 4 years and 5 were over 5 at the point of placement.

## **2.6 GENDER OF CHILDREN PLACED FOR ADOPTION**

- 2.6.1 Of the 39 children placed 23 were male and 13 were male

## **2.7 ADOPTION ORDERS**

- 2.7.1 Adoption Orders were made in respect of 39 children. 34 Adoption Orders were made within 12 months of placement.
- 2.7.2 There has been an increase in the number of parental challenges to the making of the Adoption Order. This has resulted in delays to orders being granted whilst the court considers their objections. In all of these cases the orders have been granted.
- 2.7.3 As of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018, 39 children were placed with their adoptive families. Eleven children had adoption applications made to the courts but not yet granted. It is expected that the majority of these children will have orders granted during 2018/19. There are 7 children in pre-adoption placements whose families continue to require support before adoption applications are considered. In some cases, intensive packages of therapeutic and social work support is being provided.

# **SECTION 3 – ADOPTERS**

## **3.0 RECRUITMENT OF ADOPTERS**

- 3.0.1 Adoption Agencies have a duty to recruit a range of adopters to meet the needs of the children they are seeking to place for adoption and for children nationally. The principal method for recruitment is via websites. Searches on CCC's website for adoption are now automatically forwarded to CCA's, namely [www.coramcambridgeshireadoption.org.uk](http://www.coramcambridgeshireadoption.org.uk)
- 3.0.2 The recruitment strategy in this period identified the insufficiency of adopters for sibling groups. Some targeted activity took place towards the end of the year, including website updates and social media presence. It is not yet possible to report on the impact of this.

## **3.1 THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS: ENQUIRIES, ASSESSMENTS AND APPROVALS**

- 3.1.1 CCA has a single point of contact to the service through a local rate telephone line and the website mentioned above. An information pack is made available to all enquirers and a duty SW takes calls three days a week. Social workers offer make arrangements

to meet with enquirers and offer attendance at information meetings and initial interviews.

3.1.2 Information sessions are held once a month where current information on the needs of children requiring adoption and the process of assessment is given to those people who are interested in becoming adopters.

3.1.3 In the period:

- 310 enquiries were received
- 14 information sessions were held
- 222 individuals attended information sessions, comprising 121 households
- 47 Registrations of Interest to proceed to stage 1 were received and accepted
- 10 did not proceed to stage 2 assessment phase (NB these are not all from 47 above)
- 34 started stage 2 assessment
- 24 households presented to panel for approval
- 24 approved

3.1.3 At 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018, there are 24 households in stage 1 of the process and 12 in stage 2, indicating a steady pipeline.

3.1.4 Ethnicity of 25 households approved: 21 were White British, 1 White Italian and White Spanish, 1 White British and White British/New Zealand, 1 Jordanian and Romanian, 1 White British and Lebanese/Asian.

3.1.5 The characteristics of approved adopters were 2 same-sex male, 3 single females, 5 second time adopters, 3 applicants with birth children.

### **3.3 POST APPROVAL AND POST PLACEMENT SUPPORT**

3.2.1 All approved adopters are supported by a Social Worker from the Recruitment and Assessment Team from approval through the process of matching and placement to the making of an Adoption Order. Some families also receive ASF-funded interventions prior to Adoption Order.

3.2.2 At 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018, there were 13 households approved and waiting, of those 1 has been waiting for 6 months. Eight of the 13 households have prospective matches of CCC children booked in Panel in the first quarter of 2017-2018. One of those waiting is approved for concurrent/Foster for Adoption placements.

3.2.3 At 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018, 21 CCA families have CCC children placed and 3 have other LA children placed.

### **3.3 TRAINING FOR ADOPTERS**

- 3.3.1 CCA has a social worker dedicated to training and preparation who has focused this year on evolving Stage 1 and stage 2 training.

Prospective adopters attend two modules – Stage 1 and Stage 2 and these are presented by the training Social Worker and Social Workers from the Recruitment and Assessment team.

Prospective adopters attend training in stage one covering:

- Types of Abuse
- Children's experiences
- Child development
- Trauma and attachment
- Concurrent planning
- Understanding challenging behaviour

Further training is presented to adopters in stage two covering in more depth:

- The child's journey
- The adopter(s)' Journey
- Support children emotional regulation
- Impact of abuse and neglect
- Contact
- Identity
- Loss and grief
- Post adoption support

Additionally those prospective adopters interested in concurrency/foster to adopt attend a further two days training addressing

- Early permanence planning/the legal context
- Contact
- The fostering role

The dedicated social worker for training is now in the process of developing new workshops for adopters - Preparing adopters for placement, Preparing and assessing existing children in placement (birth and adopted children) and Adopting Siblings. She is also exploring ways to include broader perspectives into training, for example children's views, birth parents and adopted adults.

- 3.3.2 Stage one and stage two training is presented according to numbers of adopters in the process but at least every other month. Training is evaluated at the end of each set of modules, with feedback from participants being consistently positive.
- 3.3.3 Adopters pre and post placement have access to the Annual foster carer training programme offered by Cambridgeshire County Council. This includes workshops on

topics such as 'Building attachments', 'First aid for foster carers' and 'Nurturing your child's developing mind'.

- 3.3.4 Adopters with children early in placement are able to attend parenting groups such as Foundations for Attachment presented by clinicians from the Adoption Support team.

## **SECTION 4 – ADOPTION SUPPORT**

### **4.0 POST ADOPTION SUPPORT TO FAMILIES**

- 4.0.1 CCA undertakes on behalf of CCC all the statutory responsibilities relating to the provision of adoption support services. The team manager is the Adoption Support Services Adviser for the LA. The Adoption and Children Act 2002 established the right of adopted families to request an assessment of their adoption support needs.
- 4.0.2 In this period the Adoption Support team received 68 new referrals for assessment. At March 2018, 168 children from 113 families were receiving a service.
- 4.0.3 Families either self-refer or are referred via other agencies such as school or health services. In such cases the team either provides direct social work support or where a specific need is identified, as specialist service may be commissioned.
- 4.0.4 The DfE Adoption Support Fund (ASF) has been available since May 2015. In the period 17/18, 76 applications to the ASF have been made. All have been accepted for the provision of ASF-eligible therapeutic interventions to families. Of these, 41 have been delivered by external providers, commissioned through CCA.
- 4.0.5 The team have a mailing list of adoptive families who are sent newsletters, invitations to support groups for adoptive parents and family days.
- 4.0.6 Adoptive parents support groups have been run regularly throughout the year at 4 locations in the County. Children's groups have been held six times a year for two different age bands.
- 4.0.7 Each child placed for adoption is required to have a contact plan in relation to their family. The majority of these are indirect contact arrangements via the letterbox service. In the year the service dealt with 1048 exchanges, of which the slight majority were adopter contacts.
- 4.0.8 The team continue to offer the 'Foundation for Attachments' therapeutic parenting workshops and have recently piloted their own 'Living with Aggression' groups aimed at those families experiencing physical aggression from their children. The team has

continued to offer training to schools around children with attachment and trauma issues.

#### **4.1 SERVICES TO ADOPTED ADULTS AND BIRTH RELATIVES**

- 4.1.1 The Adoption Support team provide an advice and counselling service to adopted adults seeking information and access to their birth records. For all residents of Cambridgeshire an access to records counselling service is offered. Information is also provided to other agencies that are supporting adopted adults living in their area who were adopted through Cambridgeshire.
- 4.1.2 Initial counselling interviews are offered to those seeking birth records and work is undertaken to locate records held by Adoption Agencies. Counselling and practical advice during tracing, an intermediary service and pre and post reunion support are also available to adopter adults and their birth relative.
- 4.1.3 Birth relatives seeking to make contact with adopted adults are offered information and advice and the Agency can act as an intermediary where appropriate.
- 4.1.4 The team received 44 new referrals for 'adult' work. At the end of the period there are 25 open cases with a waiting list of 68.
- 4.1.5 In accordance with regulation, the team offers a counselling and information service for birth parents and relatives affected by the adoption plan. The Birth Relatives Outreach Worker (BROW) is proactive in offering of support, advice and guidance and is independent of the child's social worker. This is a confidential service unless concerns arise about the welfare of a child.
- 4.1.6 In the year, there were 20 new referrals to the BROW service, with 22 open at the end of the period.

## **SECTION 5 – ADOPTION SCORECARD**

### **5.0 CAMBRIDGESHIRE ADOPTION SCORECARD 2014-17 (released May 2018)**

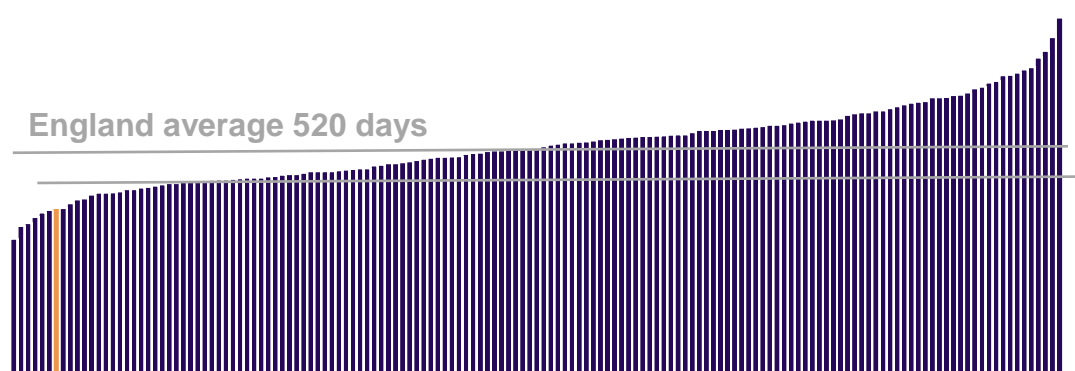
The Scorecard was introduced by the Department for Education in 2010, to address the delays in the adoption system. The indicators are based on a local authority's average performance over a 3 year period. This performance is based on timescales for children adopted in the

reporting period. These timescales are subject to decreasing thresholds year on year.

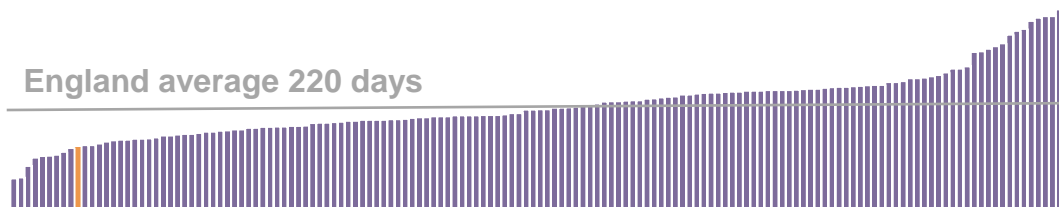
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/adoption-scorecards>

Scorecard thresholds for:	Indicator A1 timescales	Indicator A2 timescales
2010 to 2013	20 months	6 months
2011 to 2014	18 months	5 months
2012 to 2015	16 months	4 months
2013 to 2016	14 months	4 months
2014-2017	14 months (428 days)	4 months (121 days)

**A1: Average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, 2014-17**



**A2: Average time between a local authority receiving court authority to place a child and the local authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family, 2014-17**



**Indicator A3:** measures the number and percentage of children who wait less than 14 months between entering care and moving in with their adoptive family (as measured during the 3 years i.e. 2013 to 2016)

**5.0.1 Cambridgeshire 3 year Average Scorecard Performance plus 2017-18 performance as measured internally**

Year	2011/2014	2012/2015	2013/2016	2014/2017	2017-18
Indicator threshold	547	487	426	426	426
Cambridgeshire A1	517	482	428	379	379
Cambridgeshire National Ranking	LAs not ranked	Ranked 15th	Ranked 11 <sup>th</sup>	Ranked 7th	NK
National Average A1	628	593	558	520	NK
Indicator threshold	152	121	121	121	121
Cambridgeshire A2	78	114	120	129	171
Cambridgeshire National Ranking	LA not ranked	Ranked 8th	Ranked 6th	Ranked 10th	NK
National Average A2	217	223	226	220	NK
Cambridgeshire A3 (%)	58%	50%	50%	64%	80%
Cambridgeshire A3 (no)				155	31
National Average A3	51%	47%	47%	53%	NK



## **5.1 KEY SCORECARD MEASURES FOR CAMBRIDGESHIRE 2017-18 (see right column above)**

- 5.1.0 From internal analysis using scorecard criteria the position of the Agency for the **one year** period 01.04.17 to 31.03.18 (not three year average as above) **Indicator 1 - Average time between child entering care and moving in with adoptive family**, the number of days is nearly the same at 379 days, still bettering the scorecard threshold of 426 days. Despite lengthier journeys for 5 children in the cohort, this is achieved by the number of children placed soon after birth in early permanence placements and reflects the focussed partnership work between the permanence units and CCA.
- 5.1.1 The percentage of children who wait less than 14 months between entering care and moving in with their adoptive family in the period 01.04.17 to 31.03.18 has reduced slightly from the previous one year (16-17) to 80%. This indicator benefits from the shorter journeys of children placed via early permanence and children placed with in house placements identified during the course of the proceedings. This cohort of children included 5 sibling groups of 2 children.
- 5.1.3 On **Indicator 2 – Average time between LA receiving authority to place a child and the LA deciding on a match with an adoptive family 01.04.17 to 31.03.18** has also not met the threshold standing at 179 days, indicating the family finding challenge of complex children and not enough prospective adoptive families available.

## **5.2 THINK SIBLINGS**

CCA recently completed work on the sibling project with the assistance of a small Practice and Improvement Fund grant from DfE. The outcomes of the project included a regional overview of data on sibling adoptions; an adopters' survey regarding motivations to or not to consider siblings; multi-professional focus groups and the development of a number of training packages including a 2 day course for children's social workers who make the decisions around placing together or apart. Cambridgeshire was one of the key partner agencies in the project and 2 successful pilots were run in Cambridgeshire. It is hoped that further work in this area could be developed and delivered with the Council, as the number of siblings coming through for permanent placement shows no sign of reducing.