

## Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

2 April 2014

### The Adoption Process and Adoption Scorecard

#### Recommendation

That the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider the report and request a further report in 12 months when the full impact of Government's Adoption Action Plan can be considered, including the implications on local service arrangements.

#### 1.0 Key Issues

1.1 The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee has requested a report focusing on the following areas:

- What has/will be the impact of the Government's desire to ensure that children and young people are adopted quickly?
- What approach has been taken in Warwickshire?
- What is the long term impact of adopting children and young people more quickly?
- How does the service compare regionally and nationally?
- What further legislative changes are expected? How will this impact on the adoption service?
- How are the views of children and families sought and fed into the service provision/development?
- What would be the implications of outsourcing?

1.2 In 2011 the Government published '**An Action Plan for Adoption: Tackling Delay**' that outlined a range of measures to improve adoption performance across England and Wales. The Government was well aware that outcomes for younger children in care who are subsequently adopted are better than other permanency options such as long-term or permanent foster care.

1.3 Evidence was presented at that time that showed that children tended to wait too long for adoption with the average wait between their coming into care and being united with their adoptive parents being 21 months. The Action Plan listed a range of proposals for tackling delay in the adoption system with the intention of accelerating the whole adoption process so that more children benefit from adoption and more rapidly.

#### 1.4 Key elements of the action plan were to:

- Legislate to reduce the number of adoptions delayed in order to achieve a perfect or near ethnic match between adoptive parents and the adoptive child;
- Require swifter use of the national Adoption Register in order to find the right adopters for a child wherever they might live;
- Encourage all Local Authorities to seek to place children with their potential adopters in anticipation of the court's placement order;
- Radically speed up the adopter assessment process so that two months are spent in training and information gathering – a pre-qualification phase – followed by four months of full assessment;
- Introduce a “fast-track” process for those who have adopted before or who are foster carers wanting to adopt a child in their care;
- Develop the concept of a “National Gateway to Adoption” as a consistent source of advice and information for those thinking about adoption; and
- To measure improvements in tackling delay across the system, through a new performance scorecard.

1.5 Adoption involves the legal severance of the birth parent's parental responsibility for the child. Very few young children are relinquished for adoption and the majority of children with adoption plans are the subject of Care Orders through the Court, action based upon evidence of 'significant harm' or the likelihood of significant harm due to poor standards of parental care or abuse. In these circumstances, the Local Authority is not only required to obtain care orders in respect of the children concerned – through a separate legal process they must obtain a 'placement order' – this gives the Local Authority the *authority* to place the child with the prospective adopters.

1.6 Adoption Services therefore relates to a wide spectrum of activity from front line Children's Safeguarding Services and the centralised Adoption Services Team. The Adoption Services Team was established in 2001 and provides a comprehensive range of adoption services covering the following activities:

- Information and advice on adoption related matters (duty service).
- Recruitment, preparation and assessment of prospective adopters.
- Overseas adoption home study reports and post adoption services.
- Specific family finding activities for children with an adoption plan.
- Joint work with the Children's Teams on adoption related issues (this can include time limited direct work or counselling).
- Counselling, advice, court reports in respect of non-agency adoption (step parent applications).
- Services in relation to adoption support including training and support groups.

- 1.7 The cost on the Adoption Services Team, including 'on costs' such as the cost of running the Adoption Panel and senior management involvement in the service and legal support is £701,125. This is summarised in the table below:

Type of Expenditure	Budget £
Salary – Operations Manager	59,775
Salary – Social Workers	472,150
Salary - Administration	73,300
Transport costs	17,850
Service Manager Support	9,900
<b>Staffing Costs Total</b>	<b>632,975</b>
Non-staffings costs	45,385
Adoption Panel	15,765
Legal Support	7,000
<b>Total non-staffing</b>	<b>68,150</b>
<b>Total Cost of Adoption</b>	<b>701,125</b>

- 1.8 In addition, the Adoption Panel operates on behalf of the Local Authority which is a registered adoption agency. It is chaired independently and is responsible for recommending to the Agency Decision Maker (Head of Service – Safeguarding) the suitability of applicants to adopt and the 'matching' of children with prospective adopters. It provides arm's length scrutiny of adoption practice within Warwickshire. Prospective adoptive parents attend the Adoption Panel and can report directly about their service experience. Both the work of the Adoption Panel and the Agency Decision Maker has increased significantly over the past two years in response to the increase in adoption work.

## 2.0 The impact of the Government's desire to ensure children and young people are adopted quickly and what approach has been taken by Warwickshire?

- 2.1 Warwickshire has experienced an increase in the number of people enquiring about adoption which has been coupled with a similar rise in the number of children and young people with adoption plans.

- 2.2 The following data highlights these trends:

Year	Number of enquiries to adopt	Adoption Information Packs sent	Number of applications to adopt	Number of households approved to adopt
2011 -2012	181	102	43	38
2012 - 2013	165	100	67	49
2013 - 2014	200	132	83	65

Year	Number of children approved for adoption	Number of children 'matched' with adoptive parents	Number of adoption orders granted
2011-2012	62	34	31
2012-2013	65	45	33
2013-2014	95 (projected)	54 (projected)	51

- 2.3 Prospective adopters appear to be more knowledgeable about agencies adoption outcomes and are accessing the National Gateway to Adoption – First4Adoption – set up in April 2013. Prospective adopters are aware of the adoption scorecard and are effectively 'shopping around' for the best agency. Warwickshire's Adoption Scorecard is attached and shows year-on-year improved performance.
- 2.4 The Adoption Services Team has increased the number of information and preparation groups held to meet this demand. The Service introduced the revised two-stage Adopter Assessment Process from 1 July 2013 and has successfully reduced adopter approval timescales to 6 months for the majority of applicants.
- 2.5 Warwickshire has effective processes in place to reduce drift and delay in the placement of children for adoption. These processes have been accelerated further by changes in the court process, whereby care proceedings for the majority of new children entering care are concluded within a 26 week timescale. This will explain the significant rise in adoption related activity in the past 12 months which is likely to continue in the foreseeable future.
- 2.6 The new legal duty has been introduced requiring prospective adopters and children with an Adoption Plan to the National Adoption Register after three months of their approval as adopters, or within three months of the adoption decision being made. Despite this requirement the majority of Warwickshire children are placed with Warwickshire approved adopters.
- 2.7 Throughout the adoption process, prospective adopters are made aware of Warwickshire children requiring families. Family finding work has greater priority with the Adoption Services Team with the agency supporting local and national Adoption Exchange Events. An activity day where prospective adopters come face-to-face with children requiring adoptive parents is planned for July 2014, in conjunction with Coventry and Solihull Adoption Services.
- 2.8 In 2013-2014, twelve approved households were matched with children from other Local Authorities and Warwickshire made six inter-agency placements where Warwickshire children were matched with prospective adopters approved by other adoption agencies. The Association of Directors of Children's Services has agreed the standardised inter-agency fees for these placements. They are £27,000 for a single child, rising to £40,500 for a sibling group of two children and £54,000 for a sibling group of three. Some voluntary adoption agencies and London agencies charge an additional amount for ongoing support to the placement.

### 3.0 What is the long term impact of adopting children and young people more quickly?

3.1 The impact of placing children more quickly for adoption should result in a decrease in the number of looked after children; it also provides vulnerable children with a permanent home at the youngest possible age, enabling them to develop healthy attachments to their new parents. Children with an Adoption Plan due to their young age will invariably be placed with Warwickshire approved foster carers.

3.2 The summary below shows the average placements costs for looked after children placed in different arrangements – this shows that the average weekly cost of child placed for adoption is significantly lower than the cost of child remaining in foster care. It should be noted however that not all children who are placed for adoption are eligible for an adoption allowance.

Type of Placement	Direct Cost per week £
Average Adoption Allowance	77
Internal foster care Skills 2 – 2013/14 average	410
External foster care 2013/14 average	816
Residential care 2013/14 average	2,530
Inter-agency single placement £27,000 pa	519

3.3 However, the majority of prospective adopters are still seeking to adopt one or two children within the younger under five years age range. The Government's initiatives has not radically changed the motivation and expectations for people seeking to adopt; further, the National Adoption Register reports that there are few households approved to adopt children over five years of age and siblings groups of three or more children.

3.4 An additional impact will be short and longer term costs of providing adoption support services, defined in the Regulations as:

- Financial support – based upon a financial assessment;
- Services to enable groups of adoptive children, adoptive parents and birth parents/guardians or relatives to meet to discuss matters relating to adoption;
- Assistance including mediation in relation to contact between an adoptive child and extended family members;
- Therapeutic services for the adoptive child;
- Assistance for the purpose of ensuring the continuance of the relationship between the child and the adoptive parents including training for adoptive parents to be able to meet the special needs of the child (including respite care);
- Assistance where disruption of an adoptive placement or adoption arrangement following the making of an adoption order has occurred,

or is in danger of occurring, and the provision of mediation and support to prevent the disruption from occurring; and

- Counselling, advice and information.

3.5 These services will need to be provided for a greater number of adoptive parents, adopted children and young people and birth parents. In addition, three years after the adoption order has been granted, the responsibility to undertake any future 'assessments of need' for adoption support services falls upon the Local Authority where the adoptive family lives. Invariably, neither these children nor adoptive parents will have had any previous association with Warwickshire services. At any one time, the Adoption Services team will be actively working with 20 adoptive families (excluding those who are just accessing the support groups and training). Further, some families will be receiving service from the district Children's Social Care Team. Further work on a sub-regional basis over the next 12 months will seek to quantify these areas of potential need which can inform future service development and commissioning priorities.

3.6 Warwickshire has traditionally provided training and the annual 'family day' with Coventry Adoption Services. Adopted children can access Journeys, which is a targeted emotional health and wellbeing service for looked after children and those who are adopted. Support groups, a mentoring service and ongoing training opportunities are available to adoptive parents alongside access to psychological support especially in the early placement stage.

#### **4.0 How does the service compare regionally and nationally?**

4.1 The Adoption Scorecard is a national format for assessing the effectiveness of the different adoption agencies, based on three year averages, against key performance indicators relating to the average timescales for children and performance in respect of the approval of prospective adoptive parents. It also provides other measures, such as the percentage of the looked after children adopted from care, ethnicity of adopted children, children over five years adopted and length of care proceedings locally.

4.2 Two Adoption Scorecards have been received to date which demonstrate a year-on-year performance improvement. Attached is an Adoption Scorecard comparing Warwickshire with the statistical neighbour group.

4.3 Against the key measures on the Adoption Scorecard, Warwickshire's performance is as follows; however, it should be noted that this data relates to previous year activity as the current year's scorecard is not available.

<b>Measure</b>	<b>Warwickshire Timescale</b>	<b>Statistical Neighbour Average Timescale</b>	<b>England Average Timescale</b>
Average time between a child entering care and moving in with adoptive parents	535 days	665 days	647 days
Average time between the LA receiving authority to place a child and deciding on the placement match	87 days	215 days	210 days
Children who less than 20 months between entering care and moving in with their adoptive family	58%	54%	55%
Number of approved adoptive families as at 31.3.2013	63	51	4,195
Proportion of adopters who were matched to a child during 2012/13 who waited less than 3 months from approval	55%	57%	58%
Adoptions from care	11%	12%	13%
Average length of time of care proceedings locally	54 weeks	59 weeks	51 weeks

- 4.4 This shows that adoption and placement matching decision-making is better than both the statistical neighbours and England averages. Only Northamptonshire, Kent and Essex approved more families than Warwickshire at 68, 93 and 94 respectively. Slightly less adopters were matched with a child within three months of approval and adoption from care are 2% lower than the England average. This is based upon activity during the period 2012-2013 and the adoption activity levels for 2013-2014 as detailed in Section 2 show an increase in all areas. It is anticipated that the next Adoption Scorecard will show Warwickshire in line with England averages.
- 4.5 Within the West Midlands region, alongside Stoke and Telford and Wrekin, Warwickshire has the lowest number of 'flags' against the scorecard criteria. This is positive. These four flags are against adoption from care being lower than the England average at 11%, adoptions of children from ethnic minority background being only 3%, adoptions of children over five years standing at 3% (England average 4%) and the court timescale standing at 54 weeks. Birmingham and Worcestershire have the highest number of flags at 13 and 11.5 respectively.

## 5.0 What further legislative changes are expected? How will this impact on the Adoption Service?

- 5.1 In January 2013, the Department of Education issued '*Further Action on Adoption: Finding more loving homes*'. This document puts forward the Government's vision of a system with fewer adoption agencies operating at larger scale with clear incentives to respond to the needs of all children waiting for adoption. This was in recognition that Local Authorities recruit and assess adopters to meet the needs of their children and, whilst each Local Authority might each have a shortfall in their required number of adopters, nationally this represents an overall shortage of adopters.
- 5.2 Legislative changes are proposed that would give the Secretary of State the power to require under-performing Local Authorities to outsource the recruitment and approval of adopters. Underperformance is assessed against the national timescales set by the Government. They propose single, not-for-profit independent organisations (mutuals) that will operate under existing regulatory frameworks and would be inspected by OFSTED. In addition, the voluntary adoption agencies are receiving £16 million funding to increase their recruitment of adopters.
- 5.3 For the second year, Local Authorities will receive an Adoption Reform Grant to support the adoption change programme in their local areas. In Warwickshire, during 2013/14 this has been invested in staffing across the Children's Safeguarding Teams and the central Adoption Services Team so that performance is improved across the spectrum of adoption related work. This is summarised below:

<b><u>Adoption Reform Grant 2013/14</u></b>	
<b><u>Financial Plan</u></b>	
160,000	5 FTE x Social workers within Children's Teams - To support adoption and legal decision making processes – to reduce placement delays.
7,000	0.5 FTE administration – To support the introduction of new processes and data tracking in respect of enquiries and applications to adopt
15,000	0.5 FTE 'Family Finding' Support Worker within Adoption Team – To support recruitment activities, the development of DVDs on children with adoption plans and local and national adoption exchange events
10,000	0.5 FTE Life story worker within Adoption Team – To introduce a revised and standardised approach to this work to meet regulatory requirements
85,000	2 FTE x Social workers within Adoption Team – To increase the number of approved adoptive families within Warwickshire
3,000	Professional photographs for children with adoption plans – To support family finding activity and the placement of children with adoptive parents



50,000	Adoption grants/supplements to support sibling placements – To support timely placement plans through interagency arrangements
10,000	Commissioning - Journeys and other adoption support services – To provide timely advice and support to adoptive parents particularly during the early stages of placement – to promote placement stability and adoptive parents understanding of the child's needs
1,150	Contingency
<b>341,150</b>	<b>TOTAL ADOPTION SUPPORT GRANT 2013/14</b>

- 5.4 In addition, the Independent Adoption Support Service for birth parents has been redesigned, based upon a best practice model, and will become a traded service in due course. The preliminary decision for the 2014/15 Adoption Support Grant is that it is used to support the recruitment of adoptive families and the continuation of family finding activities as listed above. Without the grant, the recruitment of adoptive families would be reduced in line with the capacity of the service to assess prospective adopters within timescale. Family finding activities would also decline thereby adversely affecting adoptive placement timescales.
- 5.5 Royal Assent is expected shortly on the Children's and Families Bill supported by statutory guidance; this will address the concern of children waiting for adoptive parents of the same ethnicity. It will also legislate to allow the introduction of 'fostering to adopt' arrangements.
- 5.6 Warwickshire does not have a 'same race' policy with regards to placing children for adoption and proactive steps are taken to secure the most appropriate family for a child. The Service has given consideration to introducing a 'fostering to adopt' arrangement which will allow the child to be placed with prospective adopters *before* the court has granted the *authority* to adopt through the granting of a placement order. The potential risks of this arrangement for the child and prospective adopters will need to be carefully considered in the preparation and assessment process. However, for a small number of children this approach will hold certain advantages; for example, where a child is to be placed with an older sibling who has already been adopted.
- 5.7 The Government has developed a range of proposals to improve the quality and consistency of support available to adoptive parents. An Adoption Passport has been introduced that explains rights and entitlements. Adopted children have the same priority as looked after children when it comes to school admissions and adopted children from the age of two years are now eligible for free early education.
- 5.8 Work has also started in ten pilot sites across the county in developing an Adoption Support Fund prototype where personal budgets for adoption support will enable adoptive parents to exercise more choice and control over the type of support provided and the provider of that support.

5.9 Sub-regional working has developed between Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull on a range of fostering and adoption related issues. Solihull has been selected as pilot site for the personal budgets for adoption support. This will be advantageous to the sub region as the area of adoption support has been identified as a priority area for further development.

## **6.0 How are the views of children and families sought and fed into service provision and development?**

6.1 The views of children with plans for adoption are obtained through many channels. As looked after children, their views have to be represented in the Child Permanence Report which is the document that sets out the adoption plan. Through the legal processes, the views and interests of children are represented by the Children's Guardian whose view is sought about the proposed Adoption Plan. Children are seen by their social worker, looked after children and those placed with adoptive parents have statutory reviews and are seen independently by their Independent Reviewing Officer.

6.2 The majority of children placed for adoption are under five years and in practice it is not possible to engage them in service development. On occasion, adoptive parents' permission for their child/ren to contribute to national surveys or OFSTED inspection has been sought; however, response rates have been low.

6.3 The views of adoptive parents are gained throughout the process in the following ways:

- After Adoption Information Groups
- After Adoption Preparation Groups
- Following their approval as adoptive parents – the Adoption Panel will ask for their views on the adoption preparation and assessment process
- At the Adoption Matching Panel.

6.4 Feedback from adopters is invariably positive and reflects that they have a good understanding of the process, they understand the needs of children to be adopted and the additional tasks for them as adoptive parents. At the matching stage, that they have full and thorough information.

6.5 Warwickshire has adoptive parents as Adoption Panel members and adopters contribute to the preparation training for prospective adopters. There are five support groups for adoptive parents in place across the county. Adoptive parents have also worked with the staff members in responding to the Government's consultation processes.

6.6 These measures in total demonstrate the range of opportunities available to the service to take on board feedback from adopters and likewise for adopters to influence practice and service development.

## **7.0 What would be the implications of outsourcing?**

7.1 Following consultation with Legal Services, currently the adoption services that could potentially be outsourced are:

- Commissioned family finding for particular children;
- Independent Adoption Support Services for Birth Parents;
- Work relating to the counselling and preparation of prospective adoptive parents and possibly the assessment of prospective adopters;
- Adoption support services; and
- Mediation work in respect of adopted adults and their birth families.

7.2 The Strategic Commissioning Business Unit has undertaken some initial enquiries across eight Local Authorities and has established that the majority of adoption services are provided by those Local Authorities, although there is evidence of collaborative working. For example, Shropshire and Telford have a joint service led by Shropshire. Action on Adoption acknowledges that a growing number of Local Authorities are forming partnerships with voluntary adoption agencies and other external providers. Harrow, Kent and Cambridgeshire have contracted elements of the adoption service to the voluntary adoption agency Coram. Oxfordshire has brought in the Core Assets Group to run its adopter assessment process and some London Boroughs and unitary authorities have merged their adoption services. The legal advice on this issue is that under the current regulations, as long as we make the decisions on the suitability of prospective adopters to be adopters, we can put the prospective adopter's assessment process out to another agency.

7.3 The principle of outsourcing elements of adoption work is not new and Warwickshire currently outsources mediation work to After Adoption – a registered voluntary agency with expertise in this area. Previously, until October 2013 the Independent Adoption Support Service for Birth Parents had been outsourced to different providers. Cost was a determining factor in bringing the service back 'in house' as well as the need to have a service model that could respond to fluctuating demand. This service will become available as a traded service in future.

7.4 There is increasing levels of joint working within the sub region of Solihull, Coventry and Warwickshire, but at this stage there are no plans to amalgamate the services. The Local Authorities have access to each other's approved adoptive parents and jointly develop recruitment activities such as the Adoption Exchange Day and training for adoptive parents. The area of adoption support allows further opportunities for greater integrated and collaborative working, with Solihull's experience as a national pilot site being integral to this.

7.5 Outsourcing decisions are based upon two primary considerations of cost and service quality. The adoption scorecard and OFSTED inspections of Warwickshire Adoption Services show it to be 'good service' to the people of Warwickshire and surrounding areas. Adopters return to Warwickshire to be

approved for future children. Many prospective adopters approach the service due to its reputation.

7.6 Whilst it may be possible to commission another agency to undertake the recruitment and assessment of adoptive parents on behalf of the Local Authority (as long as the Local Authority makes the decision about whether they are suitable or not), if this is to be based on the current interagency rates, the cost of outsourcing would far exceed the cost of the Adoption Services Team.

7.7 The grid below illustrates what the costs would have been to the Local Authority of purchasing adoption placements for those children who were placed within the last years, based upon the current interagency rates. However, any commissioning intention would seek to negotiate down this cost at the same time as ensuring that the placement needs of Warwickshire children received priority.

<b>Period 2012-2013</b>		<b>Unit Cost</b>	<b>Total interagency cost</b>
Single placements	28	27,000	£756,000
Sibling groups of 2	4	40,500	£162,000
Sibling group of 3	1	54,000	£54,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>		<b>£972,000</b>

<b>Period 2013-2014</b>		<b>Unit Cost</b>	<b>Total interagency cost</b>
Single placements	42	27,000	1,134,000
Sibling groups of 2	6	40,500	243,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>		<b>1,377,000</b>

The Finance Section has calculated, based on the placements of 54 children during 2013/14, with Warwickshire approved adopters, that the average cost of recruiting, preparing, assessing, approving, placing the child and then supporting the placement to be £9,737.85.

7.8 During the period 2012-2013, Warwickshire bought inter-agency adoption placements at a cost of £90,103.00 and generated income at a level of £68,088.07. During 2013-2014, the trend was reversed with income generation standing at £186,574.00 and inter-agency costs standing at £141,392.00.

7.9 In conclusion, there are areas of adoption work that have been outsourced; however, the area of outsourcing the recruitment and assessment of adoptive parents appears to be under developed at the present time. This is an area where Warwickshire is performing well both in respect of cost and quality. The Service provides consistency of social worker throughout the process from the point that the assessment starts with the prospective adoptive parent, for a minimum of 12 months after the adoption order is granted in respect of the child placed with them. Warwickshire has a very low adoption disruption rate.

7.10 However, this position will continue to be monitored and kept under review in view the ongoing adoption change agenda, the national and local context and new opportunities that might arise as a result.

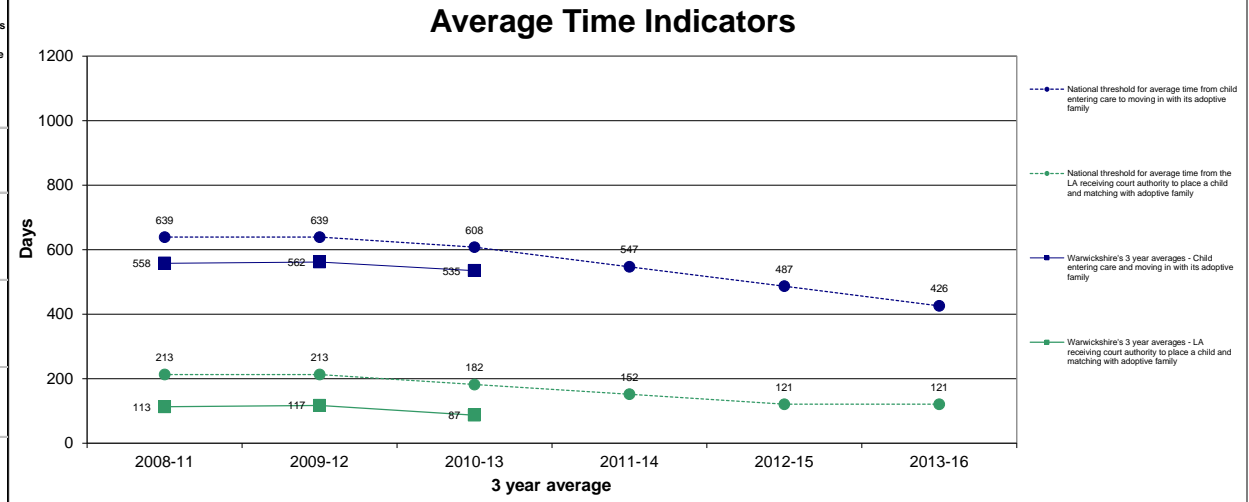
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## Adoption Scorecard

Choose Local Authority Warwickshire

### Children

	Average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, for children who have been adopted (days)	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 (days)	Children who wait less than 20 months between entering care and moving in with their adoptive family (number and %)
LA's 3 year average (2010-13)	535	87	90 (58%)
1 year trend - Improvement from 2012 to 2013	Average time in 2013 was shorter than 2012	Average time in 2013 was shorter than 2012	n/a
3 year trend - Improvement from 2009-12 to 2010-13	Average time in 2010-13 was shorter than in 2009-12	Average time in 2010-13 was shorter than in 2009-12	n/a
England 3 year average (2010-13)	647	210	11,360 (55%)
Distance from 2010-13 performance threshold	Threshold met	Threshold met	n/a



### Adopters

	Number of approved adoptive families as at 31 March 2013	Proportion of adoptive families who were matched to a child during 2012-13 who waited more than 3 months from approval to being matched to a child
LA average	63	55
England	4,195	58

### Related Information

	Adoptions from care (number adopted and % leaving care who are adopted)	Number and % of children for whom the permanence decision has changed away from adoption	Average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family. Where times for children who are adopted by their foster family are stopped at the date the child moved in with the foster family (days)	Adoptions of children from ethnic minority backgrounds (number adopted and % of BME children leaving care who are adopted)	Adoptions of children aged five or over (number adopted and % of children aged 5 or over leaving care who are adopted)	Average length of care proceedings locally (weeks)	Number of children awaiting adoption (as at 31 March 2013)	Number of applications for approval as an adopter still being assessed (not yet approved or rejected) as at 31 March 2013
LA's 3 year average (2010-13)	90 (11%)	10 (5%)	465	5 (3%)	20 (3%)	54	40	31
England 3 year average (2010-13)	10,540 (13%)	2,020 (9%)	545	1,600 (7%)	2,580 (4%)	51	6,890	2,506

## Adoption Scorecard

Statistical Neighbour Comparisons															
		Children			Adopters		Related Information								
		Average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, for children who have been adopted (days)	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 (days)	Children who wait less than 20 months between entering care and moving in with their adoptive family (%)	Number of approved adoptive families as at 31 March 2013	Proportion of adoptive families who were matched to a child during 2012-13 who waited more than 3 months from approval to being matched to a child (%)	Adoptions from care (% leaving care who are adopted)	% of children for whom the permanence decision has changed away from adoption	Average time between a child entering care and moving in with its foster family, for children who have been adopted by their foster parents (days)	Adoptions of children from ethnic minority backgrounds (% of BME children leaving care who are adopted)	Adoptions of children aged five or over (% of children aged 5 or over leaving care who are adopted)	Average length of care proceedings locally (weeks)	Number of children awaiting adoption (as at 31 March 2013)	Number of applications for approval as an adopter still being assessed (not yet approved or rejected) as at 31 March 2013	
937	Warwickshire	535	87	58	63	55	11	5	465	3	3	54	40	31	
896	Cheshire West and Chester	Extremely Close	538	111	77	27	50	12	18	500	x	5	44	25	6
885	Worcestershire	Extremely Close	756	304	52	35	68	12	16	663	7	5	48	55	16
860	Staffordshire	Extremely Close	627	179	58	57	49	15	6	458	13	4	38	105	43
855	Leicestershire	Very Close	596	189	63	35*	44*	9	5	410	x	2	44	40	17*
881	Essex	Very Close	670	260	56	94	65	12	10	597	6	4	53	175	41
895	Cheshire East	Very Close	731	236	38	18	78	14	9	563	11	4	53	30	19
886	Kent	Very Close	703	210	48	93	54	10	8	617	2	3	56	190	99
928	Northamptonshire	Very Close	617	205	44	68	33	11	3	561	x	5	51	90	34
811	East Riding of Yorkshire	Very Close	811	268	43	13	70	12	6	601	0	x	53	25	7
850	Hampshire	Very Close	599	192	58	57	48	11	10	531	6	3	49	95	18
	Statistical Neighbours		665	215	54	51	57	12	9	550	6	4	49	83	31
970	England		647	210	55	4,195	58	13	9	545	7	4	51	6,890	2,506

Data presented with a \* \* \* represent a combined result for 2 or 3 closely related authorities