

## KEY ELEMENTS OF AN ADOPTION SUPPORT SERVICE

### SUMMARY AND AUDIT TOOL

The following is a summary of the key elements of an exemplar adoption support service together with a tool which can be used to audit these components and develop an action plan to improve services.

	<b>SERVICE ELEMENTS</b>	<b>Not present</b>	<b>Partially Present</b>	<b>Matches Exempla services</b>	<b>Exceeds Exempla Services</b>	<b>NEXT STEP ACTIONS</b>	<b>ALLOCATED PRIORITY 1 – Low 4 - High</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>An outcomes-based vision for adoption support services with measurable aims/goals to include:</b>						
1a	The well-being of adoptive families						
1b	Children’s mental health and emotional well-being						
1c	Adopters and children’s experience of education						
1d	The well-being of adopted adults						
1e	The needs of birth parents and families						
<b>2.</b>	<b>A methodology for quantifying the potential need for adoption support services across:</b>						
2a	Social care						
2b	Education						
2c	Children’s mental health and emotional well-being						
2d	Parents emotional well-being						
<b>3.</b>	<b>A governing body for adoption support services with representation from:</b>						
3a	Health services						
3b	Education services						
3c	Adopters						
<b>4.</b>	<b>A multi-agency, multi-professional delivery model which incorporates:</b>						
4a	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services						
4b	Education support services						
<b>5.</b>	<b>Provision of information about services which includes:</b>						
5a	Regular communication with adopters throughout their adoption journey						
5b	Information about adoption support services for adopters						
5c	Information about adoption support services for birth parents						

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5d	Information about adoption support services for adopted adults						
<b>6.</b>	<b>Adopter Engagement including:</b>						
6a	Service development activity						
6b	Regular feedback on services and family needs						
<b>7.</b>	<b>Communication with Children and young people</b>						
7a.	Information is available for children and young people describing the services available in appropriate language						
7b.	The views of children and young people influence the development of services						
<b>8.</b>	<b>One initial referral and assessment process provides access to a range of services within an identified timescale</b>						
<b>9.</b>	<b>Adoption Support Services are structured and co-ordinated to meet different levels of need, including:</b>						
9a.	Universal Services which enable adopters to get advice and be signposted to other sources of information and support						
9b.	Targeted Services - Getting Help when universal services are not enough						
9c.	Specialist services, to provide more help via a smooth and speedy application for ASF funding, when required						
<b>10..</b>	<b>Appropriate response to situations of possible risk.</b>						
10a.	The agency works collaboratively with local authorities and other agencies to agreed protocols						
10b..	Children are protected whilst others affected by the situation or any allegations receive support						
<b>11.</b>	<b>Commissioning and procurement activity:</b>						
11a	Uses the commissioning cycle to drive the commissioning process						
11b	Develops a market which is large enough to provide a wide range of specialist services						
11c	Is based on the identified needs of adoptive families						
11d	Is undertaken with key partners and stakeholders who are aware of the ASF and how it can be accessed						
<b>12.</b>	<b>Birth Family Relationships are promoted</b>						

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12a	Adopters are expected and encouraged to have at least a one-off meeting with birth parents if at all possible						
12b	Birth parents have the opportunity to meet adopters and maintain indirect contact with them, in the interests of children						
12c	Siblings are able to maintain contact with each other if it is in their interest						
12d	The agency actively supports and reviews contact arrangements with adopters and birth families						
<b>13.</b>	<b>Support to Birth Parents</b>						
13a	Birth parents are encouraged to access an independent support service						
13b	Birth parents are given the opportunity to access services which will support them to care for any future children they may have						
13c	Birth parents are consulted about the quality of the services they receive						
<b>14.</b>	<b>Adopted Adults</b>						
14a	Can access records about their adoption						
14b	Contact is facilitated between the adopted adult and birth relatives if both wish this to happen						
<b>15.</b>	<b>A Workforce Development Plan:</b>						
15a	Identifies skills gaps in the agency workforce						
15b.	Identifies skills gaps in the third sector						
15c	Sets out a plan to close these gaps						
<b>16</b>	<b>Monitoring and Evaluation</b>						
16a	The agency gathers feedback on the quality and effectiveness of services						
16b	The agency monitors outcomes for adopted children and families which result from receiving social, health and education services (see section 1)						
<b>17.</b>	<b>The agency promotes improvements to the wider looked after and adoption system based on learning generated by adoption support work.</b>						
17a	The agency/partnership has a Theory of Change which						

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	incorporates learning from adoption support work						
17b	The agency works with key partners to improve services to adopters and adopted children						