

NOTES FOR GUIDANCE

GENERAL

The purpose of the Child's Adoption Report (CAR-NI) is to enable the adoption panel and the agency decision-maker to discharge their functions under the Adoption Agencies Regulations (NI) 1989, including the duty to promote the welfare of the child under section 9 of the Order.

In deciding on any course of action in relation to the adoption of a child, a court or adoption agency shall have regard for the welfare of the child as the most important consideration and shall:

- (a) have regard to all the circumstances, full consideration being given to –
 - (i) the need to be satisfied that adoption, or adoption by a particular person or persons, will be in the best interests of the child; and
 - (ii) the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child throughout his childhood; and
 - (iii) the importance of providing the child with a stable and harmonious home; and
- (b) so far as practicable, first ascertain the wishes and feelings of the child regarding the decision and give due consideration to them, having regard to his age and understanding.

The Child's Adoption Report (CAR-NI) is an essential tool in enabling the adoption agency to plan for the future life of a child. It is essential that the report is shared with prospective adopters to assist them in deciding about the placement, and when the decision is made to proceed with the placement, a copy of the CAR-NI should be provided to the adoptive parents.

In writing this report, it is important to remember these different functions and purposes and the potential audience for the report. It is also important to be compliant with the requirements set out in regulations in relation to adult adoptee and birth relatives' rights to access information.

For the report to fulfil these functions, it will need to be accurate, up to date, clear, concise, evidence-based and complete. The report combines facts about the child and the people who have played an important part in their life to date. It also contains evidence about the child's development and their need for an adoptive family.

The report will combine the work of many different people contributing their experience, understanding and knowledge of the child and their circumstances. These people will include:

- professionals from health, education and social services, including foster carers;
- the wishes, views and feelings of the child, wherever these can be made available;
- the child's parents and other birth family members;
- other significant people in the child's life, such as friends.

The material gathered together for this report needs to be properly evaluated and analysed. Only when this is done can it meet the child-centred purposes for which it is designed.

The accuracy of the Child's Adoption Report (CAR) is essential since it will not only form the basis on which decisions are made about whether the child should be placed for adoption, but will also assist the agency in matching the child with an appropriate prospective adopter, and will be the source of the information about the child on which the prospective adopter will rely. In due course the child, on reaching adulthood, will be able to request access to their adoption file including the CAR-NI and may have to rely on this document as the principal source of information about their pre-adoption history. The material gathered together for this report also

needs to be evaluated and analysed so that there is a clear understanding of the child's current and future needs and how these can be met.

COMPLETING THE FORM

The form is only available as an electronic template.

In order to reduce the size of the document, the various sections of the report are available separately. The details of this are set out on the front sheet. Parts A and G will need to be completed in every case but Parts B–F and H will only be completed when necessary. It is very important that the front sheet is completed so that users of the report know which sections have been utilised.

NOTES FOR PART A

1. Genogram

The structure and membership of the child's birth family should be set out in a genogram (see Appendix A). Where a family is very large and/or complicated, it may be clearer to list the relevant family members. The genogram should normally go back to the child's grandparent's generation and include all siblings and half-siblings and significant extended family members. Use dates of birth where known rather than ages.

2. Ethnicity

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) sets out that 'the terminology used to describe ethnic groups has changed markedly over time and however defined or measured, tends to evolve in the context of social and political attitudes or developments. Ethnic group is also very diverse, encompassing common ancestry and elements of culture, identity, religion, language and physical appearance.' It recommends that people should be invited to select, from a list of categories, the ethnic group to which they consider they belong. The groups are set out below.

A White			
English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish/ British	Irish	Gypsy or Irish Traveller	Any other White background, please describe
B Mixed/MULTIPLE ETHNIC GROUPS			
White and Black Caribbean	White and Black African	White and Asian	Any other mixed/multiple ethnic background
C Asian/ASIAN BRITISH			
Indian	Pakistani	Bangladeshi	Chinese
D Black/AFRICAN/CARIBBEAN/BLACK BRITISH			
African	Caribbean	Any other Black/African/Caribbean background, please describe	
E OTHER ETHNIC GROUP			
Arab		Any other ethnic group, please describe	

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If these groups do not reflect the way in which the individual identifies themselves, use their own preferred way of doing this.

Where more detailed information needs to be presented about the child's ethnic identity, this should be entered in the relevant section on 'Identity'.

3. Describe the child's physical characteristics

The physical description should complement the photograph of the child and should include any information not obvious in the photograph, for example, if the child is bigger or smaller than the average child, his or her age, and any striking characteristics.

4. Describe the child's personality

Given the subjective nature of this description and the likelihood that the child will read this in later life, considerable care should be exercised in using words and phrases that are accurate and give a balanced and helpful picture of the child. It may be helpful to include the views of others who have significant contact with the child. The foster carer will often be the best placed to "bring the child to life", but it will be important for the social worker to also draw on their own knowledge of the child as well as that of other relevant people, e.g. teachers, nursery workers and parents. It should be made clear where information/views about the child have come from and if there are differing perceptions of the child in different settings. All descriptions of the child will need updating to reflect the child's development.

5. Emotional, behavioural and social development

Included in this should be a description and evaluation of the child's capacity for making and sustaining relationships. This might include:

- how people who care for them describe them in terms of warmth, enjoyment or wariness of intimacy, their playfulness, their responses to daily routines, to boundaries being set and to change in routines or circumstances;
- how the principal carers observe the child developing relationships with other children in the family, including siblings, foster children or the birth children of their carers;
- how the principal carers observe the child's developing relationships with those outside the family, such as friends, children at school and teachers. Do they maintain appropriate wariness of strangers or are they over-familiar?
- the child's developing "sense of belonging" to important people in their life;
- information from any strengths and difficulties questionnaire (SDQ).

6. Interests, likes and dislikes

Describe the child's particular interest in hobbies, music, sporting activities, favourite toys, etc. If he or she has particular aptitudes or talents, these should be noted. If there are significant things the child likes or dislikes, these should also be noted.

7. Identity

Consider the child's awareness of his or her relationship to the birth family and foster family and the development of their identity. Each child will have a developing sense of who they are and what is important in the world around them. This will become the basis of self-esteem and identity. There are a number of factors that build towards this:

- the child's physical capacities, including any disability;
- their social class;
- their culture;

- their ethnicity;
- their language;
- their religion;
- their gender;
- their sexuality.

Each of these factors singly affect how the child thinks and feels about him/herself and in combination will influence the way the child feels, thinks, behaves and makes relationships. They will be central to their sense of belonging to important people and their sense of community, culture and wider society. The people who care for the child and provide him or her with opportunities and guidance will be vital in this. Adoption itself will have an important impact upon the child's developing sense of self, including the acquisition of an "adoption identity".

8. Self-care skills and social presentation

Information on self-care should be given in relation to the child's age and developmental stage. Describe the child's development of their capacity to appropriately care for themselves in relation to their age and abilities. Describe the child's daily routines, including eating, washing, toileting, getting dressed, bedtimes, and leaving for playgroup/nursery/school. Are there any specific factors that need to be taken into account in placing the child in an adoptive family? This should include any special arrangements needed to support the child in developing their self-care skills or daily routines.

If the child has any particular likes or dislikes in relation to daily routines, self-care, etc, these should be described.

The development of the capacity to care for oneself physically, emotionally, intellectually and socially is a key outcome from childhood and adolescence. It is a capacity which develops from an early age as children learn to feed themselves, manage their toileting needs, wash themselves, etc. It increases in complexity as children grow older and mature. For some children this capacity may be limited by physical, cognitive or emotional impairments and their particular need for support will have to be balanced against the need for them to develop self-care skills and a sense of independence.

In developing self-care skills, young people must also learn to use others for support, guidance or comfort when necessary. Where former caregivers have been unreliable, unpredictable or unavailable, children may have developed maladaptive self-care patterns.

9. Health

The health section should not duplicate information from the medical adviser's summary but should give information about the child's general physical and mental health and any learning difficulties, if these are not covered in the medical report. It can include observations from foster carers on the child's general health and give details such as their height and weight and whether they are meeting their developmental milestones. The summary report from the agency medical adviser should be attached or inserted into the report. This must include the child's health history, current state of health and any anticipated health care needs; information about the birth parents' health, including any known learning difficulties, medical or mental health factors which are likely to or may have genetic implications for the child; and the date of the most recent medical examination. It is very important to ensure that any known genetic risk factors or any health conditions or disabilities which may be significant are identified here, and that information about the child's family health history which may be relevant to their future and future placement is highlighted. Where information about birth parents' health is disclosed during assessments

undertaken during proceedings, the social worker should ensure that this updated information is passed on to the medical adviser so that the medical summary can be updated.

^{10.} Education

Using the details from the section on **The child's education**, outline the significant factors about the child's education (including early education in playgroups or nursery) and their progress to date, and the anticipated needs of the child in relation to their education that should be taken into account in planning the adoptive placement. If the child is of nursery or school age, include any key points and recommendations from the child's Personal Education Plan (PEP). If the child is of school age, attach the Child's Personal Education Plan (PEP).

^{11.} Chronology of the child's care since birth

The chronology should include all the moves and changes of carer to date, including parents and other birth family members as well as other carers, including respite carers. The 'placement details' column should describe the type of placement (e.g. with family members, foster placement, residential, etc), who the carers were, reasons for any move, and other relevant details, such as whether there is any continuing contact with the carers. An analysis of the impact of this chronology on the child's development should be made in the section 'Summary account of the child's history from their birth to the present time (including prenatal experience) and how this led to them becoming looked after'.

^{12.} Key supports and assessments

This should include a list of all services to which parents were referred by the Trust or by other agencies/professionals involved to support them in safely parenting their child and the dates when this work commenced and concluded, or, where the parents refused this service, when the referral was made or the service discussed with the parents. This should include therapeutic services in addition to educative, health and psychological services and assessments. A brief summary of the parent's engagement with each of these services/assessments should be provided in addition to a summary of the outcome of this work. In some instances, it will be appropriate to include reports provided by these services where the outcome of this work contributed to care planning decisions for the child.

^{13.} Chronology of the decisions and actions taken by the Trust with respect of the child

Give details of any significant decisions and actions taken in respect of the child and their outcomes. This should include dates of key review decisions and care planning meetings where the adoption plan was progressed, rather than every meeting or contact involving the child. The minutes of the key LAC review where adoption was proposed as the care plan should be attached as an appendix to the CAR-NI. Important decisions such as to place siblings together or apart, or which considered or ruled out family members or foster carers wishing to adopt, should also be recorded together with assessments, care plans, reviews, provision or commissioning of services, written information, specialist reports/assessments in respect of the child/parent/s and notices given to the child and his or her parents and any person with parental responsibility. When independent counselling and support were offered this should also be recorded (care and other placements and court orders are recorded elsewhere in this report)

^{14.} Overview of relevant family history

This is a crucial section and should be written specifically for this report, rather than being "cut and pasted" from other reports. A brief summary should be given of the relevant family history to help explain the Trust's involvement and the situation the child was born into.

- A brief social history should be outlined for each birth parent including any significant life events and experiences (their carers, places of residence, and any bereavements, losses or major illnesses).
- Reference should be made to birth family members and relationships detailed in the genogram contained earlier in this report.
- What was the status of the birth father's relationship with the child's birth mother at the time of the birth of the child (married, cohabiting) and what is the current status of the relationship

(together, separated, divorced, living apart)? Include dates. Give a brief description of the past and current relationship of the birth parents and their views of this.

15. Summary account of the child's history

The child's history section should be used to set out this child's "story" and bring together the facts contained in other parts of this report to "tell" this story. This should not be a chronology but should provide both description and analysis, including reference to the following:

- Prenatal experiences, where known. Was the child exposed to alcohol and/or other substances? Include prescription medication as well as illicit medication. Was there domestic violence or other trauma during the mother's pregnancy? This should be based not just on parental reports, but also evidence from other sources, e.g. medical or police reports.
- The child's relationships with their birth mother and father and other members of the extended family who have cared for them and how these have impacted on the child.
- The child's experience of being parented by their birth parents and the reasons that they became looked after.
- The known facts about and consequences of any abuse or neglect, and how this has influenced the child's emotional and behavioural development.
- Include any significant events, both positive and negative, which the child may have some memory of and also identify any gaps in the child's records.
- The child's experiences of being cared for by foster carers, residential care workers or others as their principal carers. Refer back to the chronology of care and expand on the reasons for any changes of carer and consider the way in which previous moves occurred and have impacted on the child's emotional and behavioural development.

This section should cover up to the present day and will need to be updated at each point at which the report is used.

16. Social worker's summary of the wishes and feelings of the child

This should include an assessment of the child's level of understanding and give details of any direct work undertaken and the date on which the child's wishes and feelings were last obtained. It should take account of any wishes and feelings the child has expressed in other ways, e.g. to foster carers, in contact sessions and at school. Has the child had an opportunity to express their views about adoption as the plan and their understanding of their life path to date/life story work? If yes, describe how this happened, who undertook this work and when. The social worker's analysis of the child's capacity to express their wishes and feelings and of the child's views should also be included. This section should be updated to reflect the child's changing understanding and development.

17. Guardian ad Litem's views

Where court proceedings are ongoing, it is important that the child's guardian's views are conveyed to the adoption panel and agency decision-maker, particularly if these differ from those of the Trust. Their view at this stage will be a provisional one based on the evidence available and it should be made clear whether they have provided a written view which has been inserted into the report or whether the social worker is representing their view given verbally.

18. Does the child meet the criteria for an adoption allowance?

The Adoption Allowance Regulations (NI) 1996 outline the circumstances in which an adoption allowance may be paid as follows:

Regulation 2

- (a)** where the adoption agency is satisfied that the child has established a strong and important relationship with the adopters before the adoption order is made;
- (b)** where it is desirable that the child be placed with the same adopters as his brothers or sisters, or with a child with whom he has previously shared a home;

- (c) where at the time of the placement for adoption the child –
- (i) is mentally or physically disabled or suffering from the effects of emotional or behavioural difficulties, and
 - (ii) needs special care which requires a greater expenditure of resources than would be required if the child were not so disabled, or suffering from the effects of emotional or behavioural difficulties;
- (d) where at the time of the placement for the adoption the child was mentally or physically disabled, or suffering from the effects of emotional or behavioural difficulties, and as a result at a later date he requires more care and a greater expenditure of resources than were required at the time he was placed for adoption because there is –
- (i) a deterioration in the child's health or condition, or
 - (ii) an increase in his age; or
- (e) where at the time of the placement for adoption it was known that there was a high risk that the child would develop an illness or disability and as a result at a later date he requires more care and a greater expenditure of resources than were required at the time he was placed for adoption because such illness or disability occurs.

PART A2

- ¹⁹ In completing this section, identify the source of this information.
- ²⁰ In completing this section, identify the source of this information.
- ²¹ Please specify if this was: secondary school, further education, higher education (degree level), higher education (postgraduate).
- ²² **The social worker should ensure that the confidentiality of each birth parent is protected in sharing the content of the CAR-NI with the other.**

PART A3

- ²³ In completing this section, identify the source of this information.
- ²⁴ In completing this section, identify the source of this information.
- ²⁵ Please specify if this was: secondary school, further education, higher education (degree level), higher education (postgraduate).
- ²⁶ **The social worker should ensure that the confidentiality of each birth parent is protected in sharing the content of the CAR-NI with the other.**

PART A4

- ²⁷ A separate sheet should be completed for the birth mother and birth father and any other relevant person.

NOTES FOR PART B

- ²⁸ The way in which the PR was obtained should be noted:
- residence order;
 - parental responsibility agreement entered into by a stepparent with a birth parent;

- parental responsibility order to stepparent;
- being appointed as a legal guardian after a parent's death.

NOTES FOR PART C

²⁹ A separate sheet should be completed for each of the child's full or half-siblings.

³⁰ The section, '**What is the current plan for this child?**' should include the work done to identify whether siblings should be placed together or separately and what the plan is for this.

NOTES FOR PART D

³¹ **The Adoption (NI) Order 1987 9(b) requires that wherever possible the child's wishes and feelings about adoption as the plan should be taken into account**

The way in which these wishes and feelings are made known will be a part of the general preparation of the child for a permanent placement. This will require considerable skill and experience from the social worker.

NOTES FOR PART E

³² **Wherever possible, and if the agency considers it appropriate, this record should be completed by the birth mother or father in their own words**

It may be used as an important source of information for the Trust in making its decisions and, when and where appropriate, for the child and the adoptive parents in understanding the child's background. It is important that the birth mother understands the importance of these questions and the reasons for asking them. The form should be used wherever possible in the context of a "counselling interview(s)" (required in Adoption Agency Regulations (NI) 1989 7(1)(a)).

This section of the form can only be used where there has been some measure of acceptance by the birth parent that the Trust's plan for the child is adoption. Where this is not the case, Part F should not be used. However, if the circumstances change it may be appropriate to return to this section at a later date.

NOTES FOR PART F

³³ As in Part E above.

NOTES FOR PART G

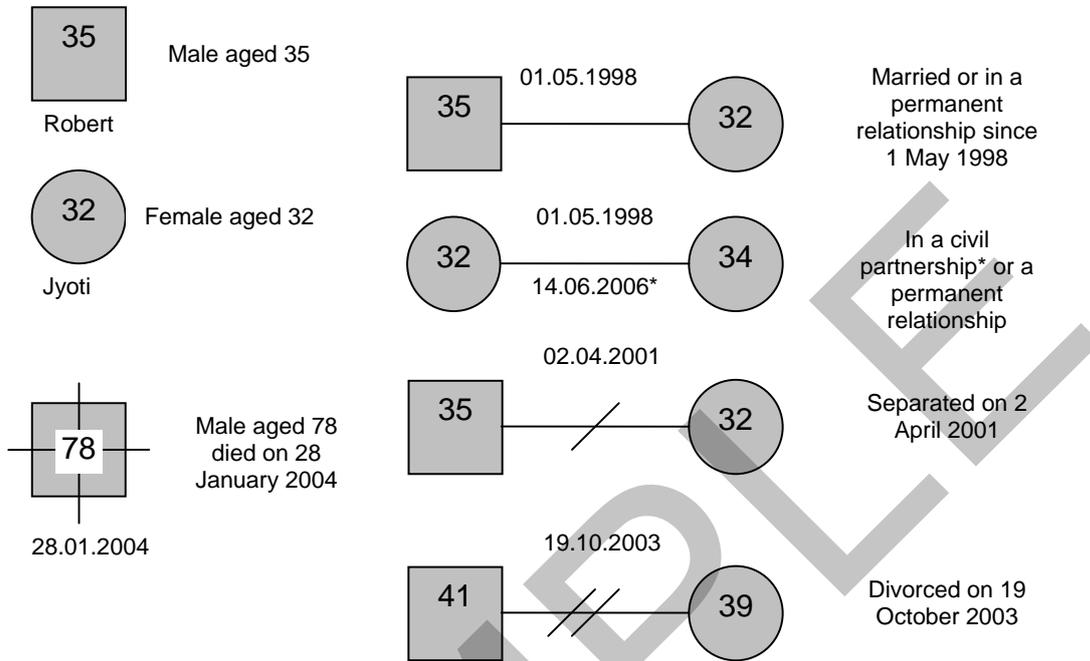
³⁴ In completing this section, refer to the CoramBAAF Practice Note 57 *Evaluation of Permanence Options for a Child in Care Proceedings* (2014) included with the form.

NOTES FOR PART H

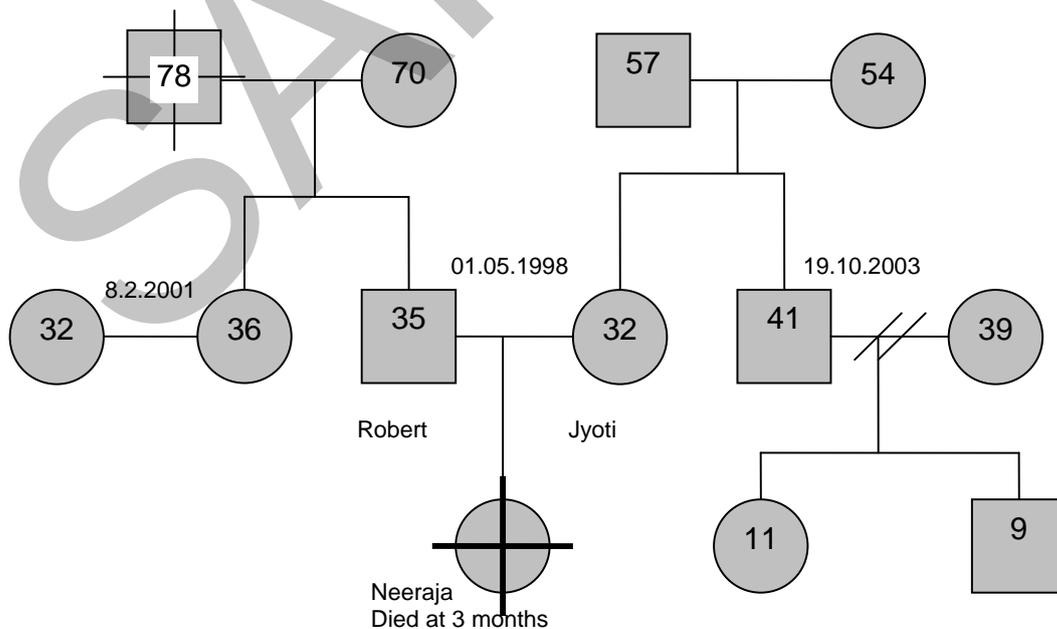
³⁵ Where no placement is available within the child's placing Trust and regional family finding is required, **Parts A1, C, D and H** of the Child's Adoption Report (CAR-NI) should be forwarded to ARIS as soon as possible. All children should be referred to ARIS within three months of their 'best interests' recommendation if no placement has been identified within their own Trust.

APPENDIX A

Exemplar for genogram symbols



Robert and Jyoti's Family Tree



CHILD'S ADOPTION REPORT NI (CAR-NI)

Please refer to Notes for Guidance before completing this report.

The Adoption Agencies Regulations NI 1989 Part A – Essential information

Name of child:
Date of birth:
Name of social worker completing this report:
Name of Trust:
Address of social worker completing this report:
Telephone number of social worker completing this report:
Email address of social worker completing this report:
Date report completed:
Date revised report completed:
Date of panel recommendation that adoption is in the best interests of this child (Article 9 (a)(i) Adoption Order 1987):

The Child's Adoption Report (CAR-NI) comprises a Core Report and a number of other sections which are completed and become a part of the report depending on the circumstances of the child.

Index

Tick to indicate which sections have been completed and are included.

Part A1	The child	Essential	
Part A2	The child's birth mother	Essential	
Part A3	The child's birth father	Essential	
Part A4	Ability and willingness/summary	Essential	
Part B	Other people with parental responsibility	As applicable	
Part C	Siblings	As applicable	
Part D	Wishes and feelings of the child	When completed	
Part E	The views of the birth mother	When completed	
Part F	The views of the birth father	When completed	
Part G	Summary of reasons for adoption	Essential	
Part H	Declaration for referral to ARIS	When required	

Adoption agency details

Name of team manager responsible for supervising this report:
Address, if different from the one above:
Telephone number:
Email address:

Name of link social worker for inter-agency placements:
Address if different from the one above:
Telephone number:
Email address:

Social worker:	Signature:	Date:
Team manager:	Signature:	Date:

Part A1 – The child

A recent good quality electronic photograph of the child should be inserted here with date on which photograph was taken.



Surname:

First names:

Other names child is known by (including familiar names):

Sex:

Date of birth:

Place of birth:

Nationality:

Current address:

Genogram: (Please use format outlined in Guidance Notes) ¹

The carer

Name of person(s) at this address who is the main carer of the child:

Relationship/status of this person(s) to the child:

Telephone number of carer:

Has the plan for adoption been discussed with the carer?

What are the carer's views?

Birth parents and heritage

Ethnicity of child's birth mother ²

Ethnicity of child's birth father ²

Religion of child's birth mother (indicate if this is active or nominal):

Religion of child's birth father (indicate if this is active or nominal):

Has a religion been identified for the child (indicate which and by whom)?

Does the child actively participate in their religious faith?

Has the child been formally admitted to their religion through a recognised ceremony (state which)?

Child's first language:

Identify any other languages the child uses in daily living (including Makaton, BSL/ISL and other forms of nonverbal communication):

Legal status of child

If there is a court order in force, give name of court, date on which order was made and type of order:

Have any orders been applied for but not yet granted? If so, which orders and at which court and date of application?

If the child is subject to proceedings, who are the parties to the proceedings?

Has the child any rights/claims under section 30 of the Fatal Accidents Act 1976 or any other rights to or interest in property which they may lose or gain if an adoption order is made?

If **yes**, please give details:

Descriptive and evaluative report on child

Please note that this section will contain significant information which is required for referral to ARIS.

In compiling this report, if evidence has been drawn from the reports of other professionals, give details below. (These may be appended to this report as sources of further information.)

Name of report	Author of report	Professional position	Date of report

Describe the child's physical characteristics³

Describe the child's personality⁴

Emotional, behavioural and social development⁵

Interests, likes and dislikes⁶

Identity⁷

Language – identify the child's first language and any other languages the child uses in daily living:

Self-care skills and social presentation⁸

If **no**, is the child receiving additional support?

Please attach the child's most recent school report/comment from preschool provider.

SAMPLE

Key supports and assessments provided/offered to support the child to be rehabilitated to the care of the parent/s¹²

Assessment/ support offered	
Date	
Outcome, engagement effectiveness and recommendation	

Assessment/ support offered	
Date	
Outcome, engagement effectiveness and recommendation	

Assessment/ support offered	
Date	
Outcome, engagement effectiveness and recommendation	

Assessment/ support offered	
Date	

Summary account of the child's history from their birth to the present time (including prenatal experience) and how this led to them becoming looked after ¹⁵

Wishes and feelings of the child¹⁶

Guardian ad Litem's views¹⁷

Type of placement sought (please tick)

Adoption	
Dual approved	

Current contact arrangements for the child

	What are the current arrangements? (Include type of contact, frequency and location)	How are the current contact arrangements meeting the needs of the child?
Birth mother		
Birth father		
Maternal grandmother		
Maternal grandfather		
Paternal grandmother		
Paternal grandfather		
Sibling 1 (name)		
Sibling 2 (name)		
Sibling 3 (name)		
Significant other (name and relationship)		
Significant other (name and relationship)		
Significant other (name and relationship)		
Significant other (name and relationship)		

Proposed contact arrangements for the child

The Trust must consider the likelihood of any existing relationship continuing and the value to the child.

What are the proposed contact arrangements post-placement and post-adoption order? Outline the way in which the plan is considered to meet the needs of the child and the details of the arrangement – direct, indirect, non-identifying, frequency and any other details.

	Planned arrangements and details
Birth mother	
Birth father	

	Planned arrangements and details
Maternal grandmother	
Maternal grandfather	
Paternal grandmother	
Paternal grandfather	
Sibling 1 (name)	
Sibling 2 (name)	
Sibling 3 (name)	
Significant other (name and relationship)	

Is the child to be placed with other siblings? **Yes/no**

If yes, which sibling(s) – see Part C.

Placement considerations

(Please give details of any additional placement considerations)

Geographical considerations,
 i.e. any area where the child
 must not be placed.

Is it important that this child:			
		Please tick	
	Should be placed with other children?		
	Should be the sole child in a family?		
	Should be the youngest in the family?		
	Other		
	Should continue to attend current school or nursery? Please identify		
	Name:		
	Address:		
Child's further specific matching considerations/specific needs (please tick)			
Child's relevant family history	Parental/history of familial schizophrenia		
	Parent(s) with severe learning difficulties		
	Parent(s) with history of drug/alcohol abuse		
	Parent(s) with specific medical condition		
Child's existing medical condition	Down's Syndrome/other genetic abnormality		
	AIDS or HIV		
	Autistic Spectrum Disorder		
	Cerebral Palsy		
	Foetal Alcohol Spectrum		
	Hepatitis B or C		
	Any other medical condition		
Child's relevant past experience	Experience of neglect		
	Experience of physical abuse		
	Experience of sexual abuse		
	Severe emotional difficulties		
Child's current and anticipated functioning	Mobility impairment		
	Physical impairment		
	Visual impairment		
	Hearing impairment		
	Moderate/mild learning difficulties		
	Special educational needs		
	Severe learning difficulties		
	Behavioural difficulties		
Attachment difficulties			

	Emotional difficulties		
	Developmental delay/uncertainty		
	Sexualised behaviour		
Other (please specify)			

Adoption support
 Detail identified adoption support needs for this child:

Health/development

Education

Psychological/therapeutic support

Other (please specify)

Outline proposed adoption support plan in response to specific needs identified.

Does the child meet the criteria for an adoption allowance? Article 2(1) Adoption Allowance Regulations NI 1996¹⁸

If yes, under what criteria?

SAMPLE

Give a brief description of the birth mother¹⁹

Briefly describe the personality and interests of the birth mother²⁰

Brief details of the birth mother's education history²¹

Current occupation or profession:

Brief details of her employment history:

Brief description of the home and neighbourhood where she lives:

Brief summary of any relevant health factors:

**If the birth mother's current partner is not the birth father of the child,
please complete**

Is the child aware that this person is not their birth father?

Yes No

Surname:
First names:
Other names (including familiar names):
Status of relationship with birth mother (married, civil partnership, cohabiting), including relevant dates:
Length of relationship:
Sex:
Occupation or profession:

SAMPLE

Support to birth mother

Has the birth mother been (a) offered or (b) received counselling from a person independent of the agency in relation to the plan for adoption? (Give details)

Has the birth mother given formal agreement to the placement of the child for adoption (witnessed by a lay magistrate)?

Has the birth mother made a declaration under Article 17(5) of the Adoption NI Order 1987?

Has the birth mother been given an opportunity to state her views on the adoption plan for the child and how has she been supported to do so?

Please detail any advocacy/support/interpreter services offered.

If yes, briefly describe the outcome of this. If Part E has been completed, note this here:

If no, give reasons:

Has the birth mother been shown the relevant sections of this CAR-NI?²²

If yes, note date shown and briefly describe the outcome of this. **If no**, give reasons.

How has she been assisted to understand the context?

If the birth mother has written her own account, is this included with this report?

Part A3 – The child's birth father

Where the birth father's identity is unknown to the Trust, please go to page 23.

Is the child aware of the identity of the birth father?

Yes No

Surname:
First names:
Are these the names used at the time of the child's birth?
If no, what were they?
Other names used (including familiar names):
Date of birth:
Place of birth:
Nationality and immigration status:
Racial origin, cultural and linguistic background::
Current address (Give date when last confirmed):
Trust/local authority area:

A recent good quality photograph should be attached or inserted here or reasons given where not available:

Date of photograph:

Give a brief description of the birth father²³

Briefly describe the personality and interests of the birth father²⁴

Brief details of the birth father's education history²⁵

Current occupation or profession:

Brief details of his employment history:

Brief description of the home and neighbourhood where he lives:

Brief summary of any relevant health factors:

The birth father without parental responsibility (PR)

Is the identity of the birth father without PR known to the Trust?
Where details of the birth father are not known to the Trust, please indicate reasons and what efforts the Trust has made to establish his identity.
Where appropriate, has the birth mother signed Adopt 3C (Adoption Regional Policy and Procedures 2010) Non-Disclosure of Putative Father?
Has the paternity of the child been confirmed? If yes , indicate how, and has the birth father signed Adopt 3D (Adoption Regional Policy and Procedures 2010) Confirmation of Paternity:
Is anybody else claiming paternity of the child? If yes , give brief details:
Does the birth father know of the birth of the child? If no , and the Trust knows his identity, has a decision been made to notify the father, and if not, reasons for this decision. If yes , what steps have been taken to counsel and advise him and are these continuing?
Does the birth father intend to apply for parental responsibility for the child, or for a residence or contact order? Details:
Has there been contact between the Trust or any other agency and the birth father? If yes , give brief details:

Birth father with parental responsibility for the child

How did he acquire parental responsibility for this child? (Please indicate)	
By marriage to the birth mother (before or after the birth)	
Registration on the birth certificate (only after 15 April 2002)	
Parental responsibility agreement with birth mother – Article 7 Children (NI) Order 1995	
Parental responsibility order – Article 7 (as above)	

Does he know of the plan to place the child for adoption?
Has he given formal agreement to the placement of the child for adoption (witnessed by a Lay Magistrate)?
Has he made a declaration under Article 17(5) of the Adoption NI Order 1987?

**If the birth father's current partner is not the birth mother of the child,
please complete**

Is the child aware that this person is not their birth mother?

Yes No

Surname:
First names:
Other names (including familiar names):
Status of relationship with birth father (married, civil partnership, cohabiting), including relevant dates:
Length of relationship:
Sex:
Occupation or profession:

SAMPLE

Support to birth father

Has the birth father been (a) offered or (b) received counselling from a person independent of the agency in relation to the plan for adoption? (Give details)

Has the birth father been given an opportunity to state his views on the adoption plan for the child and how has he been supported to do so?

Please detail any advocacy/support/interpreter services offered.

If yes, briefly describe the outcome of this. If Part F has been completed, note this here.

If no, give reasons.

Has the birth father been shown the relevant sections of this CAR-NI? ²⁶

If yes, note date shown and briefly describe the outcome of this. **If no**, give reasons.

How has he been assisted to understand the context?

If the birth father has written his own account, is this included with this report?

Part A4 – Ability and willingness of family members or relevant persons to permanently care for the child²⁷

Briefly describe the current circumstances of the birth mother's extended family:

Briefly describe the current circumstances of the birth father's extended family:

For each parent or guardian or where relevant the child's relatives, or any other person, outline an assessment of the ability and willingness to provide the child with a secure environment that facilitates their full development and meets their needs. Include the care/legal options that have been explored in relation to this carer and the reasons why the options have been discounted, and date and recommendation of relevant meeting including LAC review and panel outcome.

Name:

Relationship to the child:

Details:

Outcome:

Date:

SAMPLE

Part B – Other people with parental responsibility

Does anyone else have parental responsibility for the child? (i.e. legal guardian)²⁸

Name:	
Relationship to the child:	
How was PR obtained?	
Sex:	
Date of birth:	
Ethnicity:	
Nationality	
Address:	

SAMPLE

SAMPLE

Page 2

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Part C – Siblings (full and half)²⁹

Complete this section for each identified sibling

Surname (which can be withheld if confidential):	
First names:	
Date of birth:	
Place of birth:	
Sex:	
Ethnicity:	
Nationality:	

Select one:

Full sibling Maternal half-sibling Paternal half-sibling

Current carer's/adopter's name (where appropriate):
Current carer's address (where appropriate):
Relationship/status of current carer to child:

A recent good quality photograph should be attached here if appropriate or reasons given where not available:

<p style="text-align: center;">Date of photograph:</p>
--

Is this sibling currently “looked after”?
Name and address of the Trust that has responsibility for this sibling:
Legal status of sibling:
Is there a court order in force?
If yes , type of order:
Name of court:
Date on which order was made:
Has an order been applied for and not yet granted? Please give brief details:
What is the current plan for this child? Give brief details. ³⁰
If the plan for this child is adoption, indicate if this sibling is to be placed with the child subject to this CAR-NI?
Brief description of child and their personality:
Outline the nature of the relationship of this sibling with the child subject to this report, including the length of the relationship, where and when they have lived together, the frequency of the contact and the quality of their relationship:

Part D – Wishes and feelings of the child³¹

CHILD'S NAME:

Your social worker will have talked to you about adoption. They will have explained to you what this means. They should also have told you what they are going to do to find your adoptive family.

If you feel you still do not understand what adoption means, you should ask to be told again until you feel you understand.

It is very important for the adults who are making decisions about this to understand what you think and feel about adoption.

You may want to write what you think about adoption in your own words. You can do this below. You may want an adult to write this for you. You might have lots to say. You may have little to say. It is up to you, but whether it is a lot or a little, it is always very important. You can use extra paper if you like.

What I think about being adopted

What I think I want my adoptive parent(s) to be like

Here are some other important things that you may want to say something about

You may go to a church, temple, mosque or synagogue. You may say prayers. If this is so, it is important that social workers know about this so that your adoptive parents know about this too.

Do you go to a church, temple, mosque or synagogue or say prayers?

Do you want to say any more about this?

There are lots of important things about you. This might include the place where you were born or have lived, the festivals or celebrations you like, the clothes you wear, the kinds of people you like to be with, the food you like or the food you don't like or don't eat, sports or games you enjoy, your favourite animals and any other things you like to do.

It will be very important to make sure that your adoptive parents know these things about you.

Ask somebody who knows you well to think about how you might write some of this down

After you are adopted, it may be possible for you to stay in touch with people who are very important to you now. Your social worker can explain how this can happen.

You may want to say something about each of these people and how you want to stay in touch with them.

Write down the names of the people who you want to stay in touch with below. If you want somebody else to help you do this, ask them.

SAMPLE

Form CAR-NI

Part E – Views of the birth mother on the Child’s Adoption Report

Part E – Views of the birth mother on the Child’s Adoption Report³²

This is your opportunity to contribute to reports about your child for whom adoption is being planned. This form will be read by the Trust’s adoption panel and the Trust’s adoption decision-maker when considering plans which are being made for your child’s adoption. It will also be used to help make decisions about the best adoptive family for your child.

Your name:

The name of your child:

I have been shown the details about me as recorded in my child’s Adoption Report, i.e. Part A2 Essential information.

YES **NO**

I agree with what has been written:

YES **NO**

I would like to add the following information:

I disagree with the information for the following reasons:

Form CAR-NI

Part E – Views of the birth mother on the Child’s Adoption Report

(Any additional comments should be recorded separately and signed and dated)

I have been given written information about the adoption process:

YES NO

I have been offered/had independent counselling to support me in understanding why adoption is the Trust’s preferred plan for my child:

YES NO

SAMPLE

Form CAR-NI

Part E – Views of the birth mother on the Child’s Adoption Report

You may want to seek advice and support from somebody who is experienced in adoption matters and can help you with this. It is also important for you to understand that, whilst the Trust must take into account your wishes or feelings, the Trust and the adoptive parents cannot be required to follow them.

It is important that you are aware that at age 18 your child has the right to read the contents of this report, including your comments.

Your name:

The name of your child:

What things would you like your child/children and the adopters to know about you? This could include your childhood and the way that it has influenced you, your health, education, interests and anything else you feel it is important for them to know. In time, it will be very important for your child to have a better understanding of your life, and why it has sometimes been difficult for you to manage. This will be easier if he or she has a picture of both the good things and the difficult experiences you may have had whilst growing up:

1

Form CAR-NI

Part E – Views of the birth mother on the Child’s Adoption Report

What are your wishes and feelings about the plan to place your child/children for adoption?

What are your feelings in relation to the future religious and cultural upbringing of your child/children?

Are there any other comments you would like to make about the way you would like your child/children to be brought up in their adoptive family?

Signature:

Date:

Part F – Views of the birth father on the Child’s Adoption Report³³

This is your opportunity to contribute to reports about your child for whom adoption is being planned. This form will be read by the Trust’s adoption panel and the Trust’s adoption decision-maker when considering plans which are being made for your child’s adoption. It will also be used to help make decisions about the best adoptive family for your child.

Your name:

The name of your child:

I have been shown the details about me as recorded in my child’s Adoption Report, i.e. Part A3 Essential Information.

YES NO

I agree with what has been written:

YES NO

I would like to add the following information:

I disagree with the information for the following reasons:

Form CAR-NI

Part F – Views of the birth father on the Child’s Adoption Report

(Any additional comments should be recorded separately and signed and dated)

I have been given written information about the adoption process:

YES NO

I have been offered/had independent counselling to support me in understanding why adoption is the Trust’s preferred plan for my child:

YES NO

SAMPLE

Form CAR-NI

Part F – Views of the birth father on the Child’s Adoption Report

You may want to seek advice and support from somebody who is experienced in adoption matters and can help you with this. It is also important for you to understand that, whilst the Trust must take into account your wishes or feelings, the Trust and the adoptive parents cannot be required to follow them.

It is important that you are aware that at age 18 your child has the right to read the contents of this report, including your comments.

Your name:

The name of your child:

What things would you like your child/children and the adopters to know about you? This could include your childhood and the way that it has influenced you, your health, education, interests and anything else you feel it is important for them to know. In time, it will be very important for your child to have a better understanding of your life, and why it has sometimes been difficult for you to manage. This will be easier if he or she has a picture of both the good things and the difficult experiences you may have had whilst growing up:

SAMPLE

What are your wishes and feelings about the plan to place your child/children for adoption?

What are your feelings in relation to the future religious or cultural upbringing of your child/children?

Are there any other comments you would like to make about the way you would like your child/children to be brought up in their adoptive family?

Signature:

Date:

Summary of the reasons why adoption is the proposed permanence plan for the child³⁴

Table of realistic placement options

First realistic option:

Factors in favour:

Factors against:

Second realistic option:

Factors in favour:

Factors against:

Third realistic option:

Factors in favour:

Factors against:

Reason why adoption is the preferred and proposed placement option:

SAMPLE

Declaration for referral to ARIS³⁵

Consent to refer a child

The Adoption Regional Information System (ARIS) for Northern Ireland is a regional database of families who have been approved to adopt and children who have a ‘best interests’ decision for adoption. ARIS gathers statistics and monitors regional activity to inform the development of adoption services. ARIS also allows for the widest possible search for each child/adopter in NI to help create the most appropriate match and reduce the time that children and adopters wait for placement.

Basic information on all children with a ‘best interests’ decision is sent to ARIS for monitoring purposes. If a Trust or a child’s birth parents give consent, by ticking and signing the consent box below, information from this CAR-NI will be added to ARIS and made available for linking with adopters registered with the service. ARIS can only family find for children if the necessary consents are in place. See below for information about consent.***

The information provided will be used to populate ARIS and a search will be conducted to find any available adopters who meet the child’s needs as defined in Part A of this form. When a potential link is identified with adopters on ARIS, a record card with the adopters’ details will be sent to the Trust with responsibility for the child. It is then a decision for the child’s Trust whether or not they pursue links sent by ARIS.

The child’s details will continue to be available to be linked with adopters on ARIS until his or her Trust advises ARIS that the child has been matched/withdrawn.

Any written information regarding the child may be held by ARIS for up to 12 months after he or she has been matched or withdrawn, after which time it will be confidentially destroyed. Computer records will however be retained by the service for a longer period of time for monitoring purposes. More information on this is available in the ARIS Privacy policy.

*** General notes about consent to information sharing

When adoption is planned for a child, parental permission may be given to share the child’s information with ARIS for family finding purposes. However, in most cases, parental permission will not be provided, or is not able to be sought. In those situations, the child’s Trust can proceed with a referral to ARIS when the child is subject to a Care Order or Interim Care Order. If a child is subject to an Interim Care Order, the relevant court should be informed of the Trust’s intention to refer to ARIS. It is good practice, however, to seek parental permission and always to keep parents and children informed about developments. The Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) allow public authorities to share personal data where there is a valid lawful basis to do so, for example, if the sharing is done as part of the exercise of statutory duties. Regulation 3 of the Arrangements for Placement of Children, General Regulations (NI) 1996 requires Trusts to plan for children whom they are looking after. This is a statutory duty, and allows data sharing without permission.

Consent by birth parent(s)

I consent to the information in this Child's Adoption Report (CAR-NI) being added to ARIS to help identify potential adoptive families for my child.

Please sign here to indicate that you agree to your child's information being included on the ARIS database.			
Signature		Date	
Signature		Date	

Consent by Trust

Please sign here to indicate that all necessary consents are in place to allow the information contained in this form to be included on the ARIS database for family finding purposes.			
Signature		Date	

For ARIS use only

Date of adoption panel when best interests recommendation was made:	
Date of decision:	
ARIS reference:	
Date received:	