

# Adopters Assessment Report (AAR)

## Including Concurrent Carers and Fostering for Adoption (FfA) Carers

Copyright and License Information to be added.

### Front Sheet

#### Name/s of prospective adopter/s

Click or tap here to enter text.

- Full names and dobs of applicant 1 and 2(if a couple) but make it clear if they are known by a version of, or even different name: this will help adopters to recognise themselves in the report.

#### Photograph of prospective adopter/s (please copy and paste into box below):

Click or tap here to enter text.

- Relevant and less than 6 months old
- Applicants need to look natural, as a *child* would see them, so no wedding photos, photo-shoots, hats, sunglasses, fancy dress, holding a glass. Regulations require a photograph, plus panel members are helped to remember adopters between suitability and matching panels.
- This photo can also be used in their subsequent profile so if the applicant produces a photo that you do not feel is as good as it should be ask for another please, it is in their interests.

#### Pen picture of prospective adopter/s and their household

Click or tap here to enter text.

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- Age, name, personality, interests, and occupation (if adult) of all members of the household
- If a couple, how long have they been together?
- Brief statement - Motivation to adopt

#### Social workers recommendation and advice

Click or tap here to enter text.

#### Name of assessing social worker:

Click or tap here to enter text.

#### Date report completed:

#### Date of update (if applicable):

Click or tap here to enter text.

## Section A

### Factual information

#### Agency details

**Agency completing assessment:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Address:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Telephone:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Reference number** Click or tap here to enter text. **Agency report type: Full/Brief?** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Date Stage 2 commenced** Click or tap here to enter text.

(See C5 for details)

**Team Manager:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Telephone:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Email:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Assessing social worker:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Telephone:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Email:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Signature:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Is the assessing social worker qualified under the Restriction on the Preparation of Adoption Report Regulations 2005 - yes or no?** Click or tap here to enter text.

**If no – give details of the person who is qualified and has supervised the preparation of this report**

**Name:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Email:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Signature:** Click or tap here to enter text.

This report complies with the Restriction on the Preparation of Adoption Report Regulations 2005

Manager's Signature: Click or tap here to enter text. Position: Click or tap here to enter text.

<b>Applicant details</b> <i>To be completed by applicants with assistance if required</i>			
<b>Applicant 1</b>		<b>Applicant 2</b>	
Name:	Click or tap here to enter text.	Name:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Known as:	Click or tap here to enter text.	Known as:	Click or tap here to enter text.
DOB:	Click or tap here to enter text.	DOB:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Place of birth:	Click or tap here to enter text.	Place of birth:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Mobile:	Click or tap here to enter text.	Mobile:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Telephone Work:	Click or tap here to enter text.	Telephone Work	Click or tap here to enter text.
Email:	Click or tap here to enter text.	Email:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Gender	Click or tap here to enter text.	Gender	Click or tap here to enter text.
Ethnicity	Click or tap here to enter text.	Ethnicity	Click or tap here to enter text.
Nationality	Click or tap here to enter text.	Nationality	Click or tap here to enter text.
Religion or faith	Click or tap here to enter text.	Religion or faith	Click or tap here to enter text.
Practising or non-practising?	Click or tap here to enter text.	Practising or non-practising?	Click or tap here to enter text.
Are you registered as disabled?	Click or tap here to enter text.	Are you registered as disabled?	Click or tap here to enter text.
Home address:	Click or tap here to enter text.		
Home telephone:	Click or tap here to enter text.		
Date moved to this address:	Click or tap here to enter text.		
Is this your permanent place of residence?	Click or tap here to enter text.		
Local Authority Area:	Click or tap here to enter text.		
Language/s spoken at home:	Click or tap here to enter text.		

## Section B

### Social Work Assessment

#### B1 - Current Family Life

##### Relationship Status

##### Single applicant

Click or tap here to enter text.

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- How long has the applicant been single – is this a positive choice?
- For the applicant, what are the perceived advantages and disadvantages of their single status?
- Attitude towards having a relationship now and in the future and what they would look for in a partner including their role in the child's life.
- What is the attitude of family, friends, and colleagues to their single status?
- Who offers emotional and practical support? How does the applicant give and receive comfort and support at times of distress?
- Within the applicant's close relationship, are they able to discuss differences of opinion and perspectives openly – give examples related or observed?
- Does the applicant show an interest in, and commitment to, understanding the experience of others without judgement or criticism?
- If the applicant is married or in a civil partnership and applying alone, please give reasons for this (see guidance).

***Evidence Personal referees, interview with person(s) identified by applicant as main emotional and practical supports – you could conduct an individual and joint interview with main supporter, marriage, and civil partnership and divorce/dissolution papers if appropriate.***

***Tools: Rose Fantasy, sculpt***

##### Couples

Click or tap here to enter text.

700

Interview partners separately and together:

- Listen to how they tell the history of their relationship and what they believe makes it work? How did they learn to live together? How did the relationship begin and develop? How has each partner adapted to life with the other? How did their own families of origin react to their relationship?
- Do they convey a shared sense of satisfaction in the relationship?
- Different qualities they bring to the relationship and how they complement each other, things that irritate each other and how they resolve arguments.

- How does one partner describe the other in terms of their personal qualities, interests, values, strengths, limitations, roles: do they know each other well?
- Are the couple able to accept and discuss differences of opinion and perspective together. Have they changed as people during their relationship? Do they have shared goals?
- Do the couple show an interest in, and commitment to, understanding the experience of each other without judgement or criticism?
- Is each partner, in turn, able to give and receive comfort and support when one of them is experiencing distress?
- What does the legal status of the relationship mean to them: if married or in a civil partnership, then what did that step mean?
- What has tested the relationship and how did they cope? (Examples might include infertility, miscarriage, bereavement, redundancy, family problems, infidelity, separation, illness, work stress, discrimination).
- What causes stress or difficulties within the partnership? In what ways does each partner support and understand the other?
- How do the couple organise everyday life together? Do they have distinct roles?
- How do they spend time together? Do they have separate interests and social groups as well?
- How do they come to decisions - day-to-day and longer term?

**Evidence: Personal referees, children including adult children, present and past household members, marriage, or civil partnership certificate (where appropriate) Feedback from preparation groups.**

**Tools: Set joint tasks, set up and observe a Thera play activity, relationship questionnaires, Rose Fantasy, Workbook, observation of the quality of connection between partners: Do they touch, make eye contact, tease, listen, reassure, interrupt, praise, argue, mock, make you feel uncomfortable? Does one partner in a couple appear more dominant?**

## Children in the Family

Click or tap here to enter text.

**300 per child**

- Details of children in the family and relationship to applicant/s
- Personality and characteristics of each child in the family including children living elsewhere and adult children
- Do any of the children have health needs, disabilities, or medical conditions and how these are managed?
- Has there been any specific help sought or given to children within the family e.g. CAMHS, Child Development Clinics?
- How are they doing at nursery/school/college/in employment?
- Understanding of adoption, their preparation and feelings providing a summary of the work undertaken with them during the assessment process.

**Evidence: Reports from school, personal referees, observation, 'interviews' with child, specialist medical reports if appropriate.**

## *Tools Sculpt, drawings, questionnaires, Parenting Daily Hassles scale*

### Health

Click or tap here to enter text.

**300 per applicant**

Comments from the agency medical adviser will be set out in Section C of the AAR. However, if any issues are raised that might affect the capacity of the applicant/s to care for and parent an adopted child, the outcome of discussions should be included here. (See NB below).

- What do the applicant/s do to maintain their physical and emotional health?
- Is there evidence of a positive attitude towards diet and exercise?
- What is each applicant's attitude towards seeking help for health issues? What kind of advice is sought and when? Give examples.
- What is their attitude to smoking, alcohol and drug use?
- Are there any current or past significant illnesses/medical treatments/operations including mental health or stress related difficulties?
- What has been the impact of illness/accidents/assaults and how have they responded and accessed support previously and currently, where applicable.
- How does stress have an impact on their physical and mental health – what strategies both positive and negative have they used in the past and present to deal with stress?
- How do they recognise stress triggers for themselves and their partner (where applicable)?
- Do the applicant/s or any family members have a disability – what impact does this have on their current lives? What positive strategies do they have to overcome any issues presented?
- Where the medical adviser has raised weight or obesity as an issue how is this being addressed by the applicant/s?
- Is any regular medication taken and is this reviewed by a medical practitioner?
- Are there any other household members or family members elsewhere who have health issues that could have an impact on the applicant/s or members of their household?

**NB: Where it becomes apparent with a couple who are applying to adopt, that one of them may be unaware of their partner's health history the assessing social worker should be clear that such information remains confidential to the person it is about and should not be shared with their partner unless the prospective adopter gives their written permission. Where one of a couple has not shared significant health-related information with their partner (e.g. previous termination) this should be discussed with them on a one-to-one basis to explore their reasons. Does this raise questions about the level of openness between the couple? For transgender applicants, their right for confidentiality must be respected, however if there are outstanding health related matters (e.g. surgery, counselling etc) that are pertinent to the application, they need to be appropriately addressed as part of the assessment.**

*Evidence – MA report, medical examinations and references from other medical practitioners, consultants/psychiatrists/counsellors/therapists where applicable, personal referees, life events questionnaire, health questions in workbook, observation in the home.*

*Toolkit Techniques: Use of circular questioning if 2 applicants 'How do you know when x is stressed? What does x do, say?' or for a single applicant 'How would your mum/best*

## B2 Family of Origin and Life Story

### Family Tree

Click or tap here to enter text.

Only go back to grandparent's generation unless a real need to go further.  
Include dates of birth as these are needed for now and later (Annex A).

Mapping, or at least reviewing, the family tree with the adopters can uncover valuable evidence about what closeness means to the family, who is supportive, how feuds continue, how problems are sorted out, who has been recently bereaved and so on. Using the family tree as a genogram, it is possible to explore relationships, family functioning and any cultural issues and this information can then be incorporated into the SW analysis. (See toolkit)

### Life Story Section

#### Guidance (Collapse this shaded section in assessment document)

An account of the adopter's life from early childhood to the present day that explores how this has shaped the person they have become. Issues **of identity and culture** should be captured under each of the following headings here.

This does not need to be an extensive biography but needs to draw out the most salient aspects of the applicant/s experiences of being parented and how this has affected them. The interviews should draw out their ability to reflect on and make sense of the emotions, behaviour and motivations of themselves and others. An ability to be 'mind minded' and show emotional intelligence is associated with a capacity for sensitive caregiving.

Childhood trauma should be explored, and assessors should be aware of the impact of an accumulation of adverse childhood experiences (these are starred in the questions). This section is best explored once a degree of trust has been established between the assessor and applicant/s. Issues of unresolved trauma and any historic disclosures of abuse should be raised with the agency and appropriate action taken in terms of accessing support and help for applicants and following policy and procedure in relation to child protection.

Adverse childhood experience (ACE) – these should be explored fully as an accumulation of ACEs can indicate potential vulnerability in adult life.

#### Life Story Applicant 1 – Name here

#### Experience of being cared for as a child

Click or tap here to enter text.

**600 per applicant**

- Who cared for the applicant as a child? Who were they closest to at different stages?
- What was the quality of relationship between the applicant and each parent or caregiver? Has this changed over time?



- What are their happiest memories of childhood – giving specific examples. A good opportunity to talk about the importance of play, activities and family experiences and gain their views on this.
- Include difficult times/times of loss and importantly who helped them through this. Did they experience their parents as supportive and as a secure base to go to when in need and did this continue into adulthood? Did they experience separation from parents/ carers – how did this affect them? Did their parents separate? Did a parent go to jail?
- Was there any misuse of drugs or alcohol in their family? Any mental health issues? Did they witness or experience domestic violence?
- Are they able to reflect and “get inside” their parents’ heads? Imagine how others feel? This is a good indicator of how attuned they will be to a child and their inner world.
- Any experience of fostering, adoption or caring for non-related child/ren in the family of origin?
- Has the applicant or anyone close to them experienced physical, emotional, sexual abuse or neglect? May need to explore any safeguarding issues in wider family.
- How did parents/carers support, encourage, show affection, value them, and prioritise them?
- Was there a culture of supporting others/valuing difference? Good indicator that adopted children will be accepted.
- What behaviour management methods were used and what are the applicant’s views on this: how do they talk about ‘discipline’? Have you needed to remind them of the local authority’s policy banning physical chastisement, and that corporal punishment/isolation is unlikely to be effective or therapeutic with an insecurely attached child, and could in fact re-traumatise them?
- Relationships with brothers, sisters, other children in the extended family. How these have changed over time.
- Impact of loss and how they made sense of these experiences.
- Have they maintained or reconciled relationships, and can describe how they have resolved conflicts, arguments, or differences? Again, this is a good indicator that they will ‘weather the storm’ with an adopted child and offer co-operative care giving.
- Have they suffered discrimination and how did they manage this? Were or are there any discriminatory attitudes in their wider family?
- Were there any issues in their teenage years? How did they form peer relationships – were parents/carers ‘strict’ or ‘laissez faire’. Experience of their own sexuality, gender identity – support they had with this from parents/carers? Did they experiment with smoking, drugs, alcohol? What age?
- Has misuse of alcohol, drugs prescribed or illicit, gambling or gaming been an issue for the applicant or any of their family members either now or in the past? Have they or any family members been involved in criminal activities?
- Reason for and age at leaving home? Reflection on this.
- How do applicants think childhood experiences have shaped the adult they are today?



## Social Worker's Analysis of B3 Parenting through Adoption

Click or tap here to enter text.

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### Sensitivity

- To what extent are applicant/s able to think about feelings and meanings behind behaviour for children who have experienced separation, loss, and trauma?
- To what extent could they be sensitive and respond to a child's 'hidden needs' as well as the expressed needs?
- Are they likely to be able retain this understanding and sensitivity under stress – e.g. parenting a child that rejects?
- Are they sensitive to the impact of living with this understanding day to day on themselves and other family members?

### Availability

- Are they prepared and have they realistically planned for changes to enable them to have the physical and emotional availability that the child will need now and in the future?
- Have they got a good awareness of their own triggers (perhaps, for example, in relation to their own attachment history)
- Are they able to recognise the signs that their emotional resources and capacity for emotional availability and connection is depleted – is there evidence of ways they will manage this?

### Acceptance

- To what extent do they understand and are realistic about the needs of children being placed for adoption?
- To what extent are they ready to adjust their expectations and their parenting to take account of the child's experiences
- Is there evidence adopter has the willingness and capacity to be unconditionally accepting of a child's inner life (their thoughts, feelings, wishes, memories, perceptions) – to be non-judgemental and curious - and to offer the child an unconditional relationship 'for better or worse'.
- Are they prepared to maintain contact with birth family based on the child's needs?
- Do they accept the importance of other significant people in the child's life such as former foster carers and their family?
- Do they understand the life-long impact of adoption for all parties?

### Co-operation

- Can they work to promote a child's sense of self-efficacy and competence?
- Can they balance a child's need for dependence and their need for autonomy at different ages and developmental stages?
- Are they comfortable about negotiation and giving the child appropriate choices and boundaries?
- Can they continue to support children when they are being rejecting, hostile or making poor choices?
- Can they build a child's resilience and self-esteem? Will they be satisfied with small steps in terms of progress?

### Family membership

- Can they accept that the child may need time to commit to being part of a new family?

- Can they accept the child's psychological reality in having two families and help the child to explore and accept this throughout their lives?
- Can they accept that the child may revisit the question of belonging over time and at different ages and developmental stages? Will they be able to tolerate this and help the child to build a coherent narrative about their past?
- Are they prepared for the impact of transitions and challenges at key stages of development?
- Can they manage conflict, remaining clear about consequences?
- Do they can connect with issues regarding identity in the teenage years – genetics, peer pressure and life-style choices?
- Are they prepared for the challenges and tensions that may arise in adolescence regarding the young person's journey towards independence and autonomy?