

CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICE POLICY

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1 This policy arises from:

The National Minimum Standards for Adoption 2011 and the Adoption Support Agencies (England) and Adoption Agencies (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2005, Regulation 13 and the National Minimum Standard for Adoption, Standard 15

2 Aims

- 2.1 PAC-UK's Child and Family Service (hereafter C&FS) aims to enhance family life for families who are affected by difficulties relating to adoption, long term fostering, special guardianship and other permanent placements, whereby issues relating to early life trauma, multiple previous placements, attachment, cultural and racial identity, contact with birth relatives and 'therapeutic parenting' are predominant.
- 2.2 The C&FS aims to meet the specific needs of adoptive/other permanent placement families, in contrast to more generic family support services.
- 2.3 The C&FS aims to reach out to parents and families who already have children living with them, as well as to families who are considering having children placed with them in the future.
- 2.4 The C&FS also offers to work with birth family members in the context of a Contact Assessment or Contact and Mediation Work between adoptive/other permanent placement family and birth family members.
- 2.5 The C&FS aims to provide a service to all presenting parents and families and offers specific expertise in working with BME and multi-racial families.
- 2.6 The C&FS aims to provide family, rather than individual child focused support.
- 2.7 The C&FS aims to use innovative and creative, as well conventional assessment, therapeutic and parenting methods.
- 2.8 The C&FS aims to tailor its service to each family's particular need.

- 2.9 All families are treated respectfully, openly and professionally throughout their contact with the C&FS, paying due regard to their race, age, culture, gender and sexual orientation (see also PAC-UK's Equal Opportunities Policy).
- 2.10 The C&FS aims to remain informed by theories and research relating to adoption, other permanent placements, attachment, (early) trauma, cultural/racial identity, contact and other relevant issues.
- 2.11 The C&FS is committed to safeguarding all their users' safety and enhance their welfare, in accordance with PAC-UK's Statement of Purpose and PAC-UK's Safeguarding and Promoting Welfare Policy and Procedures.

3 Objectives

Depending on the particular need of each family, and the funding/contracts with local authorities available, the C&FS is committed to:

- 3.1 provide informed understanding and empathy to families;
- 3.2 make an initial assessment of the family's presenting problems;
- 3.3 provide information to families relating to: adoption/other forms of permanent placements, effects of early trauma, attachment issues, cultural/racial identity and contact;
- 3.4 provide parenting advice to parents;
- 3.5 make parents aware that they are entitled to an adoption support assessment (or where appropriate other permanent placement support assessment) by either their or their child's Local Authority (following the three year rule).
- 3.6 carry out a Parent, and/or Family, and/or Contact Assessment which can constitute (part of) an adoption/other permanent placement support assessment;
- 3.7 undertake an assessment for Court where requested;

- 3.8 undertake therapeutic Parent, Parent-Child, or Family work and provide individual sessions for adolescents and parents (in the context of family or parents work) to address the presenting difficulties;
- 3.9 undertake Contact and Mediation Work;
- 3.10 provide follow-up sessions to Assessment and/or Therapeutic/Contact work;
- 3.11 provide disruption support;
- 3.12 provide Professional Consultations to any professionals involved in adoption support;
- 3.13 keep communication open between the C&FS and all other relevant professionals involved with supporting the family - especially with child's and the family's Local Authority/ies;
- 3.14 to liaise with the appropriate LA or other funding source about payment for any of the above services
- 3.15 provide training on PAC-UK's model of working with adoptive families and on various topics related to adoption, attachment and trauma in cooperation with the PAC-UK's Training Department.

4 Service Users

- 4.1 Adoptive families, prospective adoptive families, long-term foster families and other permanent placement families, all of which will be referred to as '**families**' hereafter; they include: 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4. (see below).
- 4.2 Adoptive parents, prospective adoptive parents, long term foster carers, special guardians, and any other person who is a permanent parental figure for a child; they shall hereafter be referred to as '**parents**'. Parents can be single or in a pair. Should 'parents' be assisted by third party co-parents (such as grandparent/s, adult children, other adults) it may be appropriate to consider these persons as 'parents' too.

- 4.3 Adopted children/young people, children/ young people placed for adoption, long-term fostered children/young people, children and young people in special guardianship or other permanent placements – all up to 18 years old; they shall hereafter be referred to as '**children**'. When the child is older than 18 and thus an adult, and yet still wishes to participate in therapeutic family work together with their parents, this will be considered.
- 4.4 **Siblings** of the presenting children, who live in the same family as the presenting child/ren. Siblings can be birth children of the parent/s, they can be biologically related or not to the presenting child, and they can be as described in 4.3; they shall hereafter also be referred to as 'children'.
- 4.5 **Birth family members** - in the context of contact work between these birth family members and 'families' as described in 4.1.
- 4.6 Whereas parents can use the C&FS without their children, children cannot use the service without their parent/s involvement.
- 4.7 The C&FS is available for families whose members are from local authorities that have a service level agreement with PAC-UK, as well as for families whose members are from non-subscribing local authorities.
- 4.8 Families can refer themselves to the C&FS, and they can be referred by their local authorities, by another support agency, by their GP, by health insurance companies, by the Court, or other.
- 4.9 The C&FS is available for professionals involved in adoption support who request a professional consultation. Professionals are from subscribing or non-subscribing local authorities, or any other organization involved in supporting adoptive families.

5 Assessment of Needs

- 5.1 Families approaching the C&FS are always advised of their right to apply for an assessment of need for adoption support services from the appropriate local authority (LA), or where appropriate other permanent placement support services.

- 5.2 PAC-UK will make a preliminary assessment of a family's need during the initial referral via telephone, letter or e-mail.
- 5.3 This initial assessment is broadened during a first face-to-face Parent Consultation.
- 5.4 The C&FS then recommends the family gets a full adoption support assessment, or where appropriate other permanent placement support assessment, for which the family is urged to contact the appropriate local authority.
- 5.5 The C&FS can be commissioned by a local authority to carry out a 'Parent/s only', a 'Parent-Child', a 'Family', a 'Viability', and/or a 'Contact assessment' which can constitute (part of) an adoption/permanent placement support assessment.
- 5.6 Families are signposted to alternative services if PAC-UK assesses that the family needs other services than those offered by PAC-UK.
- 5.7 PAC-UK offers wheelchair access. Where a service user indicates that they have special requirements for attending and making use of appointments with the C&FS (e.g. visual or auditory impairment, etc.), necessary arrangements will be made to provide for these needs; where this has financial implications, the C&FS will liaise with the relevant LA, or other possible funding body.

6 Format of Services

- 6.1 Parent Consultation
- 6.2 Family Consultation
- 6.3 Comprehensive Family Assessment
- 6.4 Parent Child interaction assessment (Marshak Interaction Method or MIM Assessment)
- 6.5 Comprehensive Parent Assessment

- 6.6 Assessment of Contact Needs and Arrangements with birth family members
- 6.7 Intensive Therapeutic Family Work
- 6.8 Intensive Therapeutic Parent Work
- 6.9 Life story work with children and their parents
- 6.10 Early Intervention and Home Parenting programme
- 6.11 Individual Sessions for adolescents in the context of therapeutic family work
- 6.12 Individual Sessions for parents in the context of therapeutic parent or family work
- 6.13 Contact and Mediation Work
- 6.14 Disruption Support work
- 6.15 Professional Consultation
- 6.16 Court reports to
- 6.17 Advice for schools- working together with PAC-UK's Education Service)

7 Charges

- 7.1 For service users living in Local authorities that have a Service Level Agreement with PAC-UK, and whose child has either been placed by the same LA or was adopted more than 3 years ago, certain services are free or charge or charged at reduced rates (this varies per SLA).
- 7.2 Service users who live in LAs who have a service level agreement with PAC-UK but whose children were placed by a non-subscribing authority less than 3 years ago need to first approach the placing authority for funds. However, in some cases the family's current local authority may be willing to provide or contribute to the necessary funding.

- 7.3 For service users living in non-subscribing LAs, fees are charged according to standard rates.
- 7.4 Since May 2015 Local authorities can be asked apply to the Adoption Support Fund to receive funding for assessment and therapeutic family work.

8 Staff

- 8.1 The C&FS Team comprises qualified and experienced psychologists, counsellor's therapists and social workers who are registered with one or more of the recognised professional bodies (as set out in NMS 11.5-7).
- 8.2 Team members come from diverse cultural and racial backgrounds and have considerable knowledge and experience of adoption, early trauma, attachment, identity and contact issues, as well as 'therapeutic parenting'; they are committed to ongoing professional development.
- 8.3 The team is led by a Head of Service who is part of PAC-UK's Service Delivery Managers, and a Practice Manager who is responsible to the Head of Service.

9 Location

- 9.1 The C&FS is based at PAC-UK premises in Kentish Town. Generally sessions and meetings take place at these premises.
- 9.2 Team members will occasionally attend professional or network meetings on other premises other than PAC-UK's.
- 9.3 In certain circumstances home visits or therapeutic family work in the family's home will be offered.

10 Evaluation

- 10.1 The C&FS monitors user satisfaction of their services through user feedback questionnaires for parents and children; reports to the Board of Trustees are made available annually.

10.2 To evaluate the effectiveness of their therapeutic approach with parents and families the C&FS uses questionnaires that permit some measurements of change in the child's behaviours as well as in the parents' parenting. The data of these questionnaires is recorded on data sheets that allow statistical analysis.

11 Review

11.1 The C&FS will review their Policy and Procedures annually.

11.2 The C&FS will ensure that their Policy and Procedures continue to comply with the requirements of prevailing legislation, regulations, guidance and standards, and that they are consistent with PAC-UK's overall Statement of Purpose.