

Durham County Council Adoption Service 6 Monthly Report

1 April – 30 September 2020

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Altogether better



Staffing

Staff vacancies have been recruited and appointees have added to the skill, knowledge and confidence of the team.

The performance achieved is phenomenal even more so when taking into account that the team have carried vacancies and had to develop new ways of working due to COVID-19.

Performance

- 46 initial enquiries and 24 initial visits (the majority completed via Teams), conversion rate of 52%.
- 28 prospective adoptive families completed Information, counselling and preparation courses presented through Teams.
- 25 prospective adoptive families approved via virtual Panels.
- At the end of this reporting period, there were 5 prospective adopters in Stage 1 and 8 prospective adopters in Stage 2.

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Performance (cont.)

- 28 children matched with 26 prospective adoptive families, of this number 14 were prospective adopters approved by Durham County Council
- 19 children have had Adoption Orders granted.
- 40 children are placed with their prospective adoptive families, 22 are eligible to have the Adoption Order application considered by the court.
- 38 contacts for post adoption support directly to the Adoption Team, 30 had an assessment of support needs and 27 have had applications to the Adoption Support Fund completed
- 32 enquiries regarding non agency adoption, this is a significant increase as this is only 3 less than the whole of the previous year.

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Update on Key priority areas for 2020/21:

- To develop the ethos of the team recognising that newly appointed staff will soon join. *Ongoing, however remote working has impacted on the development of relationships for new staff members.*
- To develop a learning culture within the Team that supports a wide-ranging review of practice with the goal of updating and improving practice to increase in house provision in preparation for a partnership RAA Model. *An enquiring and learning culture are more in evidence and the improvement in practice is substantial.*
- To review the current Early Permanence Planning practice across other areas to embed models of early permanence for example Fostering for Adoption. *This continues to be developed.*
- Review and develop LCS to support practice and aide reporting on performance. *There has been a delay in this commencing however dates are now agreed for reviewing the current provision*
- Review adoption allowances procedure and embed a means test approach. *This is ongoing*

Altogether better

