



Waltham Forest Adoption Support Services provided by Coram:

The Adoption Team which covers Waltham Forest, provides a range of adoption and post-adoption services which includes:

- Family finding for children with adoption plans.
- Advice, guidance, and signposting to local and regional resources for adoptive families.
- Access to various types of therapeutic support via the Adoption Support Fund (subject to an Assessment of Needs).
- Adoptive parenting guidance and support.
- Networking with other professionals providing a service to the adoptive family.
- Mediation of contact between adoptive families and birth families.
- Support with letterbox contact for birth families and adopters. Providing support with writing the letters.
- Services for Adopted adults- Access to Birth Records & Intermediary support.
- Referrals to Birth parent counselling (support for birth parents affected by the adoption of their child. This service is provided by Action for change).
- Additional services offered by Coram Ambitious for Adoption (VAA) including training, support groups, and newsletters.

Eligibility criteria for Post-Adoption Support:

You are entitled to use our adoption support services if you:

- Adopted a child from Waltham Forest and you live in the borough.
- Adopted a child from Waltham Forest but live outside the borough and it is less than 3 years since the Adoption Order was granted. After 3 years, Post Adoption Support and services are provided by the Local Authority/ Regional Adoption Agency where you live.
- Live in Waltham Forest and adopted through another local authority and it is more than 3 years since the Adoption Order was granted. Before that, the local authority who placed the child will be responsible for providing adoption support.

Letterbox contact support:

Letterbox contact for the Waltham Forest is offered to all children adopted through the Waltham Forest until they turn 18. The placing Local Authority is responsible for Letterbox contact regardless of whether they live in our borough or elsewhere. Letterbox contact can be extended until the young, adopted adults turns 21 -if this has been requested.

The Post Adoption Support team can provide support with letterbox. This support includes offering advice and ideas to help adoptive parents write letters to birth family members.

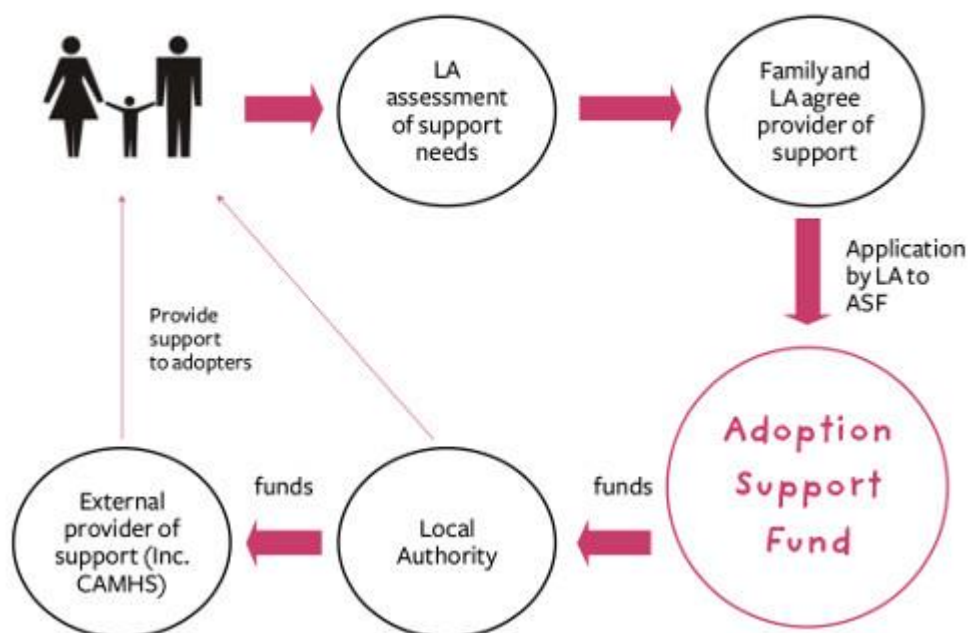
Post Adoption Support Contact details:

- Post Adoption Support – to find more about our services, or to request support, please contact us on adoption@walthamforest.gov.uk
- Letterbox Contact – for letterbox enquires – please contact letterboxcontact@walthamforest.gov.uk

The Adoption and Special Guardianship Support Fund (ASGSF)

The adoption support fund (ASGSF) provides funds to local authorities (LAs) and regional adoption agencies (RAAs) to pay for essential therapeutic services for eligible adoptive families.

How it works



WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR THE ADOPTION AND SPECIAL GUADIANSHIP SUPPORT FUND?

The Fund is available for children living in England up to and including the age of 21 (or 25 with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education Health & Care Plan) who: are adopted and were previously in local authority care in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland/ are adopted from overseas/ are under a Child Arrangement Order (CAO) to enable the assessment of a potential special guardian, while the CAO is in force/are subject to a Special Guardianship Order and were previously in care.

To access the Fund, you will need to have an assessment of your family's adoption support needs by the relevant adoption team in your Regional Adoption Agency.

The local authority that places the child with you is responsible for assessing your adoption support needs for three years after the adoption order. After three years it becomes the responsibility of the local authority/ Regional Adoption Agency where you live (if different).

Where the assessment identifies that therapeutic services would be beneficial to your family, the local authority will apply to the Fund on your behalf, who will then release funding to the local authority.

The local authority social worker will be expected to talk to you about who can provide the types of service that you need and which provider you would prefer.

WHO PROVIDES THE SERVICES?

Local authorities, independent providers (OFSTED registered or the local authority making the application assumes responsibility for quality assurance as an OFSTED registered organisation) and NHS providers e.g., Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS – offering services within the scope of the ASGSF) can all provide services through the ASGSF.

WHAT SUPPORT WILL I RECEIVE THROUGH THE ASGSF?

The Fund will provide money to the local authority to fund a range of therapeutic services. The amount per child per year is capped at £5000 for therapy, as well as a separate amount of up to £2,500 per child if specialist assessments are needed. Therapy and assessment above this amount and up to a limit of £30,000 requires match funding by the local authority.

The therapies funded are those identified to help achieve the following positive outcomes for you and your child: Improved relationships with friends, family members, teachers, and school staff/Improved engagement with learning/Improved emotional regulation and behaviour management/Improved confidence and ability to enjoy a positive family life and social relationships.

To achieve these outcomes the Fund will pay for therapeutic support and services including but not restricted to: Therapeutic parenting training/Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy/Theraplay/Creative therapies e.g., art, music, drama, play/Eye Movement

Desensitisation and Reprocessing Therapy (EMDR)/Non-Violent Resistance (NVR)/Sensory integration therapy/Sensory attachment therapy/Multi Systemic Therapy/Mentalisation Based Therapy/Psychotherapy/Extensive life story work with a therapeutic intervention (where therapy is used to help the young person understand and cope with the trauma and difficulties that their life story work might revisit)/Short Breaks are in scope where they include a substantial element of eligible therapeutic therapies.

Specialist Assessment that meets **all** the criteria below: An in-depth assessment of the child and family's needs with a focus on trauma and attachment, and how this demonstrates the links to the assessment of support needs. Led and undertaken by a qualified clinician(s). For the purposes of the ASF, a qualified clinician would be someone who diagnoses and treats patients; is suitably qualified and is licensed to practice via a regulator such as the Health and Care Professional Council e.g., a trained Clinical Psychologist or Attachment Psychotherapist. Result in a therapeutic support plan for the child(ren) / family.

To request access to Adoption and Special Guardianship Support Funding – contact Post Adoption Support team adoption@walthamforest.gov.uk

Other local services available to adoptive families accessing support through Waltham Forest:

CAMHS:

CAMHS is the name for the NHS services that assess and treat young people with emotional, behavioural or mental health difficulties. CAMHS support covers depression, problems with food and eating, self-harm, abuse, violence or anger, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and anxiety, among other difficulties.

Waltham Forest CAMHS

Contact: 0300 555 1247 Linford Road 6, London, E17 3LA

Email: wfcamhs@nelft/nhs.uk

Virtual School:

The Children and Families Act 2014 requires Local Authorities to appoint a Virtual School Head whose purpose is to ensure the Local Authority fulfils its statutory duty to promote the education of Looked After Children and formerly looked after children.

Contact: 0208 496 1741

Email: virtual.school@walthamforest.gov.uk



PAC-UK
Adoption and Permanency Support

PAC-UK:

Specialist Therapy, Advice, Support, Counselling & Training for all affected by Adoption & Permanency

PAC-UK offers a free Advice Line weekdays as well as an Educational Advice Line on Thursdays from 12 – 2pm (please be aware times can change so check the website for current availability). T: 020 7284 0555 E: advice@pac-uk.org

PAC-UK and can provide counselling services for adoptive families, birth families, and adults accessing birth records. PAC-UK also offers training for adopters such as NVR training, these can be accessed by contacting your Post Adoption Support Team.

adoption@walthamforest.gov.uk

Additional support is provided and accessible through our Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) Coram Ambitious for Adoption:

Life Story Talk Workshops

These workshops are designed to help parents talk to their child about their adoption and will give you the confidence and skills you need to do this. We will look at how parents can promote and respond to their child/children's questions about adoption and their history, and give you practical examples of words and phrases that you can use to facilitate this. Life story work is about engaging in conversation with your child about their journey, we therefore advise parents to attend this workshop every couple of years as their child develops.

Life Story Talk Seminars

The seminars are open to anyone who has attended one of the Life Story workshops in the last 18 months and would like the opportunity to discuss further their life story talk with their child, the next one is on:

Strengthening Attachment Through Play

Please join us for this training session where we explore the benefits and challenges of child & parent play, and introduce attendees to the Webster-Stratton (Incredible Years) concept of child-led/Special Play, which is an evidence-based play approach that promotes and strengthens attachment.

This training is for approved adopters (before placement or with children aged 0 – 8 years) with all levels of play experience.

Please email adoptionssupportVAA@coram.org.uk to register your interest for any of the

above courses.

Support Group for Black, Asian, Mixed Heritage, Minority Ethnic Families

We know that adoptive families from Black, Asian, Mixed Heritage or Minority Ethnic backgrounds have to consider different types of challenges. This group was formed as a response to the recurring issues that adoptive families have experienced, For example, the school experience or preparing a child for independence in adolescence are complex areas for all parents of adopted children, but helping children to manage additional issues around identity and racism within these contexts, does require further thinking and support. Coram adoption senior social workers facilitate the program once a year. This is five meetings for 12 families taking place during the week in the evening on Zoom.

There is a group currently meeting so please register your interest for the future groups: please contact adoptionssupportVAA@coram.org.uk and we can send you the registration form.

Online Social Media Safeguarding for Adoptive Parents workshop – also covering contact issues

This workshop aims to provide adopted parents with an understanding of the risks online to children and how to address these issues

By the end of the training delegates should

- Be aware of the risks to children and how it impacts on them
- Be familiar with signs and indicators of that a child is accessing inappropriate materials
- Understand the risks from social media to young people.
- Explore the process of grooming.
- Consider the specific vulnerabilities of adopted children.
- Look at the impact of birth parents contacting children or children contacting birth parents
- Explore parental controls and family agreements.
- Develop a strategy for online contact with birth parents going wrong.
- Reporting online concerns and accessing support
- Keeping up to date with current concerns

Please note that there will be a fee for this course of £12.00 per participant. Do let us know, should you be experiencing difficulty in covering this fee.

Please email adoptionssupportVAA@coram.org.uk to register your interest.

Muslim Adoption Support Group

This support group is open to all Coram's adopters of Muslim-heritage children. We welcome Muslim adopters, non-Muslim adopters of Muslim children, and prospective Muslim adopters who have been approved and are waiting for a child to be placed with them. The group meets monthly on Zoom, and offers a safe space in which to share experiences and explore issues affecting Muslim adopted children and their families, including faith-related matters, cultural attitudes, child development, identity and mental health issues, and other topics of interest to attendees. The support group will be facilitated by Dr Rachel Abedi, Child and Adolescent Psychotherapist (ACP). Rachel has several years' experience working in the NHS Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and in schools, and has a particular interest in supporting Muslim children and families to access services. She is also a Muslim and a Coram adopter.

Support group meetings take place monthly on Mondays at 12.30pm to 2.00pm via Zoom. You are welcome to stay for the whole meeting or drop in for as long as you can.

To book please email adoptionssupportVAA@coram.org.uk

CATCH (Adopter Hub) / Demonstration and Workshop

CATCH provides adopters with online access to peer support, webinars, training and sessions with experienced practitioners to help reduce isolation. This fantastic online resource was developed with adopters to provide eLearning, support and essential information.

CATCH offers:

- A forum: open 24/7 for you to swap ideas with other adopters.
- One-to-one webchat: great for individual support, all our trained peer supporters are adopters themselves.
- Webinars and videos: all you need is a screen and headphones to watch live and you can also browse the webinars, covering subjects including school transitions, difficult emotions and behaviour, and parenting an anxious child.
- ELearning on attachment and parenting: available to view at a time that suits you, reviewing and building on your previous learning.
- Resources: lots of useful information and guidance on subjects such as education, life story work and mental health.

There is a video on CATCH which demonstrates how to use and what is on offer:

https://youtu.be/m_CuSRvx6AY

If you do not have a CATCH membership and would like to be a member, please contact adoptionssupportvaa@coram.org.uk

To learn about how to make full use of CATCH services please attend our next CATCH Workshop To book please contact adoptionssupportvaa@coram.org.uk

Additional Links:

We Are Family: www.wearefamilyadoption.org.uk.

We Are Family is a free support group run by adopters, for adopters. They offer parent groups, training workshops.

The POTATO Group: www.thepotatogroup.org.uk

The POTATO Group is a group for parents of adopted teens. They have an annual fee of £15 and provide peer to peer support as well as a private Facebook page.

NEW FAMILY SOCIAL: <https://newfamilysocial.org.uk>

A UK charity, led by LGBTQ+ adopters and foster carers. New Family Social exists to help you decide if adoption or fostering is right for you and then support you on your journey to becoming parents and carers. They also work with agencies to develop their services to be as LGBTQ+ inclusive and friendly as possible. They aim to make the pool of available parents as wide as possible for the many children in care. There's an ever-increasing need for more LGBTQ+ people to explore both adoption and fostering. You might have just started to think about your options. What will adoption mean for you? Can you offer the support needed from a foster carer? How will an agency treat me? What age children can I give a home to? They are here to help. There's probably a supportive adoption or fostering team near you that's a member of New Family Social.

The Child Accident Prevention Trust (CAPT): <https://capt.org.uk/csw-translations>

They give free child safety advice to parents and carers, support professionals working with children and families, support senior professionals and policymakers and advise the government and organisations on child safety.

Anna Freud Centre - Nurturing Change

Nurturing Change is a national therapeutic service based at the Anna Freud Centre, offering specialist support to adoptive parents, among others, and their children aged up to 6 years. We provide a 12-week online therapeutic service, eligible for Adoption Support Fund funding, using the Video-feedback Intervention to promote Positive Parenting and Sensitive Discipline (VIPP-SD). This has a strong evidence base, with research consistently showing it is effective in helping parents and children's development and wellbeing. It supports relationships between parents and their children, helping to develop secure attachments by increasing sensitive responses and improving attunement. So those who are caring for children who have had a difficult start in life can particularly benefit from this intervention. To express interest in receiving the service or find out more visit: www.annafreud.org/nurturingchange/ or contact paula.oliveira@annafreud.org

NVR courses

Gill Tree, Adoption Academy, offers NVR courses for adoptive parents. Please visit the website for information on the courses offered: <https://www.adoptionacademy.co.uk/>. These courses are accessible through the Adoption Support Fund.

Please contact your Post Adoption Support Team for any of the information, advice, guidance, or support
[**adoption@walthamforest.gov.uk**](mailto:adoption@walthamforest.gov.uk)