



# Education & Children's Services

## Improving Lives Together

Ambition | Compassion | Integrity

Challenging, Rewarding, Inspiring

Change a child's world

Adopt with Perth and Kinross Council

### Adopters, the Skills, and Qualities We Look For

Perth and Kinross Council welcome applications from people who feel they are able to meet the needs of adopted children regardless of their relationship status, sexuality, beliefs or ethnicity.

We recognise that adoption is one of the most rewarding but also one of the hardest and most challenging things that people will undertake in their lives; this is confirmed by feedback from people who have adopted. No one has a right to adopt and it is important that we work in collaboration with applicants to assess whether they have the capacity, resilience, skills and qualities to be adoptive parents and that this is the right time in their lives to pursue this.

#### We are looking for people who are:

- Mature and thoughtful
- Happy to make space in their life and home
- Flexible in their approach to life – particularly important in regard to parenting and lifestyle
- Determined to make a real difference to a child's life - for a lifetime
- Ready for a challenge
- Well supported by family and friends
- Welcome opportunities for reflection, training and support and feel able to work with social workers and other professional staff
- Not daunted by children with a level of complex needs

## Some of the important qualities we look for in prospective adoptive parents:

- That they like and enjoy children and young people and can be playful
- Can be flexible – in parenting styles, daily routines, lifestyle
- Patient, warm and caring
- Can set consistent boundaries with compassion
- Self-awareness
- Emotionally literate
- Reflective and have 'made sense' of their life experiences
- Accepting of people as they are and non-judgmental
- Have the ability to negotiate and compromise
- Have the ability or willing to develop the skills to talk to children about their life story
- Can understand and empathise with children who may have been neglected or abused
- Are able to cope with complex needs which may require a great deal of patience, skill and determination - possibly over a very long period of time, and are willing and able to make a long term commitment and provide a permanent home for a child and 'claim' them for the rest of their lives.

## Adoption - things you need to consider

We would normally expect you to live within Perth and Kinross or within a reasonable travelling distance. There may be some circumstances when we would accept applications from elsewhere if you are able to meet the needs of particular children.

- You need to have resided permanently in the UK for at least a year and have a legal right to remain.
- Applicants need to be over the age of 21. We do not have an upper age limit, but age will be one of a number of considerations which will be addressed in your adoption assessment in order to ensure you are able to meet an adopted child's needs throughout their childhood.
- We are happy to hear from single people or couples, with or without children. If you are single, you will need to have a strong support network. Couples will need to have been together for at least two years and be married, in a civil partnership or be living together in an enduring family relationship. If you already have children, there will need to be a gap of about two years between the age of your child and an adopted child.
- The risks associated with passive smoking mean that we are not able to accept applications from people who smoke or vape. If you have recently given up smoking or vaping, we need you to have been a non-smoker for at least a year before making an application to adopt.

- Adopters need to be in good physical and emotional health. Adopting a child is a lifelong commitment which requires energy, stamina and physical fitness. The Agency Medical Adviser will consider issues in your current and previous medical history which might impact on your ability to care for a child throughout their childhood and beyond. This may include some medical issues such as mental health and weight. The main consideration is how a health condition / illness affects day to day life and caring for a child. Adopting a child is a life-long commitment and therefore any life-limiting illness would prevent the application from progressing.
- Many prospective adopters will have previously had infertility treatment and / or experience of miscarriage. In our experience, it is advisable to have a period of one year following any final treatment / experience of miscarriage prior to making an enquiry about adoption.
- If you have experienced a bereavement of a birth child, there needs to be at least 1 year that has passed prior to starting the adoption process.
- All prospective adopters are required to complete a Disclosure Scotland check. Some serious offences, especially offences relating to children, may result in an application not proceeding. These checks need to be undertaken for each adult living within the household (for example, adult birth children).
- A spare bedroom will be required for a single adopted child. Adopted siblings of the same gender can share a room but there will need to be space in your home for children to have their own room by early primary school age.
- In terms of adoption leave, we expect that you are able to take a minimum of 9 months, preferably 1 year leave from employment in order to promote the best opportunity for a child to build trust and settle into the family.
- Some pets are considered a risk to children and will be considered in your assessment. We are not able to accept applications from owners of dogs noted in the Dangerous Dogs Act.
- If you have already adopted and wish to make another application, we would expect your adopted child to have been living with you for at least a year.