Adoption Support Service
Statement of purpose 2020-21

PARENTS AND CHILDREN TOGETHER
Introduction

Parents And Children Together, PACT, also known as Oxford Diocesan Council for Social Work Inc, is a Company limited by guarantee registered in England (No. 1636098) and a Registered Charity (No. 285214).

PACT is registered as a voluntary adoption agency and restricted to providing domestic adoption, therapeutic support and post adoption services within the requirements of:

- Working Together 2018
- Adoption: National Minimum Standards 2014
- Children and Families Act 2014
- The Adoption Agencies (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2013
- The Adoption and Children Act Register Regulations 2014
- The Adoption Agencies (Panel and Consequential Amendments) Regulations 2012
- The Adoption Agencies and Independent Review of Determinations (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Adoption Support Agencies (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Adoption Agencies Regulations 2005
- The Adoption Support Service Regulations 2005
- The Adoptions with a Foreign Element Regulations 2005
- The Adoption Information and Intermediary Services (Pre-Commencement Adoptions) Regulations 2005
- The Disclosure of Adoption Information (Post Commencement Adoptions) Regulations 2005
- The Restriction on the Preparation of Adoption reports Regulations 2005
- The Suitability of Adopters Regulations 2005
- The Voluntary Adoption Agencies and the Adoption Agencies (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2003
- The Adoption and Children Act 2002
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PACT’s Aims and Objectives

PACT’s aim is to build and strengthen families through adoption, adoption support and through our community work.

The main objectives of PACT’s Adoption Support Service are to:

- Provide a range of quality services which can promote best outcomes for children who need permanent placement.

- Consider links and the support needed for children (for whom adoption is the plan) with PACT families who can meet their ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic needs whilst recognising that no child should wait indefinitely for the ‘ideal’ match.

- Provide comprehensive support packages to families and support them to achieve stable and successful placements.

- Provide services for children, adopters, birth relatives and adopted adults in respect of adoption support services in conjunction with other agencies.

- Maintain effective partnership with other adoption agencies.

- Ensure that cost effective services are provided and commissioned and maximise available resources.

- Ensure all staff are appropriately recruited, supervised and trained to fulfil PACT’s functions.

- Ensure that accurate and up-to-date records and management information is maintained in relation to adoptive parents and services and to maintain confidentiality and security of adoption records.

- Ensure service users are fully involved and consulted on service delivery and service development.

- Treat all service users with respect and without prejudice or discrimination.

- Provide adoption support services within the prevailing legislative framework including the National Minimum Standards for Adoption Services and relevant regulations.
**PACT’s Services**

PACT supports adoptive parents to meet the needs of children for whom local authorities and Regional Adoption Agencies are seeking placements.

**Adopter Champions (peer-to-peer support)**

The Adopter Champions are there to support families at any stage of their adoptive journey as a peer. Having adopted themselves, their expertise and lived experience can be of great benefit to families who need support.

**Strengthening Families Team**

The Strengthening Families Team of therapeutically trained social workers work alongside the family’s social worker when additional support is needed. The Team also work with families post Adoption Order, at any time up to when the child reaches the age of 18 years old.

**FACTS**

PACT has FACTS (Family And Children Therapeutic Support): an easily accessible consultation and therapeutic service with highly trained therapists with extensive adoption experience. Therapeutic services provided include (but are not limited to) clinical and educational psychology, filial therapy, family therapy and many creative therapies eg play, drama and music.

Services are commissioned by the responsible Local Authority (who may recover the cost from the Adoption Support Fund). Where there is no such agreement for funding, families may fund treatment themselves. If they are not able to do so there is a bursary fund so that no PACT family is denied services on grounds of cost alone.

**The Adopter Hub**

PACT’s online adoption support service allows parents and professionals access to forums, webinars and one-to-one webchat. There are eLearning modules available to registered users which parents and professionals can use to extend their learning at a time and pace suitable to them.

Other support services that are available to PACT families include:

- Post approval training and workshops
- Attachment Focussed Parenting training
- Regular newsletters
- Family Fun Days
- Support groups
- Occasional creative workshops for adopted children (ImPACT)

**Access to information from adoption records**

PACT assists and supports people seeking information about their adoption and family history if they were adopted through one of the following adoption agencies:

- Childlink Adoption Society, formerly Church Adoption Society (Please note this is not the Church of England Children’s Society)
- Church of the Latter Day Saints
- Oxford Diocesan Council for Moral Welfare
- Oxford Diocesan Council for Social Work
- PACT (Parents And Children Together)
Principles and Standards of Care

The child’s welfare and safety will be the paramount consideration and will be central to PACT’s services.

Children are entitled to grow up as part of a stable and loving family, which can meet their needs throughout childhood and beyond.

All children will have the same opportunities irrespective of gender, ethnic origin, disability, culture, religion, language and sexual orientation.

Delay in the adoption process can have a significant impact on the wellbeing of children and must be kept to the minimum necessary to achieve the plan made in the child’s best interests.

Children’s birth parents/guardians and families and adoptive parents and families will be valued and respected.

Adoption has lifelong implications for all involved. Children and young people who have been adopted, adoptive families and birth families all have access to a range of services and supports to meet their assessed needs.

Children have the right to be listened to, express their wishes and feelings and participate in decisions about their future. They will be encouraged and enabled to do this at all stages of the adoption process and in a way that is appropriate to their age and understanding.

A sense of identity is important to a child’s well-being. To help children develop this, their ethnic origin, cultural background, religion, language and sexuality will be recognised and positively valued and promoted.

Adoption is a service in which the child’s needs are always paramount.
Responsible Individual and Managers

PACT’s Chief Executive is the Responsible Individual and the Agency’s Decision Maker, making decisions following recommendations from the Adoption Panel.

The Service Director holds strategic responsibility and accountability for the adoption service and is the “Registered Manager” of the Adoption Support Agency. Managers hold day-to-day operational responsibility for the management of their team/service.

The Service Director is a member of the Adoption Committee, a subcommittee of the main Board. Staff may report any issues to the Service Director to be raised at the Committee.

There are no branches of PACT at the present time. There are domestic adoption teams based in Reading London and Brighton, managed from the Head Office in Reading. Adoption support services are provided to all teams.

There are no conditions in place relating to the registration of the agency.

Monitoring Systems and Quality Assurance

PACT continually monitors and evaluates its service at every stage of the adoption process to ensure quality and effectiveness. PACT welcomes feedback from service users and advertises its complaints process.

Feedback on service quality and effectiveness is sought via a variety of means whenever support services are provided.

As part of an Adoption Consortium, membership of regional Adoption and Special Guardianship Leadership Board (ASGLB) and RAA governance boards, PACT’s Adoption Support Service actively considers and shares good practice and policy development.

The Adoption Service is inspected on a three-yearly basis by Ofsted (the Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills). In 2014 and 2017 PACT’s adoption services was awarded an “Outstanding” rating by Ofsted.

Staff

Supervision and annual appraisal processes are used for monitoring and evaluation. Objectives are set annually and reviewed regularly. Staff learning and developmental needs are assessed and form the basis for the Learning and Development Plan.

See Appendix One for details of staff.
Assessment of need

When adopters or adoptees approach PACT for an adoption support service, the receiving worker will help identify the type of service which might best meet their need.

If one of PACT’s support services is appropriate this will be identified as an option and the referral process will be discussed.

It is recognised that one service will not fit all requirements and should PACT services not be taken up or found useful, support will be given to signpost to other services or to the appropriate Local Authority with information regarding assessments of need.

Compliments and Complaints

PACT wishes to improve and develop its services and welcomes feedback at all times, verbally or in writing. PACT is particularly grateful for observations and criticisms by those who consider that our services could be improved and acts on any suggestions as to how improvements might be made at any stage. Positive and constructive observations are also welcome. Feedback evaluation forms are used by all services.

If you wish to make a formal complaint about PACT’s services, or you are a child or a person acting on behalf of a child, PACT has set out the framework for this. There is a leaflet explaining the process – it is available to download from our website. Printed copies are available on request. If you have any queries about this process, please contact us.

Adopters will also be provided with information about how to access the complaints procedures of the local council responsible for the child’s placement where the concerns relate to the work of that agency.

See Appendix Two for details of the complaints procedure.

Review of Statement of Purpose

This document has been formally approved by PACT’s Senior Management Team and Adoption Committee; it will be reviewed annually and, if necessary, revised.
Adult’s Guide

Adults referred to the FACTS service will be given information about the service it is proposed they are to receive, what is involved in that particular service provision and how the service will be monitored to ensure that it is delivering the intended outcome.

Children’s Guide

All children and young people will be given a guide to PACT’s adoption support services. The guide will inform them of the services PACT offers, what it means to come to PACT for a service and how they can make their views known about the services they receive.

Registration Authority

The Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills (Ofsted)

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

General helpline: 0300 123 1231   Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

Feedback

PACT’s most recent inspection report was completed by Ofsted in January 2017, and the rating was ‘Outstanding’. A copy may be found via the link below, or via our website. A printed copy is available on request.

http://pactcharity.org/about-us/ofsted-inspection

PACT welcomes feedback about our policies and procedures so if you have any comments about this Statement of Purpose, please address them to:

Service Director
Parents And Children Together
9 Southern Court
South Street
Reading
Berkshire
RG1 4QS

Signed: Jan Fishwick, Responsible Individual
Date: 21/05/2019

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Appendix one: Staff

Jan Fishwick OBE

The Responsible Individual and Agency Decision Maker of the adoption service is Jan Fishwick, Chief Executive, who joined the agency in March 2008. Jan has more than 40 years’ experience of adoption and fostering; Jan came to PACT from the London Borough of Brent, before which she had worked for The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea as well as a number of other Local Authorities. She is a member of the Board of the Consortium of Voluntary Adoption Agencies, regional Leadership Boards as well as Regional Adoption Agency steering groups, working to advise and influence Government policy on adoption. Jan holds an MPA, a CQSW and is a qualified executive coach.

Lorna Hunt

Lorna is the Registered Manager of the Adoption Support Service and is a qualified social worker having worked in Children’s Social Care for over 32 years. Before joining PACT in October 2018 Lorna was Assistant Director for two Berkshire Local Authorities for over eight years. Lorna has a MA in Social Work and a Diploma in management.

Julie Stolland

Julie joined PACT in September 2013. She has extensive experience in social work, including child protection, fostering and adoption and adoption support. Julie manages the adoption support teams. She is a qualified social worker and holds the NVQ5 in Social Care Management.

Therapeutic Social Workers

PACT has therapeutically trained social workers with a broad range of qualifications experience and skills, including those in Theraplay, Art and Play Therapy, Family Therapy, Therapeutic Life Story Work and DDP.

FACTS therapists

PACT has a number of appropriately qualified, registered and experienced staff from a range of different professional disciplines available to work therapeutically with families. Each has a personnel file compliant with the regulations. Supervision/consultation is provided by a permanent member of PACT’s staff.
### Appendix 2: Complaints Procedure

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<tr>
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<th>Procedure</th>
<th>Time for response</th>
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| 1     | Raise the complaint with the person concerned who will try to resolve the issue. | Initial Acknowledgement letter within 24 hours  
                                  |                                                                                 | Formal response within 14 days                                                   |
| 2     | Make the complaint verbally or in writing to the *Line Manager* of the person concerned. | Initial Acknowledgement letter within 24 hours  
                                  |                                                                                 | Formal response within 28 days                                                   |
| 3     | Send complaint in writing to the Chief Executive. (Or, if the complaint concerns the Chief Executive, to the Chair of the Trustee Board). The complaint will then be looked into and a response provided. | Initial Acknowledgement letter within 24 hours  
                                  |                                                                                 | Formal response within 28 days                                                   |
| 4     | If you are still not satisfied, you should write formally to the Chief Executive requesting that an Independent Investigating Officer examine the complaint. The officer’s written report should then be sent to you, and you will then have the opportunity of responding in writing to a panel of three PACT Trustees, none of whom will have had any involvement with the issues raised. | Initial Acknowledgement letter within 24 hours  
                                  |                                                                                 | Independent Investigating Officer will be given six weeks to provide a report (reasons for any delay will be provided)  
                                  |                                                                                 | Decision of Trustees within 28 days                                               |

Further Notes

*On points of law, complainants should consult a solicitor*

A Complaints can be started at Level 1, Level 2 or Level 3. If the complaint first reaches the Chief Executive in writing, the complainant may be given the opportunity of consideration being given at Levels 1 or 2.

B Please indicate with any complaint if your first language is other than English.

C At any stage a complainant may be accompanied by a friend but not a legal representative

D Confidentiality agreements for agency work will be maintained

E *If you are unsure who the line manager is please contact PACT’s offices 7 Southern Court, South Street, Reading, RG1 4QS Telephone 0300 456 4800 or 0118 938 7600 - Email: info@pactcharity.org*

F You may contact Ofsted, (General enquiries), Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD

   General enquiries: 0300 123 1231
   Website: [http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted)
   Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
   About Concerns: 0300 123 4666

   You can contact the office of the Children’s Commissioner for England, Sanctuary Buildings, 20 Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT

   Enquiries: 020 7783 8330
   Website: [http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/about-us](http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/about-us)