



GWASANAETH MABWYSIADU
Bae'r Gorllewin
Western Bay
ADOPTION SERVICE



Quality of Service Review



Oct - March 2024/25



GWASANAETH MABWYSIADU
Bae'r Gorllewin
Western Bay
ADOPTION SERVICE



Gwasanaeth
Mabwysiadu | National
Cenedlaethol | Adoption
Service



Cyngor **Abertawe**
Swansea Council

Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol



Index

1. Introduction.....	
2. Current Position.....	
3. Staffing.....	
4. Adoption Panel.....	
5. Children.....	
6. Adopters.....	
7. Advertising and Marketing.....	
8. Development of Adoption Support.....	
9. Policies and Procedures.....	
10. CSSIW.....	
11. Local Governance and Monitoring Arrangement.....	
12. Consultation and Engagement.....	
13. Quality Assurance, Compliments, Comments, Complaints, Safeguarding issues, Whistle blowing and representation	
14. Agenda for Change and Future Challenges.....	
15. Overall Assessment of the Service.....	

1. Introduction

The requirement to provide six monthly reviews of the Adoption Service is set out in Regulation 39 of The Local Authority Adoption Services (Wales) Regulations 2019. The aim of this report is to bring into one document a presentation and analysis of the activity of each of the local authority adoption agencies, operating as a regional service. In addition, Section 15 (c) of The Adoption and Children Act 2002 (Joint Adoption Arrangements) (Wales) Directions 2015 sets out the responsibilities of regional collaborative to report to the Director of Operations for the National Adoption Service on a quarterly and annual basis.

The report and information within it will be used for:

- The Review of Service (Regulation 39 report).
- Given the broad content of this report it will be used for informing senior managers, cabinets, scrutiny committees and corporate parenting Boards.
- Quarterly and annual reports to NAS.

This report is in respect of the period 1 October 2024 to 31 March 2025.. Every effort has been made to ensure that the information presented is an accurate record of the activity and quality of the Adoption Service and consider targets for the forthcoming year.

2. Current Position

The service has settled well in to its new location in Neath town centre and the office space is being well utilised by the whole staff team. The space has a fully equipped play room, direct work room and family meeting space. The new office space is invaluable in terms of the space it provides all of the service activities to be undertaken on site reducing the reliance on external room bookings.

The service has continued to make good progress in relation to areas of development with the NAS Cymru plan and the modernising agenda for adoption.

Areas identified for development at the end of last year:

Action	Update Match 2025	Plan
A flexible approach to adoption support and good interface with the Local Authorities teams in relation to specialist support such as edges of care support services and respite	The service has continued to improve the interface between the LA front door/Early help teams to ensure that communication and co-working our most complex cases is seamless	This work has become as business as usual
Re-modelling of the service to align with the available budget, a forward look at the service over the next 1, 3 and 5 years	This work is ongoing and has been more complex due to the need to review the entire budget formula	Will be completed by Dec 2025
To have a continued focus on adopter approvals and to ensure a continued marketing focus in each of the LA areas	The reduction of adopters coming from Bridgend remains a worry and the marketing plan has been redeveloped for 2025-26 to maximise our marketing opportunities across the region	Ongoing

Action	Update Match 2025	Plan
Further implementation of the BUSS model of sensory processing, with staff members progressing on to phase 3 of their development	The implementation plan has been hugely successful with leaplets groups running quarterly and three members of staff undertaking their qualification to complete 121 interventions	Business as usual the implementation of BUSS across the service will be evaluated in 2025-26
To continue to roll out the Understanding the Child Day as part of the transition service, increasing the confidence of the family finding team to grow capacity in the service.	Family Finding SW's are now completing TNT and UTC consultation analysis on all their family finding cases. Some further work on how full UTC days will be undertaken will be developed in April 2025	Ongoing
Review all Letterbox post 18. We will contact all adopters when their child reaches 17 to ask adopters and young person if they would like to continue letterbox post 18, this can continue until age 25	This is happening when adopters contact us post 16 and the active offer is made to continue post 18	Ongoing

3. Staffing

Staffing has remained fairly stable throughout the last two quarters with low absence rates. Work has been undertaken to ensure that all staff in work have an appraisal during 2024-25, and an audit of supervision has been undertaken which did not identify any significant areas of concern. Two long standing experienced members of staff have retired during this reporting period which is a loss in terms of the skills and knowledge they brought. Agreement has now been given for the additional temporary support workers to remain in position until the end of March 2026 whilst a service restructure is undertaken.

4. Adoption Panel

All Panel members have had an appraisal and the themes from these appraisals were shared at one of the quarterly Business meetings held with panel members.

Panel continues to have a central list of members. Panel has continued on a virtual basis although two face to face panels have taken place, these coincide with the Panel business meetings. Two of the three LA lead cabinet members are now sitting as members of the panel. The independent panel chair has had some sickness absence during Q4 but panels have continued as normal with the two Vice chairs being able to cover the chairing role. The panel chair is returning to work in April.

16 Panels were held in the timeframe.

5. Children

Performance in relation to children can be seen in the performance section at the end of this report, this section will consider the qualitative information.



The number of referrals for children has reduced from 110 last year to 85. Bridgend have seen a 50 % decrease in referrals on previous years.



There is a similar theme for Placement Orders which have remained fairly steady since 2021. The big difference this year to date is in relation to a much smaller number of children with a PO in Bridgend. This has been discussed in Interface meetings with the LA and the embedding of a new practice model. SOS has been credited with a re focus on work with families. Swansea has seen a sharp increase.



The number of children matched in the year was 33, compared to last years 43. We are seeing the complexity of children's needs increase and so matching children has taken longer. We have looked creatively at attending new profile events and re starting a monthly profile booklet and specific profiling of children across our social media channels.



The number of children placed has steadily reduced over the last three years. Positively all but 6 of the children placed in this timeframe were placed with regional adopters ensuring those children can continue to be supported when the need arises.



During this reporting period the average timeframe from placement order to placement was at 9 months this is due to the placement of two siblings groups who had been waiting for an extensive period of time and also a child for whom there were extensive appeal processes before the court.



The number of children waiting and for whom the service is actively family finding has remained at a similar level to this time last year (25). The average length of time children have been waiting is 5 months, the shortest time is 5 days and the longest time is 19 months.

There have been no disruptions of regional children in this reporting period. However sadly the placement of two external children placed with WBAS adopters have disrupted shortly after placement. Both of these children were slightly older. We are awaiting the disruption meetings for these cases.



There were 44 Adoption Orders made in the timeframe, a small increase on the amount last year.



Staff in the region continue to embed the Name Change Policy. Of the children who have been made subject of an AOG in the reporting period 82% kept their first name maintaining the improved previous year performance.

6. Adopters

Enquiries and Adopter Approval



The number of initial enquiries to adopt continued to fall slightly during this reporting period. The pattern of enquiries continues to be difficult to predict with some defined peaks and troughs. Most enquiries come through from the Swansea area, there has been little activity from NPT or BCBC despite a continued marketing effort in those areas. The complexity of issues faced by prospective adopters remains challenging.



Adopter approvals increased by 2 this year from 27 to 29. Approving adopters in the right location to match with the location of the children we have in Family Finding remains a challenge.



The number of adopters waiting is 4. This is lower than previous years. The slow start to 2024-25 in relation to enquiries and approvals has meant that we have matched our regional adopters with children reducing the pool of waiting adopters.



The number of referrals for Non-Agency Adoptions slight increase from the position last year - although the robust system in place allows for these to be well managed.

7. Marketing

October was a very eventful month for the service and adoption across the country as we celebrated 10 years of working with the national adoption service and our regional counterparts in Wales.

To mark the occasion we held an exhibition at the Court Coleman Hotel in Bridgend, bringing together staff, professionals and families in an effort to appreciate just how far we've come over the 10 years as a service.

The exhibition displayed and told the story of all the different aspects of the WBAS service from birth parent support to marketing and our youth club. Adding a creative flourish there were also two original poetry pieces performed – one from award-winning poet Rhian Edwards and another from WBAS staff!

Talks were also held during the exhibition from birth parents and adopters around emotive subjects such as contact. Topping off such a special occasion were our special WBAS bakes and merchandise which went down a storm!



Going forward into the winter extensive marketing activity has resumed with the return of the marketing officer in late February - new social media campaigns, blogs and networking at the Wales Air Ambulance Coffee and Cake event in Dafen notable starts.

We've also put into place our marketing plans for the year ahead including activities such as attendance at the Urdd Eisteddfod in Margam Park, new outdoor advertising on bus rears in Bridgend and Neath and radio adverts in the build up to National Adoption Week.

Other notable activities which are ongoing include updating and refreshing of our brand, website and collateral.

8. Adoption Support Performance & Development work

Virtual Hub Consultations

27 Virtual Hubs consultations were provided during the whole year. Feedback is very positive. 19 of the 27 families scored prior and after the session, 17 moved at least one point up on the confidence scale following their consultation.

The last two families remained at the same level. Of the 13 families that rated the consultation in terms of helpfulness, ten families rated it as a 10, 2 rated a 9 and one rated it as an 8.

Signposting from Virtual Hub:

PATHway

11

Buss Group

6

**Life Journey
Support**

5

Therapy

5

**Youth
Clwb**

1

**Schools
Support**

2

**Therapeutic
parenting
programme**

2

9 families identified ADHD/ASD presenting behaviours/ assessments commencing, and one family FASD and 11 families reported school based issues. 21 of the families reported issues with emotional regulation, aggressive outbursts, rage and biting behaviours. Worryingly three families were experiencing issues with their child displaying self harm behaviours.

Contact and Life Journey Hub

Summary

11 contact and Life-journey Hubs took place during the year, the development only commenced late in 2024 and we are already seeing that it is becoming very busy. Child care social workers are also able to book in to discuss Life Journey Work on their cases.

8 of the 11 families completed the confidence score prior and after attending hub. 7 of the families moved at least two points on the confidence scale following the consultation. Three of the families rated the opportunity to talk though their worries as 10/10 in terms of usefulness.

Themes in relation to issues discussed at hub included:

- Increasing SW's confidence in completing their LJ books and Later life letters. Supporting them to be able to deliver difficult information within these.
- Advice and support to adopters in progressing contact or requests to re engage birth parents to make Post adoption contact more meaningful
- Adopters requesting support to explain to their children difficult information such as them experiencing Non Accidental injuries as young babies, birth parents being in prison and birth parents sadly passing away.
- Support to adopters and a young person who has contacted birth family via social media

- Support to adopters whose child doesn't want them to write letters for birth family

Check-ins

Annual Check-in Reviews have continued to be undertaken with birth parents and adoptive families at both the 12 month and 3 year point post Adoption order granted. These Check-ins continue to provide early intervention support to those that engage in them with support being identified at the earliest point.

Adopters/Check-ins



**Adopters for 33 children
engaged in the Check-in**

**Adopters for 4 children were
already receiving Adoption
Support**

**Adopters for 12 other children
were contacted but declined a
Check-in**

From these Check-ins adopters were signposted on to the Life Journey workshop and now the Life Journey and Contact Hub, the Therapeutic Parenting Programme, Pathway referrals and to attend the Leaplets group.

It is encouraging to note that all but 2 adopters reported that their children had an age appropriate understanding of their Life Journey Story. All talked positively about the importance of their ongoing contact with their child's foster carer and there was lots of discussion about post adoption contact arrangements.

Positively those children who had plans for direct sibling contact agreed at the time of the order had maintained that. Adopters who had not embraced writing an annual update were encouraged to restart this.

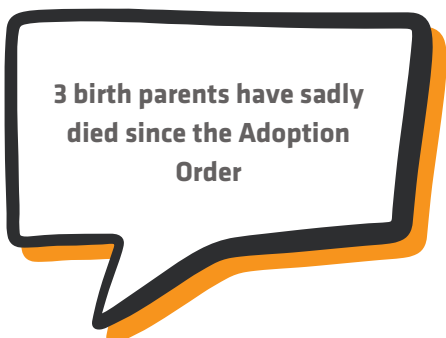
Birth Parents



**Birth parents for 16 children
engaged in the Check-in**



**A further 44 birth parents
were contacted**



**3 birth parents have sadly
died since the Adoption
Order**

Some birth parents talked about positive change they have managed to achieve, birth parents were reminded of the support they could receive in receiving and responding to their annual letter and many were referred to the team for one to one support and to attend the birth mothers group. Several birth fathers requested support and were referred to one of the male workers in the team.

PATHways

There are currently 36 AUK Pathways cases open to WBAS. Between October 2024 and March 2025 there were 10 new referrals made to Pathways and there is currently one further case which is likely to be referred before the end of March. Of the new referrals, 6 were referred to Pathways following Virtual Hub Consultations, 3 were referred through the duty system and 2 were known to and referred by their social worker/therapist within Western Bay Adoption Service. One of the new referrals is a re-referral to Pathways.

In December 2024, Pathways announced that they had achieved the agreed number of referrals for the current 2-year funding cycle and stopped processing referrals. This was an opportunity for AUK to review the Parent Pathways programme; AUK and NAS agreed to pilot a new model of service. Pathways launched the new pilot programme in January 2025 - Pathways Multi-Disciplinary Team service (MDT). The pilot consists of 30 cases across Wales. WBAS were allocated 5 cases (based on the proportion of Adoption Grant funding).

Of the 11 current referrals, 6 are accessing the previous Parent Pathways Programme, 4 have been accepted for the new MDT programme and the one potential case will also access the MDT programme if accepted.

The adopters currently open and accessing the previous Parent Pathways programme have access to the three pillars of Parent Pathways -psychological consultation, parents support partner and reflective group.

Although all adopters access the consultation session with the psychologist/therapist; engagement with Parents Support Partners and the Pathways Reflective Group is significantly lower (as previously reported) and this has been a theme experienced nationally by Pathways and significant in the decision to review the Pathways programme.

Four families have been accepted for the new MDT programme and are due to commence work shortly. Under the new MDT programme, each family will meet with a member of the multi-disciplinary team to identify their needs. The multi-disciplinary team will then consider the most appropriate package of support which will include up to 10 sessions with a member(s) of the multi-disciplinary team.

Therapeutic intervention will be available on a range of issues designed to meet each family's unique needs including, for example; Therapeutic parenting, Family therapy, Neurodiversity, Education issues, Life journey work, Sensory issues and Individual therapy.

Youth Clwb

During the period October 2024-March 2025 we have delivered 17 sessions of our Western Bay Youth Clwb. Our young people are aged between 11-16 years old and come from all across the Western Bay Region. We continue to attract on average around 12 young people each week and have 4 members of staff. During this period we have welcomed 5 new members to youth clwb and 3 young people have returned. We are also looking to train up an older adopted young person to volunteer with the group on a regular basis. This has already been a great experience for him as he starts to develop an understanding of the role and responsibilities of a youth worker. He is building great working relationships with our group of young people. We can see his self-esteem and confidence building and his mum is super proud of him.

Clwb continues to keep to the same structure each week which includes popular activities such as cooking, arts and crafts, indoor and outdoor games. All of these activities provide the perfect opportunity for the group to learn new skills, make new friends and seek support and guidance from the youth workers.

Our highly skilled and experienced youth work team have regular discussions with young people about a range of issues affecting them. During this period there have been discussions around death, anxiety, adoption, court hearings, online safety, self harm, bullying, vaping, sleep deprivation, periods, appropriate touching, questioning pro-nouns, identities, birth names.

In October we took 2 young people to the 10 Year celebration event at Court Coleman Manor Hotel. Both young people thoroughly enjoyed the day. O ended the day's celebration with an emotional speech about his experience of adoption. He was amazing and an absolute natural at public speaking!

Through these experiences he has really found something he excels at and which makes him feel good. He hopes to have further opportunities in public speaking at other events in the future.

Another one of our new young people had not attended school since the age of 11. With the support of her WBAS worker, she was very brave and attended our youth clwb. This was an email we received from her mum.

“Thank you so much for taking E to Youth Club. She has really enjoyed and has come back so happy.

“She is looking forward to next week already”

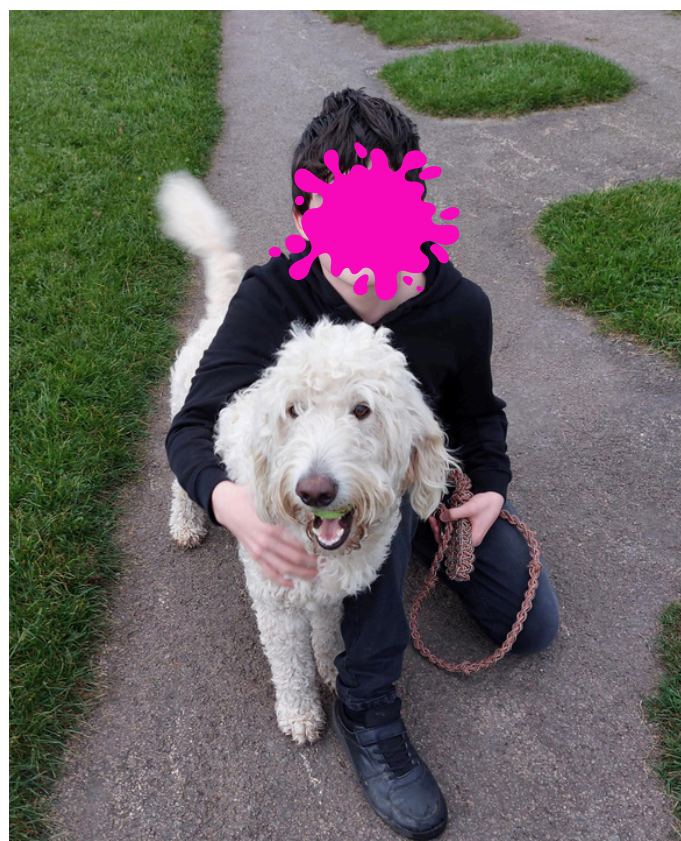
Shortly after this E decided to try school and has attended school ever since. We strongly believe that making the step to attend Clwb first, was crucial in her recognising that she was also able to use similar coping strategies to attend school. We are so pleased for her.

In November we invited Barod to one of our sessions to help our group understand the risks associated with vaping. This was very successful and insightful for all involved. We have also established a strong relationship with the Evolve team of youth workers at Stadwen. They are great at including us in a whole range of opportunities and events.

In January 2025, we were fortunate to acquire Swansea City Council COAST funding. Our group chose to attend Lazerzone. We had a fantastic turn out with 16 young people attending. Everyone had a fantastic night.

We continue to be really pleased with the success of WBAS Youth Clwb, one of our young people expressed to his court Guardian that he had found his best friend at WBAS Youth Clwb.

We are really making a positive difference!



Birth Parent Support

Monthly birth parent support groups continue to run in all three Local Authorities with approximately 30 Birth Mothers engaging regularly. Numbers in Neath Port Talbot have been low and so workers attended the Willow project to speak to birth mums there.

The team have also:

- Supported 8 mums with Letterbox ✓
- Supported 1 mum who previously attended with Letterbox ✓
- Supported 1 mum twice with Letterbox October / January ✓
- Supported 7 mums to attend yoga retreat in November ✓
- Team supported 17 mums to attend Winter well being event/food/hamper/wellbeing bag/raffle prizes provided ✓
- Picked up and dropped off food hamper from Church for mum who has attended group and gone on to care for her second child in the community ✓
- Supported 1 mum one to one emotionally prior to Christmas ✓
- Met with Family Finder to discuss 1 vulnerable mum to support with letterbox and adopter meeting – regular check ins with her ✓
- Regular check-ins with 1 mum due to stress of sibling residing with her – recently linked the same mum with SW from NPT to discuss these issues ✓
- Regular check ins with 1 vulnerable mum – this mum referred to adult services in January and now has support from them ✓
- 2 new mums supported to attend January group – 1 referred by duty and 1 referred by AS SW ✓

- Two workers met with 1 mum for emotional support after her ill health ✓
- Supported 4 mums to attend different venue in Feb – 3 mums accessed free clothing from the charity shop attached to the venue ✓
- 1 mum supported to attend another contact with adopters ✓
- 1 mum who previously attended group supported to meet adopters for the second time ✓
- 3 mums supported to link in with RISE project Bridgend ✓

Therapy Team

The Psychology and Therapy team continue to integrate their practice throughout the Service. There are currently 12 children and families accessing Play Therapy or Filial Therapy, 16 families accessing Systemic Family Therapy, 3 accessing BUSS and 28 families accessing therapeutic consultations with the psychologist or therapist.

Our team of therapists have been depleted recently due to long term sickness so we have needed to find creative ways to continue to provide quality support throughout the service by working through consultation as well as individual case work. We have recruited a Drama Psychotherapist, who is due to start on 24 March.

Our work throughout the year has included:

- Therapeutic Parenting Course - Ran from Oct to Dec with 6 attendees (3 couples) who fed back that they benefitted greatly from a better understanding of the theory and the opportunities to discuss individual challenges.
- Virtual Hub - Working alongside therapeutic adoption support social workers to support parents, widening parents' access to the therapy team. This addition to our service has been very well received by families with them reliably feeling more confident in dealing with presenting issues following the session.

- Facilitating a group for parents of teenage children - Our systemic family therapist has worked with adoption support social workers for parents to explore issues that arise in adopted children in their teenage years.
- Understanding the Child Work - Our psychologist and play therapist continue to work closely with the Family Finding team and have now embedded the Understanding the child work throughout WBAS processes. Family Finders are more confident in considering the impact of the child's genetics, birth families' epigenetics and early history and how this can inform matching with adopters. Family Finders, CSWs and fostering social workers worked alongside the UtC team in drawing up Trauma Nurture Timelines and Circles of Understanding for complex cases and sibling groups and are confident in completing these in all of their cases. We have also introduced Preparation Through Play consultations where children's social workers, supervising social workers and Family Finder Social workers can discuss how best to prepare children in foster care for their move to adoption with a play therapist specialising in transition.

Some families need a bit of additional support in early placement. Our psychologist and play therapist provide therapeutic consultations at times of need.

- Assisting with differential diagnosis - It can be difficult to tease out symptoms that are associated with developmental trauma from those that could be suggestive of an underlying neurodevelopmental difficulty.

Our psychologist supports parents and schools to think about potential roots of behaviour and has acted as a 'professional friend' to schools when diagnostic assessment is needed and has also been able to undertake cognitive assessments to support the understanding of a child's needs.



9. Policies and Procedures

National Adoption Policies and Procedures which were a collaborative piece of work involving all the regions and VAA's were formally launched in October 2023.

10. CSSIW

The service was last inspected during 2018-19 and an appropriate subsequent plan drawn up which has been reviewed at the Management Board with actions completed. WBAS were the only region to be inspected. CSSIW have confirmed that all Regional services will face an inspection of their service in the next 12 months.

11. Local Monitoring and Governance

The Management Board is fully compliant with the Directions Powers Regulations, the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (Joint Adoption Arrangements) (Wales) 201. The terms of reference in place.

Monitoring and governance of the service is the responsibility of the Management Board, which now meets on a quarterly basis. The Board members interrogate data provided on a quarterly and annual basis. Strategic decisions are shared with the board for approval whereas, in the main, operational decisions are overseen by the Regional Manager who is supervised by the 'Host' authority Head of Service. The service is measured on both the service plan and the national performance indicators through regular reports, presenting the achievements of the service compared to previous years and where data is available, with other regions across Wales. The formation of a Regional Joint committee has now happened and these meetings will take place twice a year.

A six monthly report is available to Scrutiny Committees in all three local authorities. Periodically, reports are submitted and shared with Cabinet, Scrutiny Panels and Corporate Parenting Cabinets/Committees. Performance indicators are reported to the National Adoption Central team on a quarterly basis, this information is provided to the Advisory Group and the Governance Board of the National Adoption Service.

During this financial year the Regional manager has presented information to all three of the LA's corporate parenting forums, the Corporate parenting Committee in Bridgend, to the Cabinet Committee in NPT and the Scrutiny Committee in Swansea.

12. Consultations and engagement of those who use the Service

The use of surveys and qualitative data continues to be used to receive feedback from families and professionals that have experienced the service. We are in regular contact with our adopters through our closed Facebook page where they are able to also provide feedback about their experience of the service and the events that are run. A working group attended by adopters from various stages of the adoption journey is being re-launched from April 2025.

The service is also implementing a pre-evaluation pack with all new families who commence with support from 1 April 2025, introducing a wellbeing scale to ensure that the work that is undertaken is positively impacting on individuals wellbeing. Mid point and Post evaluation feedback will also be sought throughout the intervention to ensure that the intervention is achieving the goals set for the family.

Since December surveys are in place for all workshops, panels, support groups and training events. 155 adopters, young people, social workers and foster carers have responded following attending a session.

Some of their feedback is summarised on the next page.

Support Group for Parents of Teenagers

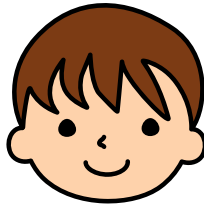
- ✓ Improving emotional wellbeing 8.60/10
- ✓ Reducing isolation 9.40/10
- ✓ Usefulness 10/10



Speaking to others and getting ideas from others to feel supported and not alone

Youth Clwb

- ✓ YP Feel listened to 9.30/10
- ✓ Would recommend to other YP 9.60/10



I love going to Youth Club, I have found my best friend and everyone is super friendly!

Day 4 post approval training

- ✓ A really useful workshop 9.75/10



Medical discussion was really useful, it gave me better insight into medical conditions and their impact plus hearing from the adopter first hand was incredible!

Support workshop for approved adopters

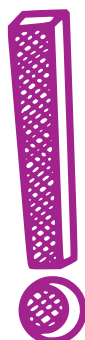
Usefulness 9.53/10



Confidence in preparing for the next stage in the adoption journey increased from 7.27 at the start of the session to 8.87 at the end. These sessions had focused on PATHways/Adoption Support and post adoption contact.

Understanding the Child Work

Usefulness 9.79/10



Those who attended rated their confidence in understanding the needs of the child at 5.89 at the start of the session, this increased to 9.26 at the end.



13. Quality assurance, compliments, comments, complaints, safeguarding issues, whistleblowing and representation

Attempts are made to address any complaints received by the service at the informal stage but registered with the relevant local authority within the region. Fortunately complaints remain very low with many issues being resolved informally before reaching the formal process. The service has had four new complaints during 2024-25 all 5 have been dealt via Stage 1.

14. Overall assessment of the service

The overall assessment of the service during this reporting period is good and the priorities identified within the good practice guide and the Adopt Cymru plan continue to be developed creatively within the service. The service continues to be able to manage the adoption support function effectively with no waiting list for adoption support.

Family Finding and Recruitment and Assessment continue to respond to the challenges of the sector, the level of complexity for both children and prospective adopters is increasing, adopter enquiries remain inconsistent and approving adopters in the locations that the service needs is challenging. The service is mindful of the budget constraints being faced by the Local Authorities and has commenced a review of the service structure which has remained the same since 2015 to ensure that the service can remain affordable.

Next steps identified 2025-26

The service has a developmental plan in place for 2025-26 which is based on the National Adoption Service plan for the forthcoming year but in addition specifies some regionally specific actions. In the table below the regional actions for Q1 Q2 have been summarised.

Quality of Service - October - March 2024/2025

Service Timeframe	Timeframe	By Whom
Undertake two case file audits	September 2025 and January 2026	RAM and TM's
Implement the Pre evaluation pack and review after three months	Launch April/May 2025 Review template and forms September 2025 Consider YP evaluation pack	Whole service
Reinstate the Adopter focus group	June 2025	R&M manager MRO
Update Young Persons Guide and consider development of a adoption Support guide for young person. Consult and work with Young people in designing the guide.	September 2025	RAM Youth workers
As part of annual appraisal of panel members review panel make up to ensure that panel reflects the diversity of our adoption community.	September 2025	RAM R&A manager
Embed the new regional process for accessing files to ensure a more timely response is given to individuals wishing to access information.	May 2025	Access Team
ASSA notifications and process to be reviewed Audit to consider notifications at matching and 3 years post placement	September 2025	TM Adoption Support and TM Family finding
Review of service structure Review of budget formula	September 2025 May 2025	RAM Management Board

Nichola Rogers

Nichola Rogers | Regional Adoption Manager
April 2025



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Performance Summary in respect of Children and Adopters

Oct - March 2024/25



End of Year Summary 2024-25

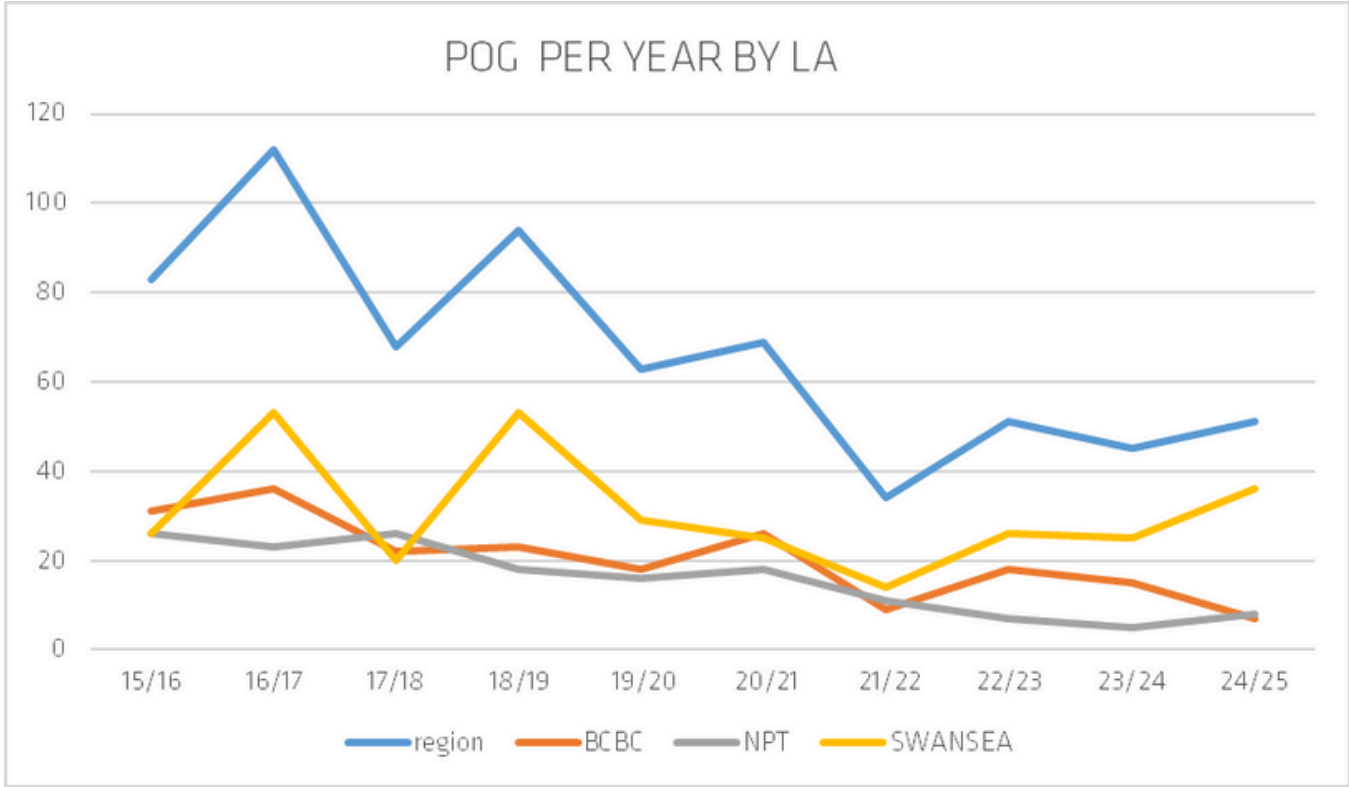
	2019/20	2020/21 COVID	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Number of Referrals	153 BCBC 62 NPT 32 SC 59	129 BCBC 44 NPT 39 SC 46	118 BCBC 41 NPT 21 SC 56	115 BCBC 49 NPT 17 SC 48	110 BCBC 42 NPT 16 SC 52	85 BCBC 20 NPT 17 SC 48
Number of POG	63 BCBC 18 NPT 16 SC 29	69 BCBC 26 NPT 18 SC 25	34 BCBC 9 NPT 11 SC 14	51 BCBC 18 NPT 7 SC 26	45 BCBC 15 NPT 5 SC 25	51 BCBC 7 NPT 8 SC 36
Number of children matched	80 BCBC 22 NPT 22 SC 36	79 BCBC 23 NPT 19 SC 37	51 BCBC 15 NPT 14 SC 18	38 BCBC 8 NPT 7 SC 23	43 BCBC 15 NPT 9 SC 19	33 BCBC 6 NPT 6 SC 21
No of children placed	79 BCBC 20 NPT 21 SC 38	69 BCBC 20 NPT 17 SC 32	49 BCBC 17 NPT 14 SC 18	35 BCBC 11 NPT 5 SC 19	43 BCBC 15 NPT 10 SC 18	35 BCBC 6 NPT 5 SC 24

Performance Summary - Oct / March 2024-25

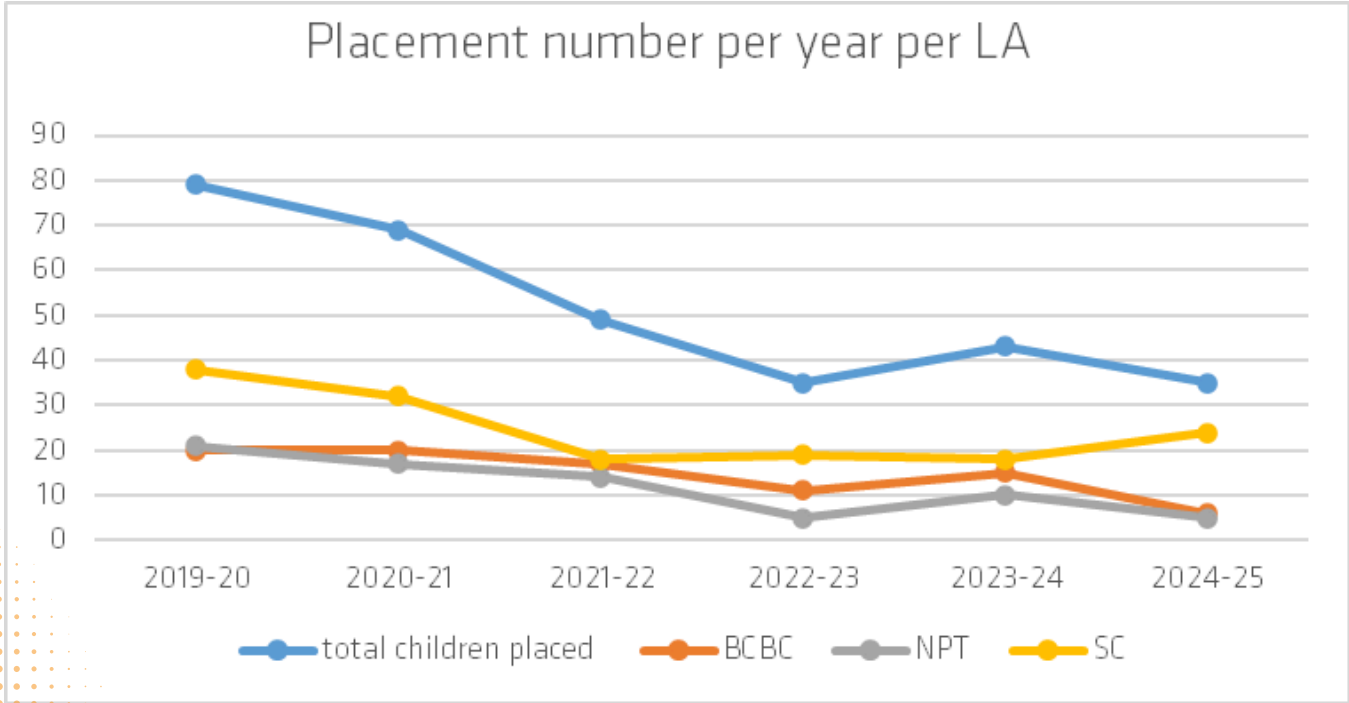
Of these children number of children placed with WBAS adopters	44	55	32	21	37	39
Of these children number placed via the Market share Project			3	3	2	2
Of these children number of children placed with Non regional adopters	35	14	14	11	4	4
Number of AOG	62 BCBC 17 NPT 14 SC 31	63 BCBC 20 NPT 13 SC 29	61 BCBC 16 NPT 15 SC 30	46 BCBC 17 NPT 10 SC 19	35 BCBC 10 NPT 7 SC 18	44 BCBC 11 NPT 7 SC 26
Number of Enquiries	166	260	224	169	213	194
Number of adopters approved	54	53	52	31	27	29

POG

Trend analysis since 2015 in relation to POG

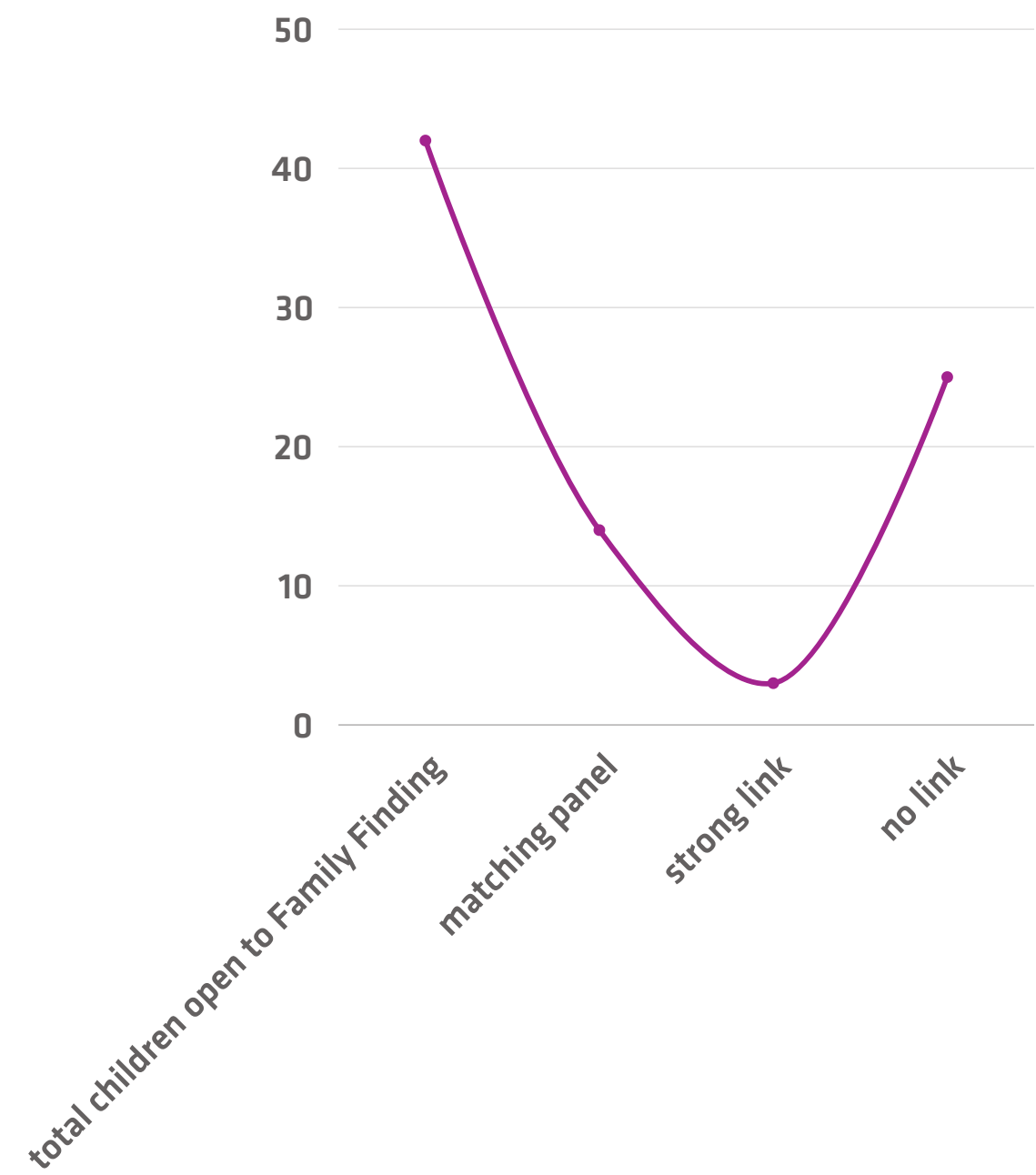


Children Placed



Of the 35 children placed this year, 29 were placed with regional adopters, 2 children were placed via the market share project in Wales (2 St David's). 4 children were placed out of the region. 3 of these children were placed in Scotland and 1 in England.

Children within the Family Finding Section



Children waiting

At the end of quarter 4:



25 children were waiting without a strong link or matching panel booked



For 10 of these children the PO was only granted in February/March 25



The average length of time that children have been waiting is 5 months, the longest time is 19 months.

11 of the children have complex medical conditions and/or potential presenting ASD behaviours which makes Family Finding hugely challenging. There are 3 sibling groups of 2 children



Children Placed

Average Length of Time from Placement Order to Placed for Adoption

This year has seen an increase in the length of time from placement order to placed for adoption, this is primarily due to the placement of two siblings groups who had been waiting for an extensive period of time and also a child for whom their were extensive appeal processes before the court.

	WB 2019-20	WB 2020-21	WB 2021-22	WB 2022-23	WB 2023-24	WB 2024-25
Placement Order to Placed for Adoption average (months)	8.1	9.2	9.7	9.1	7.7	9.79
Placement Order to Placed for Adoption shortest (months)				3.5	3.25	3
Placement Order to Placed for Adoption longest (months)				24.6	18	23.75
Placement Order to Placed for Adoption average (months)	8.1	9.2	9.7	9.1	7.7	9.79



Name change

In 2023 a name change policy was implemented to try and address the number of children whose first name was changed at point of AOG.

Of the children placed in 2022-23 only 60% retained their first name. With the implementation of the policy this increased to 80% of children retaining their first name in 2023-24. ✓

Of the 44 children subject to an AOG in 2024-25, 36 (82%) retained their first name. For the other 8 their first name moved to their middle name due to its uniqueness and identifiability. ✓

The process and report was completed in all these cases so the child has a clear record of the decision that was made and the reason for it. The implementation of the policy continues to be effective. ✓

Birth parent adopter meetings

Of the 29 children placed this year, 46 birth parents were offered meetings with the adopters (31 birth mothers and 15 birth fathers).

The parents of 16 children attended these meetings (in total 15 BM and 6 BF attended) and for a further 3 children there was an exchange of questions and information between Birth parents and Adopters.

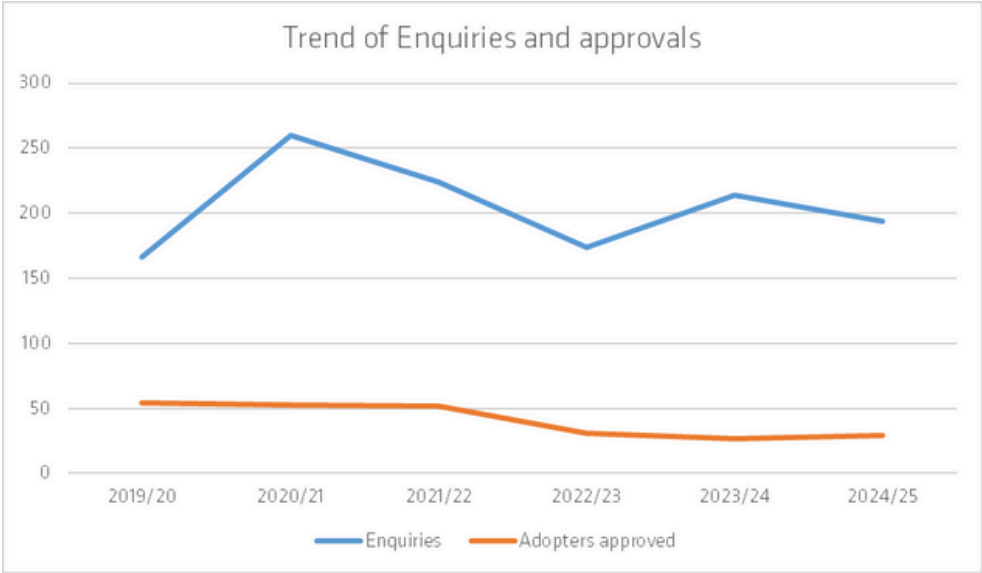
Where meetings have not taken place some exploration is still ongoing as to whether a meeting can be undertaken in the future with 1 birth mother and 1 birth father who did not feel able to manage these meetings at the time of placement. All the meetings were seen as hugely positive and beneficial to those involved.

Of significance for 6 children of the 35 children placed adopters met extended family members and most importantly siblings and their carers.

It is hoped that the forming of these initial relationships will serve to strengthen the opportunity for siblings to maintain a more significant level of contact. 5 of the children placed now have plans for ongoing direct sibling contact including 1 case where the sibling is living with the birth father.

Enquiries and Adopter Approval

	2019/20	2020/21 Lockdown	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Number of Enquiries	166	260	224	174	214	194
Number of adopters approved	54	53	52	31	27	29



An audit of the 29 approved adopters at end of year March 2025 has been undertaken and the following identified:

	Number of families approved 2020-21 (53)	Number of adoptive families approved 2021-22 (52)	Number of adoptive Families Approved 2022-23 (31)	Number of adoptive families approved 2023-24 (27)	Number of adoptive families approved 2024-25 (29)
Bridgend	9	10	14	8	5
Swansea	25	22	7	9	13
Neath Port Talbot	8	11	4	7	5
Cardiff Area	7	5	2	1	4
Carmarthenshire and Tenby	3	5	3	2	1
England	1	1	1	0	1



Of the 29 approved adopters this year, they can further be broken down into approvals of:

- 3 single adopters
- 6 adopters from same sex relationships
- 6 foster carers and 14 heterosexual couples

Currently there are 5 adopters waiting without a link or match.

Non Agency – Step Parent/ Non Relative Applications

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/2025
Number of Referrals	52 BCBC 15 NPT 18 SWN 19	26 BCBC 9 NPT 11 SWN 6	35 BCBC 12 NPT 10 SWN 13
Number of Referrals	52 BCBC 15 NPT 18 SWN 19	26 BCBC 9 NPT 11 SWN 6	35 BCBC 12 NPT 10 SWN 13

