



Adoption Passport: **a support guide for adopters**



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NORTH
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www.nelincs.gov.uk

Adoption service

Children adopted from care can have on-going needs and you and your child may benefit from support. This is the support adopters in North East Lincolnshire may be entitled to.

For your child...

Children adopted from care have priority access to schools, which means that your child should be able to attend whichever school you think best meets their needs. (www.gov.uk/schoolsadmissions).

Your child will also attract the Early Years Pupil Premium and Pupil Premium – additional funding to help meet their needs. They will also be entitled to free early education from the age of two. (www.gov.uk/free-early-education)

If your child needs extra support, you can ask your local authority to assess their needs for adoption support services. If you think your child may have special educational needs you can ask your local authority to assess these needs too. (http://www.adoptionuk.org/sites/default/files/documents/Pupil%20Premium%20Q%20and%20A_0.pdf)

North East Lincolnshire holds a quarterly support group for adopted young people: They have named themselves “The Aces”.

For you as an adopter...

Many adopters are entitled to adoption leave and pay when their child is placed with them. This is now more similar to maternity and paternity leave pay, and it will include the right to take time off when you are meeting your child, before they move in with you. (www.gov.uk/adoption-pay-leave)

Adopters may have priority for council housing (www.gov.uk/council-housing). If you are living in council housing and claiming Housing Benefit or Universal Credit while waiting for a child to move in you can also apply for funding (Discretionary Housing Payments) so that you are not penalised financially while you have an empty spare room.

You are also entitled to a summary of your child's health from his or her local authority's medical adviser before he or she is placed with you, and to a life-story book to help your child understand his or her early life. We offer training to assist adopters in enabling children to understand their life story.

Adoption Support Services

North East Lincolnshire provide and fund a range of support services for children adopted from care.

These support services can include:

- counselling, information and advice
- help with behavioural, attachment and other problems, including Therapeutic support.
- money e.g. to help with special care needs, or for former foster parents
- help with contact between an adopted child and his or her birth family
- meetings and events to enable groups of adopters and adoptive children to get together. We hold two social events a year and six weekly adoption support groups where we invite guest speakers. We hold monthly Family Time (for adopters and preschool children) which are well attended.
- training to help adopters to meet the needs of their adoptive child. This includes training on attachment, explaining adoption to your child, Relationship Building with your child.
- We offer a “buddy” system where newly approved adopters are linked with experienced adopters in similar circumstances.
- help where an adoption breaks down.

Access to these services depends on your circumstances but you can ask for an assessment *at any time*, no matter how long after the adoption.



Support Services Advice

If you require any Adoption Support from North East Lincolnshire please contact the Adoption Service on the contact details below and the Adoption Service Support Advisor (Maria Chase, or in her absence the Adoption Duty Worker) will respond to your enquiries. They will be able to help you access adoption support and other specialist services, such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services.

The NHS commissions health services to meet the needs of adopted children, and the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence will produce new guidance so that your GP will understand the problems you may face.

Every adopter is entitled to an assessment of their adoption support needs, but local authorities do not have to provide support in response to an assessment. Which services you are able to access will depend on your circumstances. Local Authorities must tell adopters about adoption support services and their right to an assessment, and will give those who receive support a choice about how that support is provided, either by a local authority or through a 'personal budget' to purchase services from a voluntary adoption agency or adoption support agency.

If you want advice on adoption support you can also contact one of the many adoption support organisations, such as Adoption UK (www.adoptionuk.org.uk) or the British Association for Adoption and Fostering (www.corambaaf.org.uk), or read the e learning materials soon to be on the First4Adoption web-site which will explore the effect of children's experiences on their development and the services available to help them.

Which Local authority?

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

Comments and complaints

If you are unhappy with the support provided by your local authority, or with the time taken to carry out an assessment, you can complain under the Local Authority Complaints Procedure. (<https://www.nelincs.gov.uk/safeguarding-and-social-care/childrens-social-care/childrens-social-care-complaints>). Thereafter if you are not satisfied you may be able to refer your complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman (www.lgo.org.uk).