

Panel Member Person Specification

Experience and qualifications

- Experience, either professionally or personally or both, of the placement of children in adoptive and foster families or of children being cared for away from their birth family.
- A social work or medical qualification will be necessary for certain panel members. Social work members must have at least three years post-qualifying experience in child care social work, including direct experience in adoption work.

Knowledge

- An appreciation of the effects of separation and loss on children.
- Awareness of the richness of different kinds of families and their potential for meeting children's needs.
- Some understanding of the purpose and function of the panel and of the agency, which the panel is serving, or a willingness to learn.

Abilities

- Good listening and communication skills.
- The ability to read, process and analyse large amounts of complex and sometimes distressing information.
- The ability to make an assessment and to form a view, based on the written and verbal information presented to the panel, and the confidence to articulate this at panel.
- The ability to use personal and/or professional knowledge and experience to contribute to discussions and decision-making in a balance and informed manner.
- The ability to work co-operatively as part of a multi-disciplinary team.
- The ability to attend panel meetings as required, arriving on time, and to attend at least one training day each year.

Attitudes

- A commitment to keeping children within their own family or community where this is possible and to maintaining contact between children living in adoptive families and their birth families where this appears to be in the child's best interest.
- A commitment to adoption as a way of meeting a child's need for permanence, where this appears to be in the child's best interests.
- A valuing of diversity in relation to issues of ethnicity, religion, gender, disability and sexuality.
- An understanding of, and a commitment to, the need for confidentiality.
- A willingness to increase knowledge and understanding of issues through reading, discussion and training.
- A willingness to contribute constructively to the annual review of your central list and panel memberships and, as required, to that of other panel members and the Chair.