

An 'Outstanding' Year

Achievement Report 2022/23

01 April 2022 - 31 March 2023



www.adoptionmatters.org

Registered Charity No. 512892

 **adoption
matters**
A proud history of children's futures

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Foreward and introduction from CEO and Trustees Chair

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My first year as Adoption Matters CEO and what a year it was! We were delighted to be awarded our fifth and consecutive Ofsted Outstanding rating making us the ONLY adoption service in the UK to achieve this accolade.

We could not have achieved it without the dedication of all of our team, supported by our board, volunteers, supporters and families, to whom we are so grateful.

We are so excited to be expanding the Adoption Matters family and will be launching a new independent, not-for-profit, fostering service in the North West in 2024, **Foster Care Matters**.

Our vision is to have robust and outstanding adoption and fostering services running in parallel which impact positively on outcomes for children.

This report highlights many of our achievements over the last year but is unable to capture the real dedication of our staff, who on a day-to-day basis put children at the heart of **everything** they do.

Susy White

Chief Executive Officer



Adoption Matters has achieved some amazing successes and set itself some momentous challenges this past year and I feel privileged and excited to be chair of a charity that exudes such confidence in its Board, staff and supporters.

To be inspected by Ofsted and be awarded Outstanding for the fifth time in a row; demonstrates the extraordinary commitment and teamwork of everyone involved with the charity.

There are lots of exciting plans ahead for the charity whilst we continue to ensure that our organisation reacts to the changing climate in adoption.

On behalf of the Board I would like to recognise and thank the dedication, creativity and adaptability of our staff, volunteers, supporters who have embraced the changes for the benefit of the children and families who depend on our services.

Carolyn Johnson

Chair of Board of Trustees



Our year in review

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1 April 2022 - 31 March 2023

52 We welcomed 52 new adopters - including 8 CCP* carers / adopters

96 We placed 96 children, including 7 children placed with our CCP carers / adopters

In addition to the above adoption placements:

13 We placed 13 children in fostering for adoption placements

7 We placed 7 children in CCP fostering placements

*CCP - Concurrent Planning

As of 31 March 2023:

Of the 13 fostering for adoption child placements:

9 9 children are now placed for adoption and are included in the above reported 96 adoption placements figure

4 4 children are still in the fostering phase

7 Of the 7 concurrent planning fostering placements, 7 are still in the fostering phase

51% 51% of children we placed were part of a sibling group

3 The average age of child we placed was 3 years old



In 2022-23, nearly 25% of our newly approved adopters identified as LGBTQ+.

www.adoptionmatters.org

Achievement Report 2022/23



Centre for Adoption Support and Therapy Services

1 April 2022 - 31 March 2023

823

people enrolled on to one of our 45 webinars

45

children attended one of our regular groups

83

schools received support

155

families received packages of support

82

sensory packages were delivered to 68 families



Adoption Matters is passionate about developing freely available resources through our Centre for Adoption Support so that knowledge from our skilled and experienced team can be passed to families and professionals working with children and young people. In 2022, we filmed and launched a new suite of online videos. The filming of our online training videos were generously funded by The Welch Trust.

Visit: www.adoptionmatters.org/onlinetraining

216

therapy service contracts delivered

Our therapy service worked with 216 families over the last year. The work has included assessments and a wide range of therapeutic interventions. These have included Theraplay, DDP, EMDR, VIG, therapeutic parenting, therapeutic life story work and work with schools. The therapy service currently has 23 therapists based across the North West all of whom continue to provide evidence based therapies for families.

www.adoptionmatters.org/cfas

The Centre for
Adoption Support

Concurrent Planning Service

1 April 2022 - 31 March 2023

13 The service welcomed and approved 13 new concurrent carers / adopters

13 and also placed 13 children for adoption with concurrent carers / adopters

In addition to the above adoption placements, during the year:

15 The service placed 15 children in concurrent planning fostering placements

There were **3 rehabilitations home to birth family** from Adoption Matters concurrent carers during the fostering phase during this period.

The service has continued to see a rise in demand for carers for children over the age of 12 months old and sibling groups.

The Concurrent Planning Service formed in 2014, is delivered in partnership by Adoption Matters and Caritas Care. The service offers an early permanence route for some young children in the care system. Now one of the largest services of its kind in the country and covers the whole of the North West including; Lancashire, Greater Manchester; Cheshire; Wirral, Merseyside and parts of Shropshire.



Outstanding



The ONLY adoption service in the UK to achieve 5 in a row!

In January 2023, we were awarded our fifth 'Outstanding' rating from Ofsted during a week-long inspection.

In making their judgement, Ofsted inspectors had to consider the experiences of children and families we work with taking into account how well they are helped and protected and also the effectiveness of leaders and managers. They also considered the experiences of local authorities and regional adoption agencies who work closely with the organisation.

Susy White, Adoption Matters Chief Executive Officer commented:

"We are absolutely delighted with the outcome of our Ofsted inspection. We are also proud that Ofsted recognises the dedication and expertise of our staff together with our commitment to ongoing support, something we have been offering for some time.

To be the only adoption service in the country to achieve 5 outstanding ratings in a row, for 15 years, is a true testament to the amazing team we have here at Adoption Matters.

I also want to say a heartfelt thank you to all the children, young people and families who spoke to the inspectors during our inspection, your kind words really do mean a lot to everyone here at Adoption Matters".

Adopters said that they feel exceptionally well supported and value the individual relationships they have with staff and with the agency.

Ofsted Report January 2023

Everyone is thorough and professional, but with a personal touch.

Ofsted Report January 2023



Pictured: Members of Adoption Matters Senior Management Team and left, Susy White cutting the celebratory cake for all staff.

YouCanAdopt campaign

We were delighted that our family Ash, Graham and Bill, together with our Trustee Jamie, were involved in the YouCanAdopt campaign that highlighted the importance of support.

Ash, Graham and Bill shared their personal adoption story of adopting Bill through our North East team in 2021. Ash commented:

“Adoption Matters were absolutely superb, they tailored everything for us throughout the process and it wasn’t because I was in a wheelchair, when we talked to other adopters and you are able to do so at training, it was lovely to hear that people had different journeys and that the process is tailored to each family.

We had the most amazing journey and it’s thanks to Adoption Matters”.

Jamie also shared his own story of adoption. Jamie was adopted through Adoption Matters and also reconnected with his birth family, with Adoption Matters help. Jamie is now a Trustee, bringing his experiences and views as an adopted adult to our Board.

“I have the gift of a massive family now – adoptive and biological. It’s an absolute lottery win. And I know it can’t be like that for everyone, I know I’m lucky”

Their stories received national publicity featuring in The Daily Mail, The Mirror, Hello! Magazine and BBC North West, to name a few. Their stories and accompanying videos can be found on our website: www.adoptionmatters.org



Open Garden & Teddy Bears Picnic

Children and parents brought along their favourite Teddy Bear to eat their picnics in the grounds and woodland of the beautiful Ashton Grange in Ashton Hayes, near Chester in August 2022. The afternoon of fun included a Teddy Bear Trail, Storytelling, TeenZone and Children's Magician! Visitors also were invited to explore the beautiful grounds of Ashton Grange, the venue so kindly offered by owners Kate & Martin Slack, Adoption Matters supporters.

We were delighted to welcome our honorary guest to the event, Jeannie France-Hayhurst, the High Sherriff of Cheshire.

Pictured left to right: Carolyn Johnson, Adoption Matters Board of Trustees Chair, Kate Slack, Adoption Matters supporter and host, Susy White, CEO, Sarah Johnson, former Fundraising & Relationship Manager, Jeannie France-Hayhurst, the High Sherriff of Cheshire.



Weston Charity Award

Adoption Matters has had the impact of its current services and future ambitions recognised with its selection as a 2022 Weston Charity Awards winner.

The award gives the charity the chance to invest in its future with ten months of strategic planning support from a dedicated team of four business experts, thanks to pro bono charity Pilotlight and a core grant of £6,500 from the Garfield Weston Foundation.

Adoption Matters was chosen from over 100 applicants, all of whom are frontline charities delivering youth, welfare or community services in the North of England, the Midlands and Wales.



21 miles for Adoption Matters

Supporter Katie-May Williams walked 21 miles in just over 7 hours on Saturday 1 October 2022 for Adoption Matters. Katie-May completed her amazing challenge, with the support of her friend Samantha Jones (both pictured right).

Katie-May said after achieving her goal: **"I cannot believe it!! A lot of aches and pains but it was all worth it for such an amazing charity. Lucky enough for me, I found my forever family at the age of 3 months old and will be forever grateful. Supporting a charity that is close to not only me but my family is something I have wanted to do for a while, and I wanted to raise enough money to make a difference to children and their new awaiting families."**

Katie-May smashed her £400 goal raising an **amazing £1,000** for Adoption Matters.



Team Great North Run raise over £2,500!

We were delighted to have an amazing 8 runners in the world's biggest half marathon, The Great North Run, which took place in Newcastle on Sunday 11 September 2022. The team managed to raise just over £2,500 between them, which was an amazing achievement.

Ciaran (pictured below), whose wife Aeron works for our Centre for Adoption Support, ran together with close friends Rebecca & Darrell and his brother Gareth, commented:

"It was an amazing experience and we were all delighted with to raise funds for a cause very close to our hearts – thankfully Aeron was cheering us all along too!"

Adoption Matters Chief Executive **Susy White**, commented:

"We are so grateful to all of our runners for their dedication in competing in the Great North Run and of course for supporting our charity. It was wonderful to see so many friends and family of our own staff too. A huge thank you to all our runners: Jenny, Myles, Gareth, Darrell, Rebecca, Ciaran, Gareth and Richard."



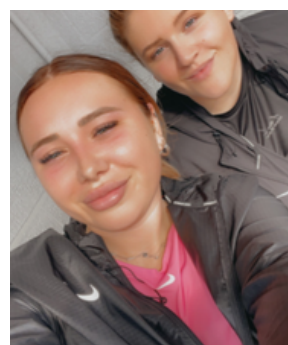
Thank you to all our supporters.



A huge thank you to **all** our supporters, volunteers, funders and corporate partners of which there are too many to mention individually.

None of our success would be possible without generous supporters who help us in so many ways. From donations to events like our teddy bears picnics or children's parties, to sponsored runs, walks, swims and bakes, to raising awareness through sharing personal stories or supporting us at events such as Pride.

Thank you, for your commitment and kindness.



The difference your support can make

Page 12

£25

could fund activity materials
for use within a Theraplay
support package

£100

could provide a virtual
therapeutic consultation session
for any member of an Adoption
Matters family with one of
our adoption professionals

£200

could enable us to deliver a
valuable peer support group
session for adopted adults

£400

could fund materials for
our invaluable Life Story
work for children along with
a session with adoptive
parents to share the work

£1000

would provide a package of
intense support for families
during times of crisis

Why we do it

Children are at the heart of our work and we believe that their welfare and needs are paramount. Our aim is for them to grow up in a secure and loving family which will best meet their long-term needs and can help them reach their full potential.

Every year, there are vulnerable children needing a stable, caring home through adoption. Some wait longer than others. We want to help change that. Can you help?

How you can help

Your donations allow us to provide vital life-long support from the outset of the adoption process, helping new families to understand their child(ren)'s needs and to cope in potentially difficult circumstances. Donations also provide all the 'fun stuff' such as our social activity events.

Facebook Fundraisers are a great way to raise funds and awareness for Adoption Matters and we are so grateful to all our supporters who kindly asked for donations for their birthdays this year.

To find out more about Facebook Fundraisers, visit:
bit.ly/AMfacebookfundraisers



For more information about our Fundraising plans and how you could help, please get in touch, we would love to chat with you about any ideas you may have.

Email: fundraising@adoptionmatters.org

www.adoptionmatters.org/fundraising

www.adoptionmatters.org
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The Adoption Matters family is growing...

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The Adoption Matters family is growing...

We are excited to share the news that Adoption Matters is developing a new independent, not-for-profit, fostering service in the North West.

The background

Adoption Matters has been researching expanding into the foster care market for over two years. The fostering sector is experiencing a crisis never seen before. As a children's charity and the ONLY adoption service in the UK rated Ofsted Outstanding 5 times in a row, with our decades of expertise in providing excellent services to children in care, we want to step forward and make a difference.

We aim to offer a not-for-profit fostering service to the local authorities across the North West, providing cost-effective and high-quality foster care households.

We strongly believe in re-investing in our services to offer a high-quality foster care service, with multi-disciplinary, therapeutic support to children and young people who need it most.

Our Vision

A world in which every child feels safe and supported by nurturing families who encourage and enable them to reach their full potential. Our vision is to have robust and outstanding adoption and fostering services running in parallel which impact positively on outcomes for children.

As a charitable organisation, we feel strongly that supporting children's basic need for security and care should not be a profit-making activity.

What does this mean for Adoption Matters?

Nothing will change. We will continue to recruit adoptive families, place children, offer support to adopted adults and birth families and offer therapy and support services through our Centre for Adoption Support and Therapy Service.

We aim to launch our new fostering service, **Foster Care Matters**, in early 2024.



A new not-for-profit, fostering agency in the North West. Offering a therapeutic parenting model, specialist support, fair allowances to foster parents and affordable fees to local authorities.

Putting children before profit.





A proud history of children's futures

Head Office: 14 Liverpool Road, Chester, CH1 2AE.



Also offices in: Warrington, Manchester, Hale, Blackburn, Stoke, Leeds and Durham.



Email: info@adoptionmatters.org



0300 123 1066

www.adoptionmatters.org

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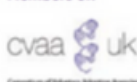
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#FosterCareMatters
#ChildrenMatter
#YouMatter



Ofsted 'Outstanding' since 2008 – the ONLY adoption service in the UK rated 'Outstanding' by Ofsted 5 times in a row.



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