

Report to: Corporate Parenting Panel

Date of meeting: 17 July 2025

By: Director of Children's Services

Title: Adoption South East annual report 2024/5

Purpose: To provide the Corporate Parenting Panel with a summary of the Adoption South East annual report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Corporate Parenting Panel is recommended to note the Adoption South East 2024/25 annual report as set out at Appendix 1.

1. Background

1.1 Adoption South East (ASE) is the Regional Adoption Agency delivering adoption services on behalf of Brighton & Hove, East Sussex, Surrey, and West Sussex. This fifth annual report summarises ASE's performance and developments for the year ending 31 March 2025.

1.2 ASE operates under a service hub model with specialist teams in Recruitment, Family Finding, and Adoption Support, supported by a central hub for finance, data, marketing, and project management.

2. Supporting information

2.1 ASE has restructured its service to improve responsiveness and staff satisfaction.

2.2 In 2024/25, ASE placed 82 children with adoptive families, including 22 sibling groups and 20 early permanence placements. Of these, 95% were placed with ASE-approved adopters, reflecting strong internal sufficiency. Recruitment efforts led to 537 enquiries and 64 adopter approvals. ASE also launched the 'Becoming a Family' pilot, enhancing early placement support.

2.3 Adoption Support remained a high-demand area, with over 2000 families accessing services. ASE secured nearly £4 million from the Adoption and Special Guardianship Support Fund (ASGSF) to provide therapy for 1397 children. The Advice Hub handled 637 enquiries, and the Keeping in Touch team managed over 3000 letterbox exchanges and 80 face-to-face meetings. ASE also expanded community-building activities, including playgroups and teen events.

2.4 Panels reviewed 68 adopter approvals and 84 matches, with overwhelmingly positive feedback. ASE continues to prioritise quality assurance and training, including implementation of a nationally recognised framework for transracial placements.

2.5 Complaints were minimal and well-managed, with learning used to improve services.

3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

3.1 ASE has demonstrated resilience and adaptability through its restructure and continued service improvements. The specialist hub model has enhanced efficiency and responsiveness, enabling ASE to meet increasing demands in adoption support and maintain high placement rates. ASE has demonstrated strong performance in placing children, supporting families, and evolving its service model to meet modern adoption needs. ASE remains committed to continuous improvement, stakeholder engagement, and innovation in adoption practice.

3.2 Corporate Parenting Panel is recommended to note the Adoption South East 2024/25 annual report as set out at Appendix 1.

CAROLYN FAIR
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LOCAL MEMBERS

All

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Adoption South East 2024/25 annual report

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None