



Lambeth

# ADOPTION



How long  
does it take?

## So, how long does it take?

Decisions and plans about your future should be made once you have been 'looked after' for 4 months.

Some of these decisions could be:

- You will return home.
- You will go to live with another member of the family.
- You will go to live with a new family, an adoptive family
- Where you will stay.

All these things will be discussed at your Review Meetings. You will be part of the discussions and will be asked how you feel about any plans that concern your future. Your views will be written down.

If you and the important people in your life decide that adoption is best for you, then a report is written for the Adoption Panel to read. This report is about you, your past, your family, your health and culture, your education, interests and hobbies.

- After the review where it was decided that Adoption would be best for you, your social worker is asked to finish this report within 6 weeks. You will be able to read this report if you are old enough to understand it and your views will be included in it.
- If you cannot understand it, your Social Worker will explain it to you.
- This report is then to be given to the Adoption Panel 2 months after the review meeting. Your Social Worker will be at the Adoption Panel meeting and you can attend if you wish. If you don't wish to attend, your social worker will tell you what has been agreed.
- Once the Adoption Panel has decided that adoption is best for you, we try to find a new family to adopt you within 6 months.

Sometimes it is sooner than this and sometimes it can take a little longer especially if it is important for you to live with your brothers and sisters.

So, altogether from when you are first looked after, it can take about a year before you find a new family.



Usually, while all this is happening, a Court (where judges and magistrates work) will also have to read reports written by your social worker as well as listening to your views, your parents and to your 'Children's Guardian'. The court has to make their decision about adoption within 9 months , including what has been already mentioned in this leaflet.

It takes this time because the court need to be sure they have found out everything they need about you and what is best for the future and whether this should be adoption.

Sometimes it is hard to understand why Adoption takes so long, but it is because it is permanent, is very important and needs to be done properly.



This all may seem very complicated to you, so if you do not understand something, **DO ASK**. Your carer and social worker can help and so can the adoption team worker.