

About IAC - The Centre for Adoption

IAC – The Centre for Adoption (registered as Intercountry Adoption Centre) is a Voluntary Adoption Agency and is the lead Agency in the Intercountry Adoption Regional Adoption Agency for England. In collaboration with other voluntary adoption agencies it provides a range of services for prospective and established adoptive families throughout the British Isles. The service is also available to adopted people and adoption professionals.

IAC has been in existence since 1997 succeeding a former Helpline on intercountry adoption matters, which was funded by the Department of Health. IAC was registered as an Adoption Support Agency in 2006, in accordance with the provisions of the Adoption & Children Act 2002. In November 2008 IAC registered as a Voluntary Adoption Agency in order to offer additional services to prospective intercountry adopters. By 2010, IAC had become the largest and foremost authority in the UK on intercountry adoption matters. In 2014 and 2017, an Ofsted (Office of Standards in Education; the registration and regulatory body) inspection found IAC to be ‘Outstanding’ in every measure.

IAC is an accredited Agency under Article 13 of *The Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry* and is recognised by the central authorities in Bulgaria, China (for the adoption of children with special needs), India, Philippines, South Africa as the foreign partner Agency for the UK. IAC is also a member of EurAdopt, (the Association of accredited adoption agencies across Europe) promoting best practice in the field of intercountry adoption.

The Intercountry Regional Adoption Agency working in partnership with



In April 2012, IAC varied its registration with Ofsted to include domestic adoption services to enable the Agency to support its approved intercountry adopters who were seeking to change the focus of their application to domestic adoption.

In summer 2014, IAC was awarded a Booster Grant under the Department for Education's, Adoption Expansion Grants Programme to further develop its domestic adoption activity. Since autumn 2014, IAC has recruited adopters for harder-to-place children in the UK from amongst its approved intercountry adopters or adopters who have completed an adoption through IAC, whether through domestic or intercountry adoption and who wish to adopt again.

The IAC Team

IAC's Chief Executive and professional staff are all qualified social workers with experience of adoption, with the majority having considerable experience in the specialist field of intercountry adoption. Some also have direct experience of adoption through being either adoptees or adoptive parents.

The team currently comprises 12 full- and part-time professionals, 8 adoption administrators, a small finance team and two finance manager, 11 administrators, project workers, and 30 plus sessional social workers who provide sessions to the Advice Line, run preparation and training courses and undertake adoptive family assessments and other statutory reports.

The Agency has its own Adoption Panel which considers the suitability of prospective adopters, and which makes recommendations to the Agency for final approval.

The work of the Agency is overseen by a Board of Trustees. The staff is aided by specialist advisors, which include legal advisors, medical advisors, a literature and research advisor, a notarial advisor and an HR advisor amongst others. The CEO is registered with Ofsted as the Responsible Individual and the Operations Director is the Registered Manager.

Agency Services

The Agency now offers services under three distinct headings:

1. Assessment and Agency Services

IAC has an established enquiry and information service for potential adopters, a two stage approval service for prospective adopters and support to adopters after approval – at the matching stage through to the child’s placement, and thereafter if commissioned by the local authority to do so.

Since 2012 IAC has supported approved intercountry adopters through the process of converting the focus of their application to domestic adoption and provides equivalent support through to the conclusion of the adoption process.

Special Adoption Programmes

Intercountry

IAC prepares, assesses and supports prospective adopters applying to adopt children from many areas of the world. In addition, the central authorities of India and The Philippines and Kazakhstan have accredited IAC as an Authorised Foreign Adoption Agency and Recognised Foreign Partner Agency respectively. IAC has also been accredited by the China Center for Children’s Welfare and Adoption to provide its Special Needs Adoption Programme. In addition working agreements are also in place with accredited agencies in Bulgaria and South Africa in order to make arrangements for the adoption of children by UK prospective adopters.

These special programmes allow the Agency to offer a complete and comprehensive intercountry adoption service for children waiting for families in these States of origin where the children are unable to be provided for in any suitable way in their own country.

This means that as well as offering assessment services for prospective intercountry adopters, IAC is also able to assist people in making arrangements for the adoptions overseas, to support them when they are introduced to their child abroad, and to guide them through the legal processes necessary before they can return to the UK with their child. Some special programmes are offered on a UK-wide basis.

Domestic

Utilising skills developed in delivering intercountry adoption services, IAC has introduced a small programme to facilitate the adoption of hard-to-place children in the UK.

IAC's intercountry families have adopted children, amongst others, from infancy to teenage, and with additional needs arising from, e.g. global developmental delay, cleft lip and palate, major corrective surgery, FAE, missing limbs and spina bifida. Most carry the legacy of having lived in an institution and all have left their State of origin, often with the loss of language, culture, religion and nationality.

These children share many of the complex special needs and challenges of looked after children in the UK and IAC has placed children domestically who are over the age of 4 years, children of BME and dual heritage of any age, sibling groups and those with additional needs.

2. Adoption Support Services

IAC provides a range of specialist support services to service users and adoption professionals including:

- An Advice Line for members of the public and adoption professionals, including advice for adoptees and birth family members where the adoption has an international element.
- Publications on adoption in general and on specific countries.
- Information Sessions for prospective adopters, both general and country specific.
- Preparation courses for prospective intercountry and domestic adopters, for prospective kinship adopters and for adopters seeking to adopt for a second time.
- Face to Face consultation services at both the pre adoption and after adoption stage.
- Adoption Support Workshops on a variety of topics.
- Post Placement/Post Adoption reports on children placed if required by the overseas country.

- Services for Professional training seminars and workshops.
- Practitioners' Network meetings.
- Consultation and advice to government departments and NGO's both in the UK and overseas.

Intercountry Adoption Regional Adoption Agency

IAC is the lead Agency in the development of the Intercountry Adoption Regional Adoption Agency and has worked with other voluntary adoption agencies and the North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium of which is it an associate member to develop this new national framework for the delivery of intercountry adoption services. This developmental work was supported by a Department for Education grant.

Statutory and other information

IAC is a Company registered by Guarantee (3344762), is a Registered Charity (1067313) and is registered with Ofsted as a Voluntary Adoption Agency (SC386048).

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