

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Are there any age restrictions?

A. If you are over 21 you can legally adopt. Although there is not a legal upper age limit, being an adoptive parent can be demanding and you will need to demonstrate that you have the energy, emotional and physical health to care for a child throughout their childhood and beyond. Significant age differences between children and parents will be discussed with you. If you are planning to adopt from overseas, please note that some countries impose age restrictions on adopters.

Q. Can I adopt a child similar in age to an existing child in the family?

A. If you have children, there will normally be a gap of two years between an adopted child and a child already in the family. An adopted child will normally be the youngest child.

Q. Who can adopt?

A. We accept applications from single people and couples both heterosexual and same sex, living together, married or in civil partnerships.

Q. Can I apply to Norwood if I live outside London?

A. We generally consider applicants living in and around the Greater London area. We may be able to consider applicants living outside this area depending on individual circumstances.

Overseas adopters should live in either Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Haringey or Islington, however, we do sometimes have the capacity to extend our services beyond these areas.

Q. I am interested in Domestic Adoption

A. If you are considering domestic adoption your application is more likely to be considered if you are able to meet the needs of most of the children waiting for families. This includes school aged children, sibling groups, children with complex backgrounds or whose parent's have drug/alcohol and/or mental health difficulties.

Q. Do I need to have completed fertility treatments?

A. If you have been undergoing fertility treatment, we usually request that you wait six months from the last treatment. We need to be confident that you have resolved your loss about not being able to conceive and are considering adoption as a positive alternative to parenting.

Q. What does the process involve?

A. You will initially be sent an information leaflet and invited to attend one of our monthly information mornings and will then have the opportunity of an interview with a social worker at home. This will be followed by a preparation group and an assessment of your suitability to adopt.

Medical, police and local authority checks will be made and you will be asked to provide the names of four people who can act as referees for you.

Q. Could I be excluded because of health issues or a criminal conviction?

A. It is always best to discuss health issues or criminal convictions at the outset. We expect adopters to be healthy enough to care for a child into adulthood. Certain criminal convictions will exclude people from adopting.

Q. How much does it cost?

A. There is no charge if you wish to adopt a child in this country. If you wish to adopt a child from overseas, our current fee is £5,990.

Q. How long will it take to get a child?

A. On average it takes about twelve months to be approved as an adopter. This takes into account attendance at an information session, an initial interview, preparation training and assessment.

Norwood will actively promote approved domestic adopters nationwide to adoption agencies seeking to place children. Sometimes placements are made soon after approval panel, but it is common to wait a while to be matched with a child.

Waiting times for a child from overseas can vary. Sometimes there is already a child waiting for a family, but at other times families may have to wait two to three years for a suitable child.

Q. What kind of adopters are we looking for?

A. You will need experience of caring for children and an understanding of their developmental needs.

You will need to be able to consider some degree of uncertainty in a child's development, as well as complex birth family histories that can include mental health, drugs and alcohol abuse, and learning disability. You must have a good support network and be in good health. You must have suitable accommodation and be financially stable.