

ADOPTION IS 4 U CIC (A4U)



Statement of Purpose

June 2026

Reviewed:	June 2026
Next Policy Review Date:	June 2027
Owner:	Adoption Is 4 U CIC

The Statement of Purpose will be reviewed annually, or sooner if there are significant changes to legislation, statutory guidance, or agency structure. The Responsible Individual is responsible for ensuring that the review process is completed and approved by the Senior Leadership Team.

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The purpose of this statement is to outline:

- A4U's status and constitution, the arrangements for control of its operation and terms of the registration,
- The management structure and staffing,
- The aims and objectives, together with how the services and facilities meet the outcomes for children, including keeping children safe,
- Policies and procedures for recruiting, preparing, assessing, approving and supporting Intercountry adoptive parents,
- How complaints will be processed,
- The systems in place for monitoring and evaluating the provision of services to ensure their effectiveness and quality,
- The details of the registration authority.

1. **Introduction**

The Statement of Purpose sets out the core aims and objectives of Adoption Is 4 U Community Interest Company (For the purposes of this document and operationally, we will be known as A4U). A4U is registered with Companies House and is a Voluntary Adoption Agency which provides Intercountry adoption services with India. A4U is a social care provider, regulated by Ofsted, the inspectorate for social care, and the Department for Education, the Central Authority for Adoption¹.

At the time of updates to the Statement of Purpose in June 2026, A4U was awaiting registration inspection visit. As such the agency was not operational and was in the pre-registration phase of development².

The purpose of A4U is to transform the lives of children in need of adoption from India to the UK (an intercountry adoption process), through a comprehensive ethical, trauma informed, child-centred and culturally competent adoption service which involves recruitment, assessment and training of prospective adopters, to ensure they are able to welcome a child or children into a loving family, and understand and meet the children's lifelong needs as an adoptee. A4U is accredited abroad by the Indian Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA), as an Authorised Foreign Adoption Agency³.

A4U's focus on intercountry adoption with India is both strategic and informed by lived experience. The Agency benefits from experts by experience, including the Director, who is an adoptive parent of a child from India. This provides the organisation with a unique and authentic insight into the intercountry adoption journey, including the lifelong needs of adopted children and families.

This lived experience informs:

- Service design and development,
- Preparation and support for adopters,
- Cultural competence and identity work,
- A strong commitment to ethical, trauma-informed, child-centred and culturally competent intercountry adoption practice.

A4U actively incorporates the perspectives of adopters, adopted individuals and families into service development to ensure that its provision remains relevant, responsive and grounded in real experience.

¹ Intercountry adoption: information for adoption agencies <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/intercountry-adoption-information-for-adoption-agencies>

² Registration application submitted to Ofsted in April 2025.

³ Registration and accreditation with CARA to be sought upon registration with Ofsted (currently pre-registration with CARA).

The Statement of Purpose fulfils the requirement for adoption agencies to compile a statement which details how the service will meet outcomes for children, the range of services provided, the governing principles and who manages as well as provides the services.

The Statement of Purpose has been compiled as required by the Voluntary Adoption Agencies and Adoption Agencies (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations and the Voluntary Adoption Agencies Regulations.

The Statement of Purpose is intended for:

- Children and young people,
- Birth relatives,
- Prospective and approved adoptive families,
- Social Workers,
- Volunteers,
- Councillors,
- Adoption Panel Members,
- Regulation through Ofsted and Department for Education,
- Members of the public,
- Local Authorities,
- Social Care Trusts.

A copy of the Statement of Purpose is available to all those working with the Agency, is posted on our website and is available to prospective adopters, guardians, adoptive children and other interested parties. This document will be reviewed annually and approved by the Responsible Individual of A4U.

A4U has applied for registration with the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (OFSTED)⁴ and will operate in compliance with the relevant legislative framework and guidance:

- The Adoption and Children Act 2002,
- Adoption and Children Act guidance 2014,
- National Minimum Standards 2014,
- The Adoption Agencies and Independent Review of Determinations Amendment 2011,
- Adoption and Children Act 2002 Statutory Guidance (latest version),
- Adoption Agency Regulations 2005,
- The Children Act 1989,
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data protection Act 2018.
- Human Rights Act 1998,
- United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child,

⁴ A4U is awaiting registration and approval from Ofsted – the agency is currently in the pre-registration phase.

- The Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption (1993),
- Care Standards Act 2000,
- National Standards Commissions (Fees and Frequency of Inspection; Adoption Agencies) Regulations 2003 - England,
- Voluntary Adoption Agencies and the Adoption Agencies (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2003,
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023,
- Equality Act 2010,
- Health and Social Care Act 2012,
- Adoption Agencies (Panel and Consequential Amendments) Regulations 2012.
- The Adoption Agencies (miscellaneous amendments) Regulations 2013.

A4U will ensure that all policies, procedures and practice are aligned with current legislation, statutory guidance and best practice, and will review these regularly in line with any legislative or regulatory changes.

2. Sufficiency and Service Demand

A4U's service model is designed to meet the needs of children requiring intercountry adoption from India, in line with international and national adoption frameworks.

The agency recognises the importance of ensuring that the recruitment of prospective adopters is aligned with the needs and profiles of children requiring placement. This includes children who may be older, part of sibling groups, or who have additional or complex needs.

A4U monitors:

- Enquiry levels and adopter recruitment pipelines,
- Progression through assessment stages,
- Matching opportunities and delays,
- Feedback and withdrawal rates.

This information is used to:

- inform recruitment strategy,
- ensure that the agency recruits adopters who can meet the needs of children waiting,
- minimise delay in achieving permanence for children.

A4U works in partnership with relevant authorities, including CARA and UK adoption stakeholders, to ensure that its service offer remains responsive, ethical and aligned to the needs of children.

As a pre-registration agency, A4U recognises that the effectiveness of its systems will be demonstrated through practice once operational. However, significant work has been undertaken to ensure that governance, safeguarding, quality assurance and performance

monitoring frameworks are robust, inspection-aligned and ready to be implemented from the point of registration. These systems provide assurance that the agency is well-prepared to deliver a safe, effective and high-quality adoption service from commencement.

3. The Responsible Individual and Registered Manager

Responsible Individual

The Responsible Individual is Rebecca Marston. Rebecca was appointed as Head of Governance, Compliance and Regulatory Assurance (Responsible Individual Designate) for A4U in March 2025. During the pre-registration period, she has led the development of the agency's governance and accountability, organisational risk, and quality assurance frameworks, and the development of A4U's Social Care Common Inspection Framework (SCCIF) Action Plan. Additionally, Rebecca has provided organisational challenge, strategic oversight and regulatory liaison throughout the registration process.

Rebecca has oversight of the management of A4U to ensure that the agency complies with, and operates in accordance with, applicable statute, regulations, statutory guidance, and A4U's policies and procedures. She is tasked with ensuring the agency is fully compliant with National Minimum Standards and that high-quality adoption and adoption support services are delivered to meet the needs of the children and families served by A4U. Rebecca's primary accountability as Responsible Individual is to the welfare of children. She is committed to ensuring that A4U operates to the highest standards of ethical, child-centred, trauma-informed and culturally competent adoption practice, and will act without hesitation, including escalation to the regulator, if that commitment is ever at risk.

Rebecca brings to the role a distinctive combination of director-level governance experience, frontline safeguarding expertise, independent statutory review leadership, and specialist knowledge in child protection, permanency, attachment and trauma. She has held meaningful accountability across business, independent social work practice, and statutory multi-agency safeguarding throughout her professional life, and has maintained director-level accountability for the majority of her career in family business, and her own consultancy. As a director of a family business for approximately twenty years, she held responsibility for strategic direction, financial oversight, contractual management, staff management and stakeholder relationships, operating under sustained commercial pressures. Rebecca's appointment within A4U reflects not only her professional qualifications and knowledge of the regulatory framework, but also her proven capacity to exercise independent judgement in high-stakes contexts. Rebecca has recently completed the Chartered Management Institute (CMI) Level 7 Certificate in Strategic Management and Leadership and is progressing her application for Chartered Manager status.

Rebecca is a qualified and registered social worker with extensive experience in children and families social work, including care proceedings, child protection, child in need, looked after children (foster care and family placements), and adoption. Her career began in frontline

statutory practice, as a Social Worker within a child protection and court team, where she developed a strong grounding across the full permanency journey. She progressed to Senior Practitioner before being appointed as a Consultant Social Worker, holding statutory case responsibility alongside supervising, supporting, assessing student social workers across two cohorts on a 'fast track' non-traditional route to social work qualification. Rebecca's substantial experience as a Practice Educator includes supervision and assessment of a total of ten student social workers during their qualifying placements, through both traditional university and non-traditional routes to qualification. She is a strong champion of good practice in children and families social work, with a deep commitment to safeguarding vulnerable children and achieving positive outcomes.

In 2019, following a career in Local Authority frontline safeguarding, Rebecca moved into independent practice, establishing RM Social Work Consultancy Ltd. The majority of her independent practice has centred on expert witness services within the family court, in complex safeguarding cases, in which Rebecca has authored and acted in over 120 matters as an expert witness concerning parenting capacity, risk assessment, sibling attachment, connected persons and adoption. This work has strengthened her ability to critically analyse complex safeguarding histories, formulate assessment of risk and caring capacity and evaluate professional decision-making under uncertainty. Rebecca also provides training and consultancy services, in addition to supervision for social workers in various settings who are undertaking a range of assessments, usually within the court arena.

Rebecca is also a Home Office-accredited chair of Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews (DARDRs), an accredited Lead Reviewer and Overview Report Author, and a member of the Advocacy After Fatal Domestic Abuse (AAFDA) Domestic Homicide Review Network. In this capacity, she chairs multi-agency review panels, holds organisations to account, and produces statutory reports following serious safeguarding incidents. She is also currently leading a Safeguarding Adults Review, extending her statutory review leadership across both children's and adults' frameworks. Rebecca has a specialist interest in the prevention of serious harm through the analysis of safeguarding systems in cases involving unexpected death, homicide, suicide, and severe abuse or neglect. Rebecca maintains her independent social work practice alongside her role with A4U, with the majority of her work centred on chairing and authoring statutory safeguarding reviews.

Rebecca holds a specialist interest in attachment, trauma, domestic abuse and systemic social work. She is accredited in the administration of the Child Attachment and Play Assessment (CAPA), is a ParentAssess Assessor and Trainer, and has completed further specialist training in therapeutic parenting, mentalisation-based approaches, domestic abuse, sexual abuse, and the assessment of protective capacity. Her practice is grounded in complexity, systemic and trauma-informed approaches and a strong commitment to relationship-based social work.

Rebecca obtained her BA (Hons) Social Work Qualification in 2013 and PGCert in Advanced Professional Practice in Social Work in 2017 at Coventry University. She achieved the Foundation Level training in Systemic Practice for Child and Family Social Work in July 2018. Rebecca completed PGCert in Attachment Studies (Attachment Theory, Research and Practice) at the University of Roehampton in 2022.

Rebecca is currently in the fourth year of a Professional Doctorate in Social Work, Advanced Practice and Research at the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust and the University of Essex, with anticipated completion in early 2027. Her research focuses on professional curiosity in high-complexity child protection practice, informed by a wider interest in the prevention of fatal child maltreatment. Her work draws on systemic and critical realist approaches to examine how knowledge is constructed in safeguarding contexts and how uncertainty and organisational factors shape the use of professional curiosity in high complexity safeguarding. This research directly informs her role as Responsible Individual in fostering a culture of reflective, curious and rigorous practice within A4U.

Registered Manager

The Registered Manager is Michelle Williams. Michelle is responsible for the day-to-day operational management of A4U and for ensuring that high-quality adoption and adoption support services are delivered to children, families and prospective adopters. Supported by the leadership team and wider staff group, Michelle leads the delivery of practice across the agency, ensuring that services are child-centred, safe, effective and compliant with relevant legislation, regulations, statutory guidance, National Minimum Standards and A4U's policies and procedures.

Michelle is responsible for the quality of adoption practice within the agency, including the assessment, preparation and support of adopters, staff supervision and development, quality assurance of practice, and the continuous improvement of services. She is committed to ensuring that children and families receive compassionate, relationship-based, culturally competent, and trauma-informed support throughout their adoption journey.

Michelle is a Registered Social Worker and experienced Senior Practitioner with extensive expertise in adoption, safeguarding, and relationship-based practice. With over seven years of post-qualifying social work experience and a professional background spanning education, youth justice, and the voluntary sector, she brings a breadth of knowledge and leadership experience to her role. Having worked within a large Regional Adoption Agency for five years, Michelle has developed significant expertise across all stages of the adoption process, including adopter assessment and preparation, family finding, matching, transition planning, adoption support, and court reporting. She is highly experienced in multi-agency working and has established strong collaborative relationships with local authorities,

adoption professionals, schools, therapeutic services, and other partner agencies to achieve the best possible outcomes for children and families.

Michelle's practice is underpinned by relationship-based and trauma-informed approaches. She holds an MSc in Advanced Relationship Based Social Work Practice with Children and Families and has completed Level 2 training in Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy (DDP). She is passionate about supporting adopters to understand the impact of trauma, attachment difficulties, and loss, enabling them to develop the therapeutic parenting skills needed to help children build secure relationships and thrive within their families.

Michelle views adoption as a lifelong journey and considers it our privilege to walk alongside families as they navigate its challenges and rewards. She is passionate about creating a culture of relationship-based practice throughout A4U. She is committed to ensuring that every family experiences a service that is compassionate, respectful, and responsive to their needs. She strives to model the empathy, curiosity, and acceptance that adopted children need from their caregivers, embedding these values throughout the agency's work with children, families, and professionals.

A particular area of interest for Michelle is the development of peer support networks for adoptive families. She recognises the value of shared experiences and is committed to creating opportunities for adopters and adopted children to connect, learn from one another, and contribute to the ongoing development of services. She is equally committed to ensuring that the voices of adopters and adopted people are heard and actively inform the growth and improvement of A4U.

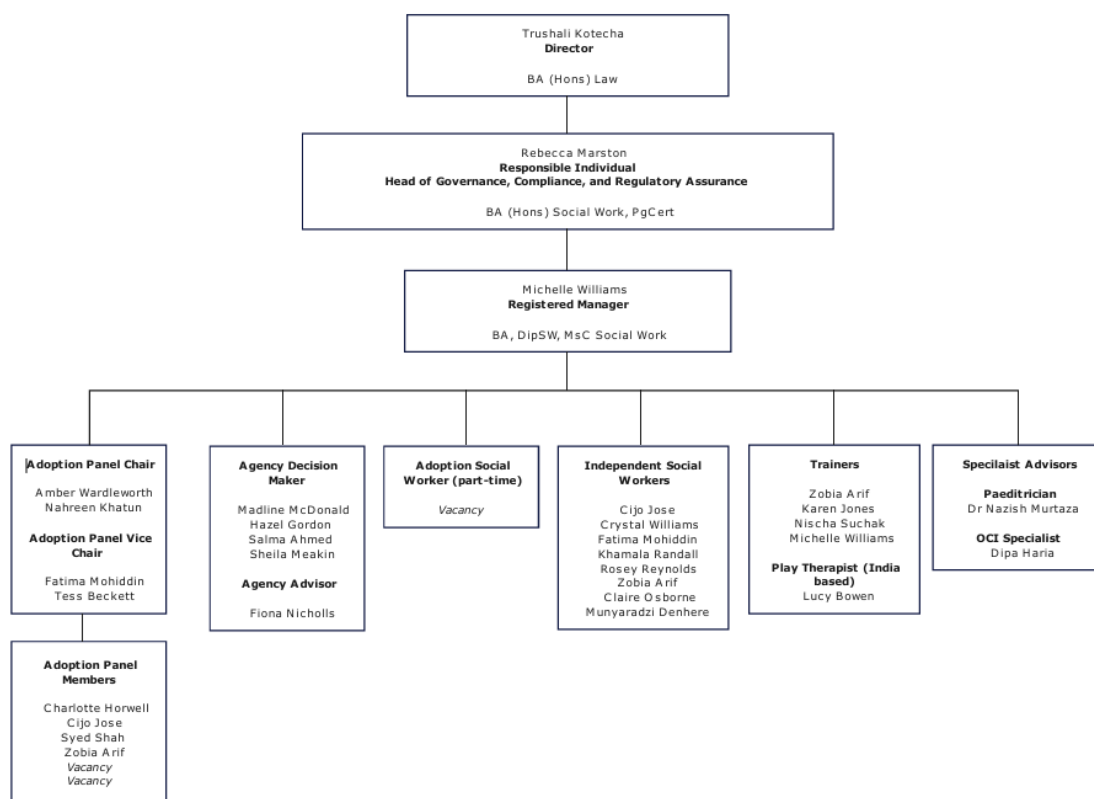
Michelle has a strong commitment to professional development, learning, and leadership. Drawing on her previous career in education, she has extensive experience delivering training to adopters, social workers, and other professionals. As a qualified Practice Educator, she has successfully supported social work students and apprentices, fostering reflective learning environments that promote confidence, professional curiosity, and continuous improvement. She is particularly passionate about supporting practitioners to develop reflective and reflexive practice, with a strong emphasis on relationship-based approaches and professional growth.

Michelle's previous management experience includes supervising and coordinating practitioners working with children and young people within the youth justice system, both during custody and following release into the community. This experience strengthened her understanding of leadership, service development, and the importance of supporting staff wellbeing. Michelle believes that a well-supported workforce is fundamental to delivering outstanding services and is committed to creating a positive, reflective, and nurturing culture within A4U.

Throughout her career, Michelle has consistently demonstrated a commitment to championing the needs of vulnerable children, empowering families, and driving service improvement through collaborative, evidence-informed, and values-led practice. She is motivated by opportunities to innovate, develop high-quality services, and ensure that every child and family receives the support they need to achieve positive and lasting outcomes.

4. **Workforce**

A4U's professional team comprises of the Director, Responsible Individual and Registered Manager, alongside social workers who are experienced in adoption and have the necessary qualifications and experience.



The workforce has been employed as guided by the National Minimum Standards and will be subject to A4U's appointment and employment safer recruitment procedures which include an enhanced DBS check on a three yearly basis and rigorous reference checking.

Independent Social Workers are commissioned on a case-by-case basis to ensure that there is a person-centred approach, allowing each adoption to have their own point of contact, giving them the maximum support they require. Independent Social Workers, although not employed by the agency, are subject to the same safer recruitment processes, and supervision requirements whilst undertaking any work for A4U.

A4U is actively recruiting a part-time Adoption Social Worker, with an aim of providing adopter consistency and maximising social work qualified staff cover within the office base; the employed social work workforce will grow in line with service demand.

The Agency is committed to the continuous professional development of all staff and succession planning is part of the recruitment strategy. All staff are subject to annual appraisal to assist in identifying individual training plans that reflect identified areas of professional interest. An annual training plan, which includes child protection and safeguarding training in line with their role, will support individual staff members to further develop and enhance their professional skills. A list of current staff and their relevant qualifications as well as experience will be made available to the Ofsted Inspection Service upon request.

A number of policies and procedures towards employment legislation are in place to ensure that A4U deals fairly with staff in relation to their employment. Relevant legislation includes but is not limited to, employment rights, working time directive, parental leave, equal pay, minimum wage, pensions, sickness absence, harassment, disability, discrimination, flexible working and human rights.

The workforce staff and their responsibilities will be as follows:

- The Director is responsible for Adoption Is 4 U CIC and has a Level 5 Qualification in Management.
- The Responsible Individual has strategic oversight of the adoption agency and is accountable for ensuring that the service operates in accordance with all applicable legislation, regulations, statutory guidance, National Minimum Standards and A4U's policies and procedures. The Responsible Individual represents the organisation to Ofsted and is responsible for ensuring that the agency is compliant, safe and effectively governed. They maintain oversight of service quality, safeguarding, risk and performance through governance systems including quality assurance activity, audit findings, risk monitoring and the SCCIF Action Plan. The Responsible Individual provides independent challenge and scrutiny to the Registered Manager and leadership team, ensuring that practice remains child-centred, effective and is continuously improving.
- The Registered Manager has day-to-day operational responsibility for the management of the adoption agency and for ensuring that services are delivered in accordance with applicable legislation, regulations, statutory guidance, National Minimum Standards and A4U's policies and procedures. The Registered Manager is responsible for the quality of practice, including the recruitment, preparation, assessment, approval and support of adoptive families, and for ensuring that children's needs remain central to all decision-making. They provide direct oversight of practice, including supervision of staff and Independent Social Workers, case direction, safeguarding decision-making and quality assurance of assessments.

The Registered Manager uses audit activity, performance data and Key Performance Indicators to monitor service effectiveness, identify areas for improvement and ensure that high-quality adoption services are consistently delivered.

- A4U are actively recruiting for a part-time Adoption Social Worker to come into post following registration. It is hoped that recruitment of this part-time practitioner will provide continuity of care to adopters and children in A4U. As the service grows, A4U's leadership will prioritise employing further social workers to hold a caseload of prospective adopters and children.
- Panel members have experience as part of an adoption panel previously, an oversight of recruitment and assessment of prospective adopters. They are required to work together with other members of the Panel to make recommendations on the suitability of the applicants and have relevant knowledge of the diverse needs of children who are looked after and adopted. Our adoption Panel seeks to reflect diversity of the families that we are looking to work with to ensure that we deliver the best possible service.
- Social Workers are required to have a Social Work qualification and registration with Social Work England, which is monitored annually, at least three years post-qualifying experience in children's social care settings and have experience of completing adoption assessments and writing Prospective Adopters Reports (PARs), in order to meet the Restrictions on Preparation of Adoption Reports Regulations 2005. They are required to develop robust, accurate and holistic assessments, which may entail collaborating with other professionals. They must demonstrate capability of adoption practice in accordance with current professional standards. Independent Social Workers are subject to regular supervision by the Registered Manager, including case oversight, review of assessment quality and safeguarding decision-making.
- A4U retains the services of a specialist Medical Advisor who will report on Health Assessments for Adults and Children as required.
- A4U has a suitably experienced Legal Advisor and access to a Legal Panel which is convened regularly.

5. Mission Statement

A4U is committed to providing permanency through timely, trauma-informed, child-centred, and culturally appropriate adoption, that meets the life-long needs of children and young people that need to be adopted from India to the United Kingdom.

The Agency is committed to ensuring that children and young people will be adopted by families who have been assessed and approved as suitable to provide a secure, warm, safe and supportive environment in which they can develop in all aspects of their lives.

6. **Aims and Objectives**

A4U aims to provide a service for all children and families that is welcoming, user friendly and non-discriminatory.

A4U aims to provide safe, secure and enduring adoption placements, to meet the assessed needs of children who require permanent placements to promote and safeguard their welfare, where they can flourish, and build secure and lifelong relationships.

A4U ensures that adoptive placements will promote stability and positive outcomes for children by working in partnership with adopted children and young people, adoptive parents, birth families and other professionals in the adoption and adoption support process.

A4U will meet the timescales set out in the Children Act 1989, Statutory Adoption Guidance and the Adoption Minimum Standards. Our Statement of Purpose fulfils the requirement of Standard 18 of the Adoption National Minimum Standards 2014, Regulation 2 of the Local Authority Adoption Services (England) Regulations 2003, Adoption Support Agencies (England) and Adoption Agencies Regulations 2005 and the Adoption and Children Act 2002.

A4U will provide a high quality and comprehensive range of adoption and adoption support services that meet the needs of children and young people who need permanency through adoption, prospective adopters, adoptive families, birth families, adopted adults and the public.

A4U positively values the UK as a multi-cultural society with diverse families, values, and attitudes. We are committed to ensuring that children placed for adoption are provided with the opportunity to develop a positive sense of personal history and self-esteem. We will challenge oppressive or discriminatory practice based on race, gender, sexual orientation, religious or cultural backgrounds or disability. We will encourage and support adoptive parents in accessing relevant resources to ensure that we mitigate, as far as possible, against the disadvantages some adoptive children may experience in overcoming the impact of negative early life experiences, loss, separation, trauma and displacement on their emotional, psychological and behavioural development.

The core objectives are to:

- Provide high quality Intercountry adoption services and lifelong adoptive support to adoptees, adopters and prospective adopters, their families and friends, established adoptive families, adopted people and birth relatives.
- Promote best practice in permanence planning for children.
- To provide accurate and quality information to applicants interested in becoming adopters, about the adoption process and the children most likely requiring adoption.
- Minimise delay in family finding, prioritising the needs of the child.

- To ensure that all decisions are child-centred, transparent and fair.
- Working in a professional manner which is non-judgmental, non-discriminatory and anti-racist to ensure that children and families whom we work with, as well as colleagues, are respected, understood and valued.
- Ensuring that the intake of Intercountry adopters reflects the needs of the children that are waiting for an Intercountry adoption placement and that all prospective adopters comply with the eligibility criteria.
- Providing secure and stable adoptive placements for children from India who may have experienced traumatic early years, including abuse, neglect and multiple caregivers which may have impacted attachment.
- The recruitment of prospective adopters with the capacity to provide stable loving homes for children and young people will be irrespective of age, gender, relationship status, sexual orientation, identity, ethnicity, faith or socioeconomic background (providing prospective adopters meet the eligibility criteria).
- Making sure that A4U's information service is staffed by appropriately qualified and experienced practitioners.
- Working in partnership with other regional adoption agencies, local authorities and voluntary adoption agencies through contracts and service level agreements to provide specialist preparation and assessment for prospective Intercountry adopters.
- Ensuring that the lifelong needs of children are understood, and that the ethnic, cultural, religious, and linguistic heritage of the children is fully recognised and positively valued. A4U offer lifelong training and support to all adoptive families.
- To ensure prospective adoptive parents receive appropriate preparation, training, support and advice to enable them to offer a secure loving home and the best possible standards of therapeutic parenting, safety and protection to adopted children both pre and post adoption.
- Develop a range of adoption support services, including practical, legal, medical, mental health, educational, financial, and therapeutic services, in partnership with other relevant agencies, to ensure placements succeed.
- Promoting an Agency culture of continuous learning and development that supports and encourages innovative practice and enhanced professional knowledge and skills.
- To ensure children who are placed for adoption are supported to understand their life story and relationships with significant people from their birth family network, if this information is available, are promoted and maintained through direct or indirect contact as appropriate to each child.

- To provide emotional and practical support to children and families post-adoption.
- To provide post placement support to newly created and existing adoptive families as per legislation or court orders.
- Providing the highest standards of adoption practice, informed by the outcomes of research, perspectives of all parties with lived experience of adoption and through training which A4U provides to staff.
- Employ staff with appropriate and sufficient skills, knowledge, and experience to deliver the adoption service.
- Independent Social Workers are also encouraged with their ongoing learning to ensure that practice remains current and of the highest quality.
- The welfare and safety of children is at the core of everything we do. A4U takes its safeguarding responsibility seriously and will take all possible steps to ensure children's welfare and protection from harm. Where there are concerns reported, the Safeguarding Policy will be followed and all concerns escalated internally, and externally, where appropriate.
- To ensure any concerns about services offered by A4U are addressed and that information about the complaint's procedure is made available.
- To ensure that the organisation regularly reviews the services it provides, consults with, and learns from, those in receipt of services through comments, compliments and complaints and structured feedback mechanisms.
- Involving customers and their families in the development and delivery of service provision.
- Compliance with A4U's policies, procedures and standards in respect of safeguarding and child protection, equal opportunities, complaints, finance and administration, health and environment, safety, security, risk management, monitoring and evaluation, staff development and training, staff recruitment and management.

A4U is committed to developing a research-informed practice model. As part of this, the Agency aspires to undertake longitudinal research with adoptive families, to understand the long-term impact of adoption placements and adoption support.

This will enable the Agency to:

- Evaluate placement stability and outcomes over time,
- Understand the evolving needs of adoptive families,
- Contribute to the wider evidence base in intercountry adoption,
- Continuously refine and improve practice based on lived outcomes.

7. Values

A4U has been established to ensure that every adoption is ethically sound and is supported by the highest quality of adoption support services.

The children who are in need of adoption are at the forefront of the process, this includes both the adoptive child and the child/children (if any) of the family looking to adopt. The children's welfare, education, development and their need to be loved, accepted, and parented in a way that meets their unique needs in their new family is paramount.

It is the role of A4U to ensure that the above is met at the highest standards, but also to ensure that the adoptive parents, their child/children and their families understand that adoption is an evolving and life-long process, taking place at the pace of the child being adopted. Every adopted child will have a different background and upbringing and therefore will require a different level of support. The age of the child at the point of placement, will also impact their immediate, short, and longer-term needs within their adoptive placement.

A4U embraces the values statement which is contained within the National Minimum Standards (2014).

Values – Children:

- The child's welfare, safety and needs are at the centre of the adoption process.
- Adopted children should have a safe and stable childhood, benefit from parenting that meets their unique needs, have a fulfilling education, enjoy a wide range of opportunities to develop their talents and skills, leading to successful and positive outcomes in adult life.
- Children are entitled to grow up as part of a loving family that can meet their developmental needs during childhood and beyond.
- Children's wishes and feelings are important and will be actively sought and fully considered at all stages of the adoption process; where children are pre-verbal, practitioners will utilise creative and thoughtful ways to gather children's views to inform ongoing assessment of their needs.
- Delays should be avoided as they can have a severe impact on the health and development of children waiting to be adopted.
- The needs of disabled children and children with complex needs will be fully recognised and considered within the adoption assessment stages.

Values - Adopted adults and birth relatives:

- Adoption is an evolving life-long process for all those involved, including adopted adults, and birth and adoptive relatives. The fundamental issues raised by adoption, such as trauma, separation and loss, may reverberate and resurface at different times and stages throughout an individual's life.

- Adopted people should have access to information and services to enable them to address adoption related matters throughout their life.
- Agencies have a duty to provide services that considers the welfare of all parties, including the implications of decisions connected to adoption on all those involved.
- A sense of identity is important to a child's well-being. To help children develop this, their ethnic origin, cultural background, religion, language, and sexuality need to be properly recognised and positively valued and promoted.
- Where a child cannot be cared for in a suitable manner in their own country, intercountry adoption may be considered as an alternative means of providing a permanent family.
- Children, birth parents/guardians and families and adoptive parents and families will be valued and respected.
- A genuine partnership between all those involved in adoption is essential for the National Minimum Standards to be delivered the best outcomes for children secured; this includes the Government, local government, other statutory agencies, Voluntary Adoption Agencies and Adoption Support Agencies.
- Agencies should seek to work in partnership with all parties involved, taking account of their views and wishes in decision-making.
- Agencies should acknowledge differences in people's circumstances and establish policies that provide non-discriminatory services.
- Adopted adults have their adoptive identity safeguarded and the right to decide whether to be involved in contact or communication with birth family members.

8. Safeguarding and Protection in Practice

The welfare and safety of children is at the centre of all activity within A4U. As a pre-registration agency, A4U has established safeguarding systems, policies and governance arrangements that are designed to be fully operational from the point of registration.

A4U's safeguarding practice is underpinned by Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) and relevant adoption legislation and guidance.

In practice, A4U will ensure that:

- All staff, panel members and independent social workers are trained in safeguarding and understand their responsibilities to identify and respond to risk.
- Prospective adopters are provided with comprehensive preparation to understand the impact of abuse, neglect, trauma, exploitation, separation, loss and displacement, and how to safeguard children placed in their care.

- All safeguarding concerns are recognised, recorded and escalated without delay, in line with childcare legislation and statutory guidance.
- Clear thresholds are applied when assessing safeguarding concerns, with immediate referral to Local Authority Children's Services or the Police where required.
- Allegations against adopters, staff or professionals are referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and managed in accordance with statutory procedures.
- A4U maintains effective working relationships with local authorities and safeguarding partners to ensure coordinated responses to risk.

Safeguarding oversight is maintained through:

- Monthly safeguarding monitoring,
- Case file audits,
- Supervision and management oversight,
- Governance review processes led by the Responsible Individual.

Where safeguarding concerns arise, A4U will demonstrate professional curiosity, timely escalation and robust challenge where required to ensure that children are protected from harm.

9. Services and Facilities

The primary purpose of A4U is providing adoptive families for children who require intercountry adoption, to enable them to grow up in a secure and positive environment, which will give them the best opportunity to fulfil their potential. To achieve this, we will aim to recruit, assess and approve adopters in a robust and timely manner.

A4U will not exclude any applications based on lifestyle. All applicants will be medically assessed. Smoking, weight, alcohol consumption, previous illnesses, criminal convictions and family history will be discussed in the initial enquiry stage. All applicants will be treated with respect, and all enquiries and discussions will relate to their ability to offer a secure home to a child in need of adoption.

A4U provides the following services and facilities:

- Information and advice, together with publications to enquirers, prospective adopters, established adoptive families, adopted people, birth relatives, or where local authorities have a Service Level Agreement with A4U to provide intercountry adoption services.
- Information sessions for people interested in Intercountry adoption with India. This will provide information at an early stage within the process and provide prospective adopters with the opportunity to consider the procedures and requirements both within the UK and India, as well as the needs of the children placed in Intercountry

adoption. They will also have the opportunity to hear first-hand experiences of those who have adopted from abroad.

- India specific workshops, where A4U will be recognised as a foreign partner, to build on information sessions and provide the procedure entailed to adopt with India.
- Intercountry adoption preparation courses for prospective Intercountry adopters whether they are adopting for the first time, second time or for anyone looking to adopt a known child to whom they are related. Additionally, preparation modules are offered to prospective adopters who are seeking to adopt a child that is racially or ethnically different from themselves; for those wanting to adopt siblings and for those prospective adopters who already have birth children.
- Whilst A4U may assist with relative and connected person adoption, we will not assist in any adoption which does not adhere to adoption procedures set out within the UK and India; A4U will not assist in the adoption of any child that has been 'pre-identified' by adopters, and any enquiries of this nature will not be accepted.
- Preparation, assessment, and support is provided for prospective Intercountry adopters from Stage One to Post Adoption. A4U will provide information regarding proposed matches with children from India, and provide post-placement and post adoption reports, as required by any court order made in India. Prospective adopters will have an allocated social worker for the assessment / home study and where possible, the same social worker will be allocated throughout the adoption process. A copy of the full process is available to anyone choosing to adopt with A4U.
- Remaining in contact with adopters and their children post placement and arranging events and training, alongside proactive adoption support, and provision of post placement advice, assistance, and support upon request.
- Arranging Life Story workshops where we will be providing a blank Life Story book created especially by A4U and approved by Dr Joanna North (a counsellor for Children), with adoptive parents and children.
- Working in partnership with other providers of services for children and families that are affected by adoption to ensure they can access support outside of A4U. This also includes the government Adoption Support Fund <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/adoption-support-fund-asf>. The Adoption and Special Guardian Support Fund (ASGSF) provides funds to local authorities and Regional Adoption Agencies (RAAs) to pay for essential therapeutic services for eligible adoptive, Special Guardianship Order (SGO) and Child Arrangement Order (CAO) families.
- Hosting and supporting Asha, the India Adoption Group which was formed in 2003 for families that have adopted from India, those who are in the process of adopting and for children and adults adopted from India.

- Offer advice and support to adopted people who are seeking their records from abroad. This would involve signposting to authorities and agencies abroad to determine their policies and procedures to locate records and counsellors.
- Contribute to improving professional practice, where appropriate, through research, conferences, seminars etc.
- Working with India through any special programmes they have, to ensure that the high-quality care which they expect for their children is provided, in line with regulations, good practice, research, and through the Central Authority.
- A programme of workshops and courses, which will be run by qualified social workers or trainers, addressing a wide range of adoption issues, aimed at prospective adopters in the assessment stage of the adoption journey, and those who are awaiting a match, or who already have a child in placement.

10. Voice of the Child, Adopters and Families

A4U is committed to ensuring that the views, wishes and experiences of children, adopters and families inform all aspects of service delivery.

As an intercountry adoption agency, A4U recognises that children may not always be able to directly express their views.

In these cases, the agency will ensure that:

- The child's voice is understood through all available information, including Child Permanence Reports, adoption records and professional assessments,
- Practitioners are supported to use creative ways of gathering the views of pre-verbal children,
- Life story work, identity work and therapeutic approaches are used to support children in understanding their experiences and expressing their views over time,
- Adoptive parents are supported and trained to advocate for their children and understand their communication needs.

A4U will actively seek and capture feedback from:

- Prospective adopters during all stages of the process,
- Approved adopters and adoptive families,
- Adopted adults and those with lived experience where appropriate.

Feedback is captured through surveys, consultation activity, complaints and compliments.

A4U is developing an Insight and Impact Forum as part of its quality assurance and improvement framework, ensuring that feedback from children, adopters and families is systematically captured, scrutinised and used to drive service improvement and strengthen outcomes. The feedback gathered will be used to inform service development, improve practice, and strengthen outcomes for children and families. This approach ensures that the lived experience of service users is central to how A4U develops and improves its services.

11. Complaints

In seeking to constantly improve the quality of the adoption service, we welcome and encourage feedback from customers, providers and partner agencies. A4U is committed to resolve any complaints quickly with a sensitive, non-judgemental approach.

Prospective adopters will be given written information about the Complaints Procedures and given information on how to make a complaint. Children and young people in placement and post-adoption are encouraged to share any worries or concerns they may have using the Children's Guide.

Anyone with a legitimate interest has the right to complain at any time to A4U about aspects of the service, if they believe A4U has acted in contravention of the law, regulation, guidance, codes of practice or has failed to adhere to its own policies and procedures.

A4U will seek to resolve complaints with an internal investigation, carried out by a member of the leadership team who has not had any prior involvement with the case.

Regular reports on any serious complaints will be reviewed to ensure that the complaints procedure is operating in an appropriate manner and in accordance with A4U's policies and procedures.

We will ensure organisational reflection and learning following the resolution and closure of any complaint, to ensure lessons can be learnt, services improved and to mitigate the likelihood of future complaints of the same nature.

Informal Complaints:

Informal complaints can be made verbally, and A4U will aim to quickly remedy the complaint to everyone's satisfaction.

If a client is unhappy with the service that has been offered, they should speak directly with the individual social worker working with them. The social worker should inform their manager about the informal complaint and what action they have taken to address the concern. The Registered Manager will record in writing all informal complaints received so that any lessons to be learnt can contribute to future professional and / or service development. Complaints data will be reviewed by the Responsible Individual on a monthly basis.

If the client does not feel that the person they are working with is best placed to resolve their concern or he /she is not happy with the response, they should contact the relevant manager directly. Most matters can be resolved through discussion with Agency managers who will investigate the problem and respond to the complainant within 10 days. If this deadline cannot be met, the complainant will be informed in writing of the reasons for the delay.

However, if the complaint is not resolved to your satisfaction, or you feel the need to proceed directly into making a formal written complaint then refer to the procedure below.

Formal Complaints:

Formal complaints can be made to the Registered Manager either by:

- Email: complaints@adoptionis4u.com
- Post: Unit 2 Quartz Point, Stonebridge Road, Coleshill B46 3JL

The Registered Manager may:

- Telephone the client or request further details and clarify the complaint.
- Arrange to meet with the client to discuss their concerns.
- Interview the staff member(s) involved.
- Read all the relevant information pertaining to the complaint.
- Discuss the complaint with the Responsible Individual.

Timescales:

- Written acknowledgement of a complaint – 2 working days from receipt
- Investigation completed – 3 weeks, or progress reports issued at 2 week intervals.

If the client is not satisfied with how the complaint was handled or the resolution provided, they are able to proceed to complaint appeal.

Independent Review Mechanism (IRM):

Applicants to become adopters who are not accepted for approval on the recommendation of the Adoption Panel and / or Agency Decision Maker can make further representations through the Agency procedures or are able to ask for their case to be reviewed by the Independent Review Mechanism (IRM). Details of this process will be made available to applicants during preparation and assessment.

The IRM has the following timescales:

- Applicants have 40 days from the agency decision to contact the IRM.
- The Adoption Registered Manager is the appointed liaison officer and will be contacted to produce relevant documents within 10 days.
- The IRM will set up a panel within 3 months of the application.

Contact details are:

Website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/independent-review-mechanism/about

Independent Review Mechanism

Regent Business Hub
4 Pavilion Business Park
Royds Hall Road
Wortley
Leeds
LS12 6AJ
United Kingdom

Email : irm@irm.org.uk

Phone : 0113 202 2080

Phone lines are open between 9:30am and 12:30pm, Monday to Friday.

12. Effective Service and Quality Monitoring

A4U's Quality Assurance Framework sets out a structured programme of audit, monitoring and review activity across all areas of service delivery. This includes:

- Monthly case file audits and safeguarding monitoring,
- Thematic audits and learning reviews,
- Supervision and workforce oversight,
- Panel quality assurance and decision tracking,
- Feedback from children, adopters and stakeholders,

Key Performance Indicators including timeliness, approvals, matching outcomes and disruption rates.

Quality assurance activity is not solely focused on compliance, but on understanding the lived experience of children and families and improving outcomes. Learning from audits, complaints, feedback and disruption is systematically captured, tracked and translated into service improvement through structured action planning.

The Registered Manager ensures that systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the provision of services and provide high quality adoption services to children and families of A4U. All staff receive regular supervision and an annual appraisal, as set out in the Governance and Accountability Framework.

Audit and quality assurance activity is structured, cyclical and aligned to the SCCIF, incorporating monthly case audits, thematic reviews, safeguarding monitoring and KPI tracking, with clear reporting to the Responsible Individual.

Where A4U provides information sessions, preparation courses, support workshops etc, all participants to these sessions will be requested to complete an evaluation form at the end of each session or day course. In turn these evaluations will then be reviewed as soon as possible after the course by the relevant team and service developments will be shaped by the feedback.

The Responsible Individual has oversight of auditing, quality, monitoring and risk assessment across the agency.

The Quality Assurance framework operates alongside A4U's Organisational Risk Framework, which enables leaders to:

- Identify, assess and monitor organisational and practice risks,
- Maintain oversight of safeguarding, operational and strategic risk,
- Ensure that risks are mitigated through clear action planning and review.

Risk is reviewed routinely through governance structures and is explicitly linked to quality assurance findings and SCCIF monitoring, ensuring that risk, quality and performance are understood as interconnected elements of service delivery.

Outcomes, Impact and Measuring Effectiveness

As a pre-registration agency, A4U has established a clear framework for measuring impact and effectiveness from commencement of service delivery.

A4U will evaluate the quality and impact of its services through a combination of quantitative performance data, qualitative feedback and audit activity, aligned to the Social Care Common Inspection Framework (SCCIF).

Key measures of effectiveness include:

- Timeliness of adopter recruitment, assessment and approval (Stage 1 and Stage 2),
- Matching timescales and quality of match decisions,
- Placement stability and disruption rates,
- Feedback from adopters, adopted individuals and stakeholders,
- Quality of assessments and decision-making,
- Access to and impact of adoption support services,
- Safeguarding activity and outcomes.

Performance is monitored through Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), audit activity and the SCCIF Action Plan, and is reviewed at monthly and quarterly governance meetings.

As the agency becomes operational, A4U will develop an evidence base which demonstrates:

- the difference the service makes to children's lives,
- the stability and quality of adoptive placements,
- the effectiveness of support provided to families.

This ensures that the agency is able to clearly evidence impact and continuously improve service delivery.

Inspection Framework, Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement

A4U operates within a comprehensive and integrated framework of quality assurance, governance and continuous improvement, designed to ensure that the agency is consistently inspection ready and able to evidence the impact of its work on children, adoptive families and other stakeholders.

The agency's improvement and assurance activity is explicitly aligned to the Social Care Common Inspection Framework (SCCIF). A4U maintains a live SCCIF Action Plan and Dashboard, which are used as the primary mechanisms for monitoring service effectiveness, identifying emerging risk and driving improvement.

The SCCIF Action Plan is structured around the three key inspection domains:

- Help and protection,
- Experiences and progress of children and families,
- Leadership and management.

These domains are used to:

- Evaluate the quality and impact of practice,
- Monitor compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements,
- Identify areas of strength and areas for development,
- Provide a clear line of sight between operational activity and inspection standards.

The Action Plan is supported by a dynamic dashboard with RAG-rated indicators, enabling leaders to maintain oversight of risk, performance and compliance and to take timely action where required.

A4U's Governance and Accountability Framework provides clear structures for leadership oversight, decision-making and escalation.

This ensures:

- Defined roles and accountability between the Responsible Individual, Registered Manager and workforce,
- Clear safeguarding reporting pathways and escalation processes,
- Robust oversight of risk, quality and performance,
- Regular governance meetings, including monthly oversight and quarterly performance reviews.

Governance activity is closely aligned with quality assurance and SCCIF monitoring processes to ensure a coherent and integrated system of accountability and improvement.

Together, these frameworks ensure that A4U:

- Knows its strengths and weaknesses,
- Responds proactively to emerging issues,

- Maintains a strong focus on safeguarding, trauma-informed, culturally competent and child-centred practice,
- Can clearly evidence the impact of its work on outcomes for children and families,
- Remains continuously prepared for inspection.

13. Review of the Statement of Purpose

The Statement of Purpose will be reviewed and updated annually through governance processes by the Responsible Individual, in conjunction with the Leadership Team, to ensure that it meets the requirements of the Adoption Agency Regulations and the National Minimum Standards.

The aim of the review is to ensure that the Agency is conducted in a manner consistent with the Statement of Purpose and that the statement is accurately reflected in the Agency's policies, procedures, and guidance to the workforce, and all relevant legislation and adoption specific practice standards.

14. Details of the Registration Authority

On 1 April 2007, Ofsted took over from the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI). Ofsted is now responsible for monitoring, regulating and inspecting adoption services under the provision of the Care Standards Act 2000.

The registration authority is:

OFSTED

Address: Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD

Telephone: 0300 123 1231

Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

Web address: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>

Children's Commissioner for England:

Dame Rachel de Souza

Address: Children's Commissioner for England, Sanctuary Buildings, 20 Great Smith Street, London, SW1P 3BT

Telephone: 020 7783 8330