



THE ADOPTABLES

together and unique



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Who are the Adoptables

The Adoptables are a peer network of young adopted people who speak about their experiences. The Adoptables ambassadors aim to improve the lives of other adopted children by speaking on a public platform about their experiences and developing resources such as this schools' toolkit.

Run by children's charity Coram and funded by the Queen's Trust, the Adoptables produces toolkits to help teachers interact with adopted students.



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**We don't accomplish anything
in this world alone... and
whatever happens is the result
of the whole tapestry of one's
life and all the weavings of
individual threads form one to
another that creates
something.**

Sandra Day O' Connor

coram
Kent Adoption



What the Adoptables say about education

“ It’s hard for teachers because each adopted person has a unique story. ”

“ I definitely wasn’t trying to be deliberately
difficult, I just couldn’t help it. ”

“ Because I was adopted
when I was younger, they said
that my issues had gone. ”

“ I just want to be treated like a
normal child. ”



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What is the Schools' Toolkit

The Schools' Toolkit aims to improved awareness and understanding of adopted young people's experiences at school.

We worked with the Adoptables and experts in the field to understand the challenges faced by adopted young people at school. In response to their concerns about support and understanding of adoption within education we have co-produced a Schools' Toolkit with the Adoptables.

What the toolkit includes:

- Lesson Plans for Key Stage 2 and 3
- Online videos and lesson resources
- Teachers Guidance pack





Adoptables Schools' Toolkit KS3 Session Teacher-delivered

PSHE Association Learning Opportunities:

- Health & Wellbeing 4,5
- Relationships 1,4,6,8,9,11,12
- Living In The Wider World 5,7

PSHE education is a non-statutory subject on the school curriculum. However, section 2.5 of the national curriculum states that all state schools 'should make provision for personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE), drawing on good practice'.

In addition to the national curriculum framework, the [Department for Education guidance](#) states that the subject is 'an important and necessary part of all pupils' education' and that 'schools should seek to use PSHE education to build, where appropriate, on the statutory content already outlined in the national curriculum, the basic school curriculum and in statutory guidance on: drug education, financial education, sex and relationship education (SRE) and the importance of physical activity and diet for a healthy lifestyle.'

The [national curriculum](#) also states that 'all schools should make provision for personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE), drawing on good practice'. PSHE education contributes to schools' statutory duties outlined in the [Education Act 2002](#) and the [Academies Act 2010](#) to provide a balanced and broadly-based curriculum and is essential to [Ofsted](#) judgements in relation to personal development, behaviour, welfare and safeguarding.

Resources needed:

Parents' information letter
Music for entry
Ambassadors films
Adoptables KS3 Session PPT
Large paper and felt pens (one set per table group)
History cards (6)
Strips of paper. Pens / pencils.

Prior to the session the Parents' information letter must have been given out and a consent slip received from all parents

Introduction

Have music playing as pupils enter / settle.

I have a note from a young person called Julia:

"Today we're going to hear from some young people who have lots in common with you – they've complained about homework, they've had spots, they've used up all their data on their phones etc. They also have one thing in common with each other – they're all adopted. What do you think that means?"

The definition we're going to use is when someone is adopted, it means that they've been placed with a family who've chosen to love and take care of them forever. I'm adopted too and today, we'd really like to give you the chance to find out more about what it's like to be adopted and hopefully help you to understand some of the issues and perhaps help you to be more supportive of anyone who you know is adopted."

Activity

Show PPT quote 1 "If you've got a question...ask".

This is a quote from one of the films. Rather than talking behind someone's back or making things up, if you've got a question about someone, why not ask them? We're going to watch some films and then you're going to write down all the questions that you'd like to ask someone who is adopted – anything at all.

Watch films.

In table groups, pupils write on large paper all the questions that they have – anything at all.

After 5 minutes writing time, pupils go on a 'learning walk' – going to other tables to read their questions. Play music.

Return to original table groups.

So you've got lots of questions, which is great. We're now going to think about the effect of those questions and consider if they are appropriate. Is the question too personal or intrusive? Think how the person you are asking might feel. Circle the questions that you feel are appropriate to ask – the ones that are respectful, polite and not too personal. Remember – at first you were told to write any questions at all so we're not going to judge anyone for the questions they suggested, we're going through a really useful process of reflection.

Show PPT quote 2 "Being adopted is hard...you have lots of stuff to think about...you might not sleep at night because you're thinking about it."

Another note from Julia:

"It's a really amazing feeling, to know that you've been chosen and that you are really loved. But some of the things from the past don't just go away. We've all got our own stories and different things to deal with. Let's have a think about how that might affect someone at school. The cards (teacher to hold up) have some of the things that some adopted young people might have dealt with. Each table will get one card to discuss."

Show PPT slide 3 'Things to consider'.

On this slide we've got a list of things that might be affected by the experience on your card - friendships, school work / exams, school trips, sleepovers, socialising, other relationships, and

Teachers' Guidance

Includes:

- Background information about adoption and fostering.
 - Basic information and statistics
- Specific guidance from the Adoptables around **'what would you like teachers to understand?'**
- Information about gaining access to funding for adopted young people – Pupil Premium
- Further readings on adoption and education.



Ask the Adoptables

1. What was the biggest challenge you faced at school?
2. How can you best support adopted students through their education? (give example of good practices from teachers, social works, parents)
3. What activities outside of school positively impacted on your education?



What the Kent Adoptables want you to know

More help for adopted children, e.g. someone to go to

Have a person to talk to

Be able to ring mum if I want to go home

Make sure schools have a support counsellor for adopted children so children can speak to them if they have any worries

Don't bring adoption up without 100% permission

Allow adopted children to walk out of class if stressed, anxious

Know that their minds work differently to kids born to the people they grow up with

Things may affect them in ways that don't make sense; be sensitive and not judgemental



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Get involved

If you are interested in hearing more about the group or if your son or daughter is interested in joining, please contact Rebecca Jones or Clare Marks via PAST@kent.gov.uk or telephone 03000 420508

Schools toolkit subscription:

<https://www.coramlifeeducation.org.uk/adoptables/>

Contact Lindsay McDougall at

Lindsay.mcdougall@coram.org.uk or 0207 239 4999

