

Press release: Thousands more families to benefit from the Adoption Support Fund

Thousands more adoptive families and special guardians are set to benefit from additional support after special fund was increased by £12million – taking the total investment to £149million since 2015.

Over 35,000 families have already benefitted from the Adoption Support Fund, which has provided things like cognitive therapy, play and music therapy, and family support sessions. This much needed therapeutic support can help children come to terms with their difficulties – giving them the confidence to build strong relationships with their new family.

This latest additional funding means that the Adoption Support Fund has grown every year since its introduction in 2015 – with the £40million available for next year double the original investment of £18million, underlining the Government's determination to support adoptive families as they settle in to their new lives.

Education Secretary Damian Hinds said:

Spending quality time with family is one of the most important parts of Christmas, and adoptive parents, along with foster carers and kinship carers, provide loving, stable homes for so many vulnerable children and young people.

Thousands of families have had their lives transformed by adoption, but there are still too many children waiting to be adopted. I want those thinking about adoption and existing adoptive parents to know there is specialist support in place to help families as they adjust to their new lives together.

We have seen how life-changing the fund can be and this extra funding will continue to support thousands of children who have experienced trauma and adoptive families as they settle in to their new homes.

Sue Armstrong-Brown Chief Executive of Adoption UK said:

This is fantastic news for adoptive parents across England. I'm pleased that the government heard our recent message, delivered directly to the Children's Minister by adoptive parents, that more support was needed. Adopters told the minister that many had received life-changing therapeutic support through the Adoption Support Fund.

This support makes all the difference to families parenting some of the country's most vulnerable children – in many cases it has been the one thing that held the family together and prevented the child returning to care. It's vital that this support is safeguarded into the future, and I'm delighted that an additional £12million has been allocated to support adoptive families.

Andrew Christie, Chair of the Adoption and Special Guardianship Leadership Board said:

I am delighted that an additional £12million has been put into the Adoption Support Fund. This will enable thousands more families to get access to the support they need to ensure that their children thrive. Adopters and special guardians have told me that access to therapeutic support helps them understand the impact that trauma, abuse and neglect has had on their children and how they can provide them with the support they need. It is making a huge difference to the lives of thousands of families.

Adoption plays a crucial role in providing support for some of our most vulnerable children, alongside Special Guardianship, foster care and residential care. The new National Stability Forum for Children's Social Care, which held its second meeting in December, brings together system leaders to focus on looked after children's outcomes and sense of belonging, regardless of type of setting or legal order.

This was a key commitment made in the Government's publication *Fostering Better Outcomes* earlier in the year, which set out our aspirations for a high quality fostering system. In January, we will be supporting Fostering Network's revised Foster Carer Charter, with an ambition for a Charter to be in place in every fostering service across the UK. The agreement between fostering services and their foster carers will provide children with the best possible care and is an important step towards foster carers receiving the support and respect they deserve.