



A guide to AEM's Panel

At AEM we run virtual panels via Microsoft Teams. We have four panels each month:

Wollaton Panel

Kedleston Panel

Rufford Panel

Chatsworth Panel

Each panel has its own Chair and Vice Chair, the other panel members are made up on a rota system from our diverse central list. Panel business support should send workers a 'welcome to panel' document when they confirm your timeslot, this will detail who will be on the panel, which can be shared with adopters.

The pre panel process:

At the point that a match is booked into panel we require an e-mail address and phone number for Social Workers and adopters.

Panel papers need to be submitted by noon, 12 working days prior to the panel date, this needs to be a complete bundle, so the child's Social Worker and the adopters Social Worker will need to agree who will take responsibility for this. The bundle needs to be e-mailed to Adoption.Panel@adoptioneastmidlands.nottsc.gov.uk

Panel members are expected to read papers and identify strengths and questions prior to the panel, they submit these to the Chair 4 working days prior to panel. **The Chair then collates the strengths and questions, which are then sent to the child's Social Worker and adopters Social Worker 3 working days prior to panel.**



Social Workers should then share these with the adopters and together, provide written answers to the questions. These should be returned via e-mail to the address above by noon the day before panel.

The panel day:

On the day of panel, you will receive a Teams link to the meeting only when panel are ready for you. You will be kept informed by e-mail if panel are running late.

The Chair will then welcome everyone and a round of introductions will take place.

The panel meeting is recorded, only for the purpose of minutes, the recording is deleted once the minutes have been signed off. We do have a minute taker present, but the recording is a backup if the minute taker loses connection.

Although most questions are asked prior to the actual panel day, Chairs do leave a few questions to be asked verbally.

At AEM we are keen to have the child's voice heard, therefore we have worked with children who are in care or have been in care to gather questions they would like to ask adopters at panel. These are referred to as 'the voice of the child' questions and may be asked in the written questions or verbally on the day.

Once all panels' questions have been answered the Chair will give the adopters and workers an opportunity to add anything else. The Chair will then ask panel members if they are ready to make a recommendation. If panel members are ready, then they will proceed to recommendation with adopters and workers present.

If panel members need more time and a further discussion you will be asked to leave the meeting. If after further discussion a positive



recommendation is going to be made, adopters and workers will be invited back into the meeting and recommendations will be made.

If panel decide to defer or make a negative recommendation then the workers and adopters will be invited back into the meeting but only the Chair, Panel Adviser and minute taker will be present.

After panel:

All those that attend panel will receive a link to complete feedback about their experience, we value all the feedback we receive.

Minutes are produced for every case, and these will be sent out along with the Agency Decision once received, which is usually 7 working days following panel.

Important information:

Please note it's AEM policy for adopters DBS and medicals to be in date by **two years** at the point the agency decision is made following matching panel.

Adopters are also required to have their suitability to adopt reviewed annually, again to be in date at the point the agency decision is made following matching panel. The most recent annual review report should be submitted with the panel bundle. This is also applicable even if the child has been placed under Fostering for Adoption.

List of papers required to be submitted:

Adopters' information:

- Declaration of compliance, completed and signed by a manager
- PAR (Part 1 and 2) – updated if applicable
- Medical report unless included in the PAR
- Application minutes and agency decision



- Annual review report, if applicable

Child's information:

- Declaration of compliance, completed and signed by a manager
- CPR – updated, including appendices and genogram
- APR and Adoption Support plan – it is expected that the adopters Social Worker and adopter contribute to these documents.
- Child's medical

We would be grateful if you could share this information with your adopters, so they are aware of AEM's panel process.

If there are any issues with paperwork or panel identify concerns prior to panel you will be contacted by the Panel Adviser.

We look forward to welcoming you to panel, if you have any further queries, please contact panel business support:

Adoption.Panel@adoptioneastmidlands.nottsc.gov.uk

You can also contact AEM Panel Managers/Advisers via the following e-mail address:

PanelManagers.Adoption@adoptioneastmidlands.nottsc.gov.uk