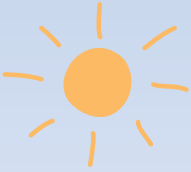


Cumbria Adoption



Dear birth family...



A children and young
person's guide to
the letterbox



0303 333 1216



Westmorland
& Furness
Council

Working for **Cumberland Council** and
Westmorland & Furness Council

cumbriaadoption.org.uk

Hello!



What is the Letterbox?

A lot of children are adopted and children are adopted for lots of different reasons, but one of the main reasons is that their birth mums and birth dads couldn't keep them safe and well. That doesn't mean they didn't love their children and that is why we arrange for letters to be exchanged.

Does my birth family know where I live?

No, they don't. And your parents don't know where your birth family lives. That's why all the letters come to the Adoption Support Team to be passed on. We keep a copy of everything on your file so don't worry if you lose anything.



How often will I get a letter?

You will probably get a letter once or twice a year. If you think you'd like to have more contact, or less contact, talk to your parents and ask them to contact us to arrange some changes for you. You are the most important person in this contact and your wishes and feelings come first.



What if my writing isn't very good?

When you are very young you might not be able to write your own letters but you might be able to do a drawing which your parents can send with their letter. We always like to pass drawings on and we see some really good ones!

What if the letter makes me feel sad?

If you feel sad after getting a letter, or find you can't sleep or have bad dreams tell your parents. Sometimes you can have mixed up feelings; feeling happy to get the letter but sad about some of your memories. The Adoption Support Team has some good ideas and some good books all about mixed up feelings – ask your parents to contact us and we will help.

What if my birth family contact me on Facebook?

The first thing to do is talk to your parents. It can be unsettling to be contacted when you are not prepared. We find it is always best to use the Letterbox until you are 18. If you would like extra contact we can arrange this through the Letterbox system.



Lego Road
Cosy Farm
Sugarberry
Cumbria
CA88 6QP

Dear.....

Top tips for writing your letter!

Talk about your hobbies



Have you got pets?



Do you play any sports
or follow any sports teams?

Do you play a musical instrument?



What do you like best about school?

Have you been on holiday?

Lots of love,
Adoption Support Team
xxxx



Call **0303 333 1216**

If you have a complaint the Cumberland Council complaints team is here to help you!

You can write a letter or an email, call us, or go to the complaints section of the council website.

Write to: Complaints, Cumberland Council, Cumbria House, 117 Botchergate, Carlisle, CA1 1RD.

E: complaints@cumberland.gov.uk

T: 01228 479770

W: cumberland.gov.uk/your-council/have-your-say/make-complaint

The Adoption Support Team can help with those extra jobs.

Remember

The Letterbox lets you know that your birth family are ok and that you are able to keep up to date, ask any questions you have and let them know about your life. It shows you that there are a lot of people who love you in the world – that has to be good!



Talk to your parents if you have any questions!

Visit cumbriaadoption.org.uk