

Support for tracing a Foundling Hospital child

The Foundling Hospital continues today as the children's charity Coram. The Hospital kept detailed records for each child admitted into its care. These records are held at the London Metropolitan Archives (LMA) and date back to the early 1740s when the first children were admitted.

It is possible for members of the public to access the majority of the Foundling Hospital Archives at the LMA. Exceptions include documents which are too fragile to be handled and any more recent records which include personal information. Coram and the LMA are currently undertaking a digitalisation project of some Foundling Hospital records. Please note that these records will not be accessible during this time.

The LMA is approximately 15 minutes' walk from the Foundling Museum at 40 Northampton Road, London EC1R 0HB. For information on opening times and the services provided please visit their website www.lma.gov.uk. You can also look at the information leaflet produced by the LMA called *Finding Your Foundling* (copies available at the Museum reception). To access items visitors need to sign up for a reader's card, which takes around 15 minutes, and more information can be found on the LMA website. Please check their website for opening hours.

In accordance with the Data Protection Act, registers and books containing personal information about named individuals remain closed to the public for a period of 110 years. However, former pupils of the Foundling Hospital and their descendants may request their personal information by contacting Coram. This can be done by contacting Val Payman or the Adoption Support Team, Coram, 41 Brunswick Square, London WC1N 1AZ, 020 7520 0300 or adoption@coram.org.uk. The Adoption Support Team can also provide advice and support for those former pupils wishing to trace members of their birth family.

Coram also offer a birth records information and counselling service to those who grew up in the care of the Thomas Coram Foundation as foster children, to those previously in the Foundation's care as children but later adopted by their foster parents, and for adults placed for adoption as children through Coram or Adopt Anglia (including Cambridge Association for Social Welfare). For further information please contact them on 020 7520 0383 or email at adoption@coram.org.uk.

Information on other agencies

If you are searching for records which relate to children cared for by other organisations such as in a children's home or by foster parents the following organisations may be able to help:

Action for Children (formerly the National Children's Homes and Orphanages)
3 The Boulevard, Ascot Road, Watford WD18 8AG
01923 361 500
ask.us@actionforchildren.org.uk

The Children's Society (formerly the Church of England Children's Society)

69-85 Margery Street, London WC1X 0JL

020 7841 4400

www.childrenssociety.org.uk

Barnardo's

Tanners Lane, Barkingside, Ilford, Essex IG6 1QS

020 8550 8822

www.barnardos.org.uk

If you are searching for records for a child who lived in London, the LMA may be able to advise on other residential homes or orphanages which were operating up to 1965. However, many were run by small voluntary organisations and individual records may not have been kept.

For enquiries outside of London, Local Authority or County Council Archives may hold information and directories on children's homes in their area.

Useful information for finding adoption records are be found on

www.adoptionsearchreunion.org.uk

For general family history research, the main commercial sites holding information on birth, death and marriage records from 1837 to 2006 and census details up to 1911 are

www.findmypast.co.uk and www.ancestry.co.uk.