



**coram**

better chances  
for children  
since 1739

---

## Coram Institute for Children

Development prospectus



# Our future focus

## What is our ambition?

Coram's vision for children is a society where every child has the best possible chance in life, regardless of their background or circumstances.

Building on our legacy as the first and longest continuing children charity, the new **Coram Institute for Children** will be instrumental in realising this vision by acting as a catalyst for change and collaboration, seeking evidence-based solutions to the challenges facing children in the 21st century in policy, law and practice.

We will help young people secure their place at the heart of public discourse and provide practical means to fulfil the goals and principles of the

**Coram Charter for Children** so children have **A Fair Share** of resources, **An Equal Chance** irrespective of who they are or where they live and **A Secure Future** and the stability, relationships and support they need with access to justice to uphold children's rights.

We are now embarking on an ambitious two-year development phase to work with others across academic, public, private and charity sectors to realise the vision for the Institute, expanding our existing programmes of work, growing capacity for policy and discourse, and creating a new home for the Institute and children's social action on the Coram Campus.

## How will we make a difference?

By conducting world-class research, testing new ideas, and creating a space for evidence-informed dialogue the Institute will provide tangible solutions to the challenges children face in the modern era.

- **INSIGHT INTO IMPACT** – a **Centre for Impact** that can 'think and do', conducting research and evaluation, generating evidence-based policy, and driving change in how programmes are run and the way services are delivered
- **FINDING NEW SOLUTIONS** – an **Innovation Incubator** that works in partnership with local authorities, voluntary and private sectors to develop new solutions to the challenges children experience and share learning and expertise
- **VOICES IN ACTION** – the new **Youth Impact Forum** of social action campaigners and developing researchers enriching understanding and engagement and driving change for the future

## Setting the agenda

Our work is designed to translate into real-world outcomes, generating policy recommendations and innovative practices, driving societal shifts and building capacity that improve the lives of children.

The Institute will explore key topics affecting children's outcomes – including those instigated by children – through research, innovation, storytelling and practice development.

These will realise Coram's continuing mission to develop, deliver and promote best practice in the support of children and young people in real time to address emerging challenges and opportunities.

Across the education, health and care sectors, UK professionals are amongst the best in the world and we know they can make a real difference to children.

We are determined to share what we learn about best practice in the UK, but also continue to learn from colleagues and communities in other countries to promote the vital importance of stable, loving homes, access to education and the right care for all children, no matter where they live or who they live with.

We will define and develop measures and data, products and programmes to support professionals, parents, schools and partners in this common cause. We will know we have succeeded when all children tell us they are positive about their wellbeing and future prospects.

## CASE STUDY

### RCT in Family Group Conferencing

This year Coram completed the world's largest Randomised Control Trial of Family Group Conferencing in pre-proceedings analysed outcomes for over 2,500 children across 21 local authorities. Through our rigorous impact study we found that children were significantly less likely to go into care and families were less likely to be taken to court for decisions about their care as a result of having a Family Group Conference.

## Coram Institute

The **Centre for Impact** will be at the heart of the Institute and already conducts research and evaluation to generate evidence-based policy, guidance and best practice to improve the outcomes of children and young people.

We conduct mixed methods research and evaluation with Government departments, What Works Centres, local authorities, NHS Trusts, sector charities and community organisations. We specialise in impact studies and participatory approaches, which combines the voice of the child with robust research techniques and work with dedicated policy specialists in each key thematic area of our work and Masters and Doctoral researchers as well as lived experience peer researchers.

We are proud to collaborate with a host of universities and other research organisations and to partner with a growing group of strategic partners such as **Churchill Fellowship, Newcastle University** and the **Thomas Coram Research Unit** and **University College London**.

Key themes and areas for research and development include:

- Childcare and family support
- Securing wellbeing
- Increasing stability and securing permanence
- Tackling social and school exclusion
- Mobility and migration
- Participation and practice
- Data, diagnostics and results

Our independent policy-ready research, young people's campaigns and public programme will complement the work of organisations dedicated to the welfare of children and add unique value as the only dedicated think and do centre for children

The centre is dedicated to child-centred, rigorous research which is grounded in children and young people's lived experience, insight and social action through Voices in Action programme and Future of Youth Forum informing and inspiring research, stories and campaigns to bring about change.



# Partnership in progress

## International influence

The **Coram International** team of socio-legal researchers works with governments around the world, including **UN bodies and agencies** and multiple partners to inform and inspire realisation of children's rights set out in the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child** and support the **Sustainable Development Goals**.

Our expertise embraces child protection, child care, child justice, education, online abuse and exploitation and ensuring that children's voices are heard and heeded.

Together we champion the rights of the child to non-discrimination (Article 2), to have their best interests taken as a primary consideration (Article 3), to life, survival and development (Article 6), and to be heard (Article 12).

"I believe the Coram Institute for Children is uniquely able to bring together those who can make a difference in children's lives today and set a new agenda for the children of tomorrow."

Professor Sir Al Aynsley-Green  
Kt, FRCP, FRCPE, FRCPCH, FMedSci, FRSA

## Innovation Incubator

The **Coram Innovation Incubator** builds capacity and creativity of children's social care by tackling issues in partnership across sectors.

Founding partners in the Innovation Incubator include **Microsoft, Ernst & Young, PA Consulting** and local authorities of **Bromley, Redbridge, North Yorkshire, Hertfordshire** and **Havering** with sector partners **Barnardo's** and **Grosvenor**.

More details of how organisations can be a part of this and the Innovation INSET programmes for individuals can be found at [coram-i.org.uk/coram-innovation-incubator](https://coram-i.org.uk/coram-innovation-incubator).

## CASE STUDY

### Innovation in partnership

North Yorkshire Council, supported by the Coram Innovation Incubator, partners at Microsoft, and funded by the Department for Education's Children's Social Care Digital and Data Solutions Fund, is exploring how a technology solution can help to search and analyse data across different sources so that social workers can access all the key information they need about a child at the click of a button.

The team will use analytics tools to map the important people and places in a child's life, helping to identify those who can help to keep a child safe and those who may pose a risk. This will enable social workers to take better, proactive decisions to protect local children.



## New chapter in the story

The **Coram Institute** will be hosted at the Coram Campus, birthplace of children's social care, and now home to 12 members of the Coram group and eight other children's sector organisations.

This is the place where colleagues can collaborate and co-create at the heart of the Institute and where the story of services for children unfolds through young people's creative projects.

Our goal is to open the first phase of the new facility in 2025, coinciding with the 50th anniversary of the creation of the **Voice for the Child in Care**, now **Coram Voice** and publication of the digital archive.

At its heart is the **Voices through Time: Story of Care** programme, supported by the National

Lottery Heritage Fund, enabling young people to reclaim their history, explore the stories of the past and present in our **Foundling Hospital Archive** and to drive change for the future through our **Voices in Action** programme.

The **Coram Story Centre** will also host our **Library of Care** including specialist collections from the **CoramBAAF** resource library and the **Bright Spots Practice Bank** to the **Innovation Collective**, and **Children England** resources.

A new Studio Café is being created as a collaboration space for professionals and young people, and we particularly thank the **Pears Foundation** and **Peter Brown** for their early support of the capital development.



# How we will work together

Achieving our aims will require cross-sectoral and cross-governmental approaches and the Institute is designed to further this collaboration and commitment through its research impact, innovation, practice development and young people's impact on policy and public understanding.

Our stakeholders are diverse, united by a passion for improving children's lives:

- Senior leaders in the education, health and care sectors
- Academics, research organisations and researchers
- Local and national governments
- Children and young people and all who work with them
- Children's social care providers
- The wider private and charity sectors
- The media and public policy and opinion formers

Our governance structure is a collaboration of founders, partners, and experts. We are committed to transparency, accountability, and responsible stewardship and together we will provide the direction and leadership to create lasting change.

The development of the Coram Institute for Children is overseen by a dedicated committee accountable to the Coram board of trustees as we build collaborative platforms and approaches.

**Ade Adetosoye CBE** is Chief Executive of the London Borough of Bromley, Coram trustee and SOLACE lead for children and young people.

**Professor Sir Ivor Crewe DL FAcSS** is former Vice Chancellor of the University of Essex, former Master of University College, Oxford and President of the Academy of Social Sciences. He guides the development of our Academic Advisory Council and appointment of Founding Fellows.

**Professor Dame Carolyn Hamilton DBE** is Professor Emeritus of children's rights and Director of Coram International, working with UN bodies and governments in socio-legal development.

**Dr Carol Homden CBE** is Group Chief Executive, chair of Diabetes UK and board member of the Association of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services.

**Andrew Ireland** is Former Director of Children's Services for Kent County Council.

**Professor Jonathan Portes** is Professor of Economics and Public Policy at King's College London and former Chief Economist of the Cabinet Office, trustee of Coram Children's Legal Centre and chairs the Ethics Committee.

**Max Stanford** leads Coram's Impact and Evaluation team conducting mixed methods research working with dedicated policy and practice specialists.

**Dr Judith Trowell** is a Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, former chair of A Voice for the Child in Care, and founder of Young Minds.

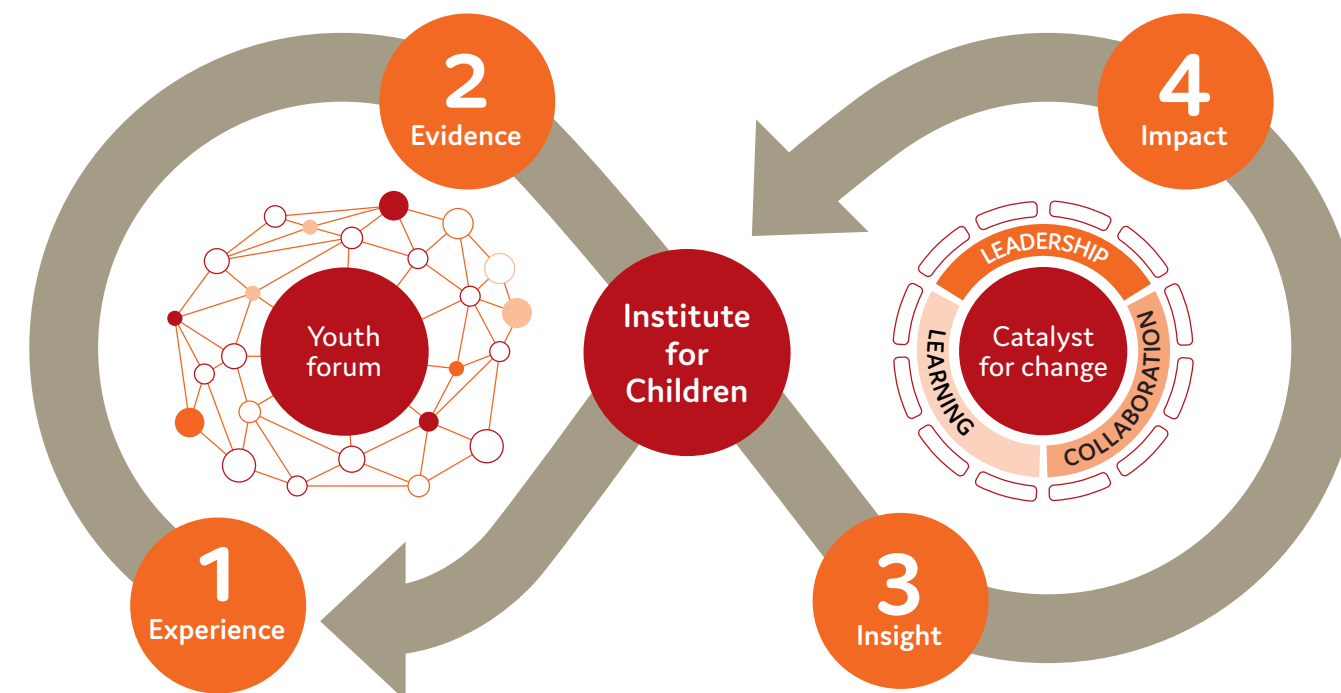
## Youth Forum convenors

The co-production in this process is being advanced by the development group of Anthony Lynch and Zoe Lambert (left) and Milly Jonas.



Professor Sir Ivor Crewe

The Coram Institute for Children will advance our unwavering commitment to making positive change happen, building on nearly three centuries of support for our most vulnerable children.



## Support to the Institute

To launch and sustain our vision and goals for the Institute we will continue to appeal to supporters, partners and the wider public who share our determination to secure the resources needed to establish the Institute and help drive change for children over the next three centuries.

We are participating in the **Anthropy** movement of organisations advancing shared principles of sustainable leadership and are grateful to **Bain & Company**, **Highgate** and all corporate partners and sector allies who are helping us in this development.

To help grow our research capability and find more opportunities in key areas, we will work towards accreditation as a recognised research institute, eligible for UK Research and Innovation funding.

## Play your part

There will be a series of round tables to help shape and guide the Institute development. Organisations, leaders and allies who would like to contribute should contact our Group Head of Corporate Affairs at [caitlin.kennedy@coram.org.uk](mailto:caitlin.kennedy@coram.org.uk)

Individuals can join us in this journey, by registering for the Coram Society and Future of Youth programme events, lectures, conferences and discussions at [events@coram.org.uk](mailto:events@coram.org.uk)

**Together, we can create better chances for children, now and forever.**

**"How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world."**

Anne Frank

