

**"TO BRING ABOUT THE
CHANGE WE NEED WILL
TAKE MORE THAN ONE
PARLIAMENT, MORE
THAN ONE SECTOR
AND MORE THAN ONE
GENERATION."**

coram | better chances
for children
since 1739

Charter for Children

**A call for change for the
next generation**





"THE TRUE CHARACTER OF A SOCIETY IS REVEALED IN THE WAY IT TREATS ITS CHILDREN"

NELSON MANDELA

Children's lives are significantly better than when Thomas Coram set up this charity in 1739.

However, after decades of progress, it is clear that, on a range of metrics, life is no longer getting better for all our children and young people.

Too many young lives are blighted by poverty and, every day, there are children and young people not getting the love, security, education and opportunity they need to thrive.

The pandemic and cost of living crisis have worsened existing trends and we need to turn the tide.

The Institute of Fiscal Studies* has reported the reduction in real value in the areas of public expenditure on which children depend over the last 20 years.

The triple lock on pensions introduced in 2010 has built economic security into the system for older people. We now need to give the youngest in society similar levels of security.

It is time for change – for our society to act as the parent it needs to be and ensure a just settlement for all generations.

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

2.3M CHILDREN LIVING WITH RISK

(Vulnerability Index, OCC)

*Source: childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/resource/public-spending-on-children/

A triple key for children

Coram presents the **Charter for Children** as a route map for the coming decade and beyond, calling for a realignment of the social contract between society children backed by three and key principles – **A fair share, A secure future and An equal chance.**

A triple key to unlock the future

A triple key of financial commitments prioritising children and young people will both deliver a more just society and unlock the potential of the next generation.

Taken together, the estimated cost of the triple key by the end of the decade is between £16.2 billion and £17.7 billion per annum at current prices, between 0.6 and 0.7% of our joint national income, significantly less than a penny in the pound.

The Charter's calls depend on a new funding settlement, additional to existing expenditure as well as commitments not yet fully enacted, such as funding of childcare reform and implementation of the recommendations of the independent review of children's social care.

The total cost would build up progressively over time so the average annual increase in public spending would be in the region of £2 billion per annum.

We could of course go further and faster, but this is what it would take to provide what we believe are the fundamentals needed to ensure we nourish, educate and provide stability for our children, upholding children's rights in our society.

A fair share

... of the nation's resources so all children and young people can develop skills for the future, built on:

- **A guarantee** that per-pupil in school and early education spending rises in line with the size of the economy;
- **Reform of childcare**, implementing current commitments and enabling all children to access high quality early education targeting areas of shortage;
- **Fair benefits** - automatic increases in child-related benefits in line with whichever is higher of earnings or prices, benefits for young people leaving care to match those paid to over 25s, all children in any size of family to be eligible for benefits, and no child left without recourse to public funds;
- **Timely access** to high quality and consistent special educational needs (SEND) and mental health support no matter where.

A secure future

Ensuring all children have a loving home, with the stability, resources and support they need to be healthy and happy:

- Introduction of a **home school register** for all children educated at home and a **single unique identifier** for all children, to enable agencies to share information and enable better safeguarding and support;
- **Extension** of free school meals as a minimum to all primary school children and all secondary pupils on Universal Credit;
- **Focus on what matters to children** – timely decisions, making them safe and settled where they live, and enjoying trusting relationships.

An equal chance

Irrespective of age or background children and young people deserve access to justice and to have their voice heard:

- Raising of the **Early Years Pupil Premium** so it matches the per-hour rate of the Pupil Premium for school-aged children and benefits for young people leaving care to match over 25s;
- Abolition of the common law defence of **reasonable punishment** with regard to the corporal punishment of any child in England;
- Free **legal advice** and representation for all children and young people when they need it.

What it will take

It means undertaking **Child Impact Assessments** to check the consequences for children and young people of any government policies. A **Cabinet Minister for Children** leading and measuring this cross-government commitment would ensure successive governments are held to account.







Our own commitment to bringing about this change is by establishing the **Coram Institute for Children** as the first Think and Do centre dedicated to fulfilling the vision set out in this Charter, working with partners to achieve it.

To find out more how you can help make change happen, visit www.coram.org.uk/institute or contact institute@coram.org.uk



coram

better chances
for children
since 1739

-  coram.org.uk/charter
-  @Coram
-  Coramsince1739
-  coram.uk
-  Coramsince1739
-  Coram

Coram Campus
41 Brunswick Square
London WC1N 1AZ

Tel: 020 7520 0300

Registered Charity no: 312278

**“WE HONOUR THOSE WHO
WALKED SO WE COULD RUN.
WE MUST RUN SO OUR
CHILDREN SOAR.”**

PRESIDENT OBAMA