



coram

better chances
for children
since 1739

A fair chance in life

Ensuring children know their
fundamental rights and can get access
to justice today

Autumn Newsletter 2026

Dear Friends,

It's been a busy time at Coram. A lot has happened since our last newsletter six months ago, but I'll do my best to fill you in.

The big news was the release of our latest impact report, which outlined several historic milestones, including Coram's growing influence on national policy and our expanded reach to children and families. In numbers, this included half a million visitors using Coram's Child Law Advice Service for issues ranging from school admissions to family arrangement orders, with trained legal advisers supporting 12,000 clients by telephone, email and webchat.

Coram Children's Legal Centre welcomed the restriction of social media access for under-16s from a child rights perspective, published a report on the rise and impact of school exclusions and responded to the government's proposals to reform the special educational needs and disabilities system.

What do these all have in common? They are all vital examples of how children's legal rights and protections impact on their ability to explore the world around them, to learn and flourish.

As the Managing Director of Legal Practice and Children's Rights, my guiding principle is ensuring children can realise their rights and enabling them to get access to justice. This means fighting for children's rights one child at a time through advice and casework services. We also publish findings to shine a light on the legal issues facing our most vulnerable children and young people, respond to policy informed by young people's perspectives and engage with government in order to positively influence policy change for all children and young people.

Behind the findings and recommendations in our reports lies our extensive advice and casework experience working directly with children and young people. Achieving even incremental policy changes can have lasting real-life consequences that help children around the country during challenging times. That's why you are essential to helping us on this mission and why we need your support more than ever.

I thank you for your support and hope you find this newsletter a useful way to highlight the work we are doing, and will continue to do, to ensure that every child has a fair chance in life.

Rosalyn Akar Grams,

Managing Director of Legal Practice and Children's Rights



It takes a village to raise a child

Hello and welcome to our Autumn Newsletter for 2026.

There's the old proverb that it takes a village to raise a child and, in many ways, Coram is the perfect example of that. Within our group of charities, we have Coram Adoption which provides a stable loving home for the child. Coram Voice helps give the child a platform to be heard. And Coram Beanstalk allows the child a chance to develop essential skills for the future.

This is just the tip of the iceberg, but since we are unable to spotlight the outstanding work of every single charity within Coram inside this 16-page newsletter – we will be highlighting Coram Children's Legal Centre. As you will have read from the introduction, giving children a fair chance in life is one of our guiding missions here, and we want to give you an insight into some of this life-changing work. The village



itself is changing rapidly in a world that feels both more connected and more demanding than ever before.

That is why we still rely on your continued support, without which we wouldn't be able to do anything. So, on behalf of those you have helped, we want to sincerely thank you and show you what you have helped us achieve and what you can help us with in future.

Contents:

- 4-5 Our most impactful year (so far!)
- 6-7 Macfarlanes raise over £290,000
- 8-9 Coram Children's Legal Centre
- 10-11 September: back to school, not square one
- 12-13 Children finding their Voices
- 14 Welcoming Coram Family Lives
- 15 Remember a Charity Week
- 16 Looking ahead to Christmas



Our most impactful year ...so far

June saw the publication of our impact report for 2025/2026 covering the work carried out last year to help children from infancy to independence.

Thanks to your support, we achieved several historical milestones, including reaching more children and families than ever before and increasing impact in national policy.



We would love you to read the report – information on that below – to see the full impact of our work and how your generosity has changed lives. We are particularly proud to include the fact that 230,000 children, young people and carers were directly supported by us over the last year.

Our wide-ranging work includes reaching over half a million children who benefitted in schools thanks to our curriculum resources. Nearly two million people utilised our digital information available online, and we gave support to thousands of adoptive families. From our policy influencing experts at Coram Children's Legal Centre to the life-changing people working at Coram Adoption to our inspirational team at Coram Voice and every other corner of Coram, they all ensured we made it our most impactful year ever.

You can read the full impact report at coram.org.uk.

Looking to the future

At Coram, we're always looking to the future and what steps we can take to help the next generation of children who face unprecedented challenges. We may have had a year full of historic milestones, and we love talking about the lives changed, all made possible by you, but there is still a lot of work to be done.

Too many young lives are being blighted by poverty, inequality and violence with little access to the stability, skills

and opportunities afforded to so many others. Millions of children and young people are at risk, with hundreds of thousands in care and thousands waiting for adoption. But here's what we have vowed to do to support them:

- 1. Sustain and innovate in our services:** We shall reach more children and families than ever before with a focus on what matters most in their lives.
- 2. Mark the centenary of adoption:** We shall publish a special edition of Adoption & Fostering Journal with research, archives and more dedicated to adoption.
- 3. Modernise practices:** We shall support member agencies to ensure every child gets the right decision and right placement for them.
- 4. Champion fostering reforms:** We shall support the creation of regional care co-operatives and secure lasting relationships for young people in and leaving care.
- 5. Undertake groundbreaking research:** We shall develop data standards, make a difference to policy and undertake vital research to advocate for young people.
- 6. Enhance access to early education:** We shall launch further Coram SCARF resources so children can achieve good development and skills for the future.

Macfarlanes raise over £290,000 for Coram



We wanted to share how an outside law firm has made an incredible difference. We're delighted to announce that law firm Macfarlanes have raised over £290,000 for Coram in just under a year.

Since announcing us as their Charity of the Year in October 2025, the team at Macfarlanes have worked tirelessly to raise money for all areas of Coram. This kicked off with a Great Macfarlanes Bake Off, which saw the staff baking a variety of sweet treats, judged by a young person from Coram Voice, which raised over £1,200.

Trading biscuits for bikes, fourteen members of staff successfully took part in Club Peloton's challenging 100km ride through the scenic Chiltern Hills to raise an incredible £2,500 for us. And then there were the big ones: the London Landmarks Half Marathon and the London Marathon. Fifteen runners took part in both events and, despite

the unusually hot conditions, managed to raise a staggering £30,000.

However, Macfarlanes have not just given their money but their time to help our children and young people at Coram. The staff have generously spent their free hours reading with young people in local schools as part of our Coram Beanstalk Regular Reading Volunteers. One of the teachers noted the incredible impact of the programme on the children:

"Thank you so much for your support this term. The children look forward to their reading sessions with you every week and all the teachers have reported an improvement in their reading."

Happy Hour was another way Macfarlanes raised money, by encouraging their staff to donate an hour (or more) of their salary in July. As for what Macfarlanes have planned next, there are plenty of ways they

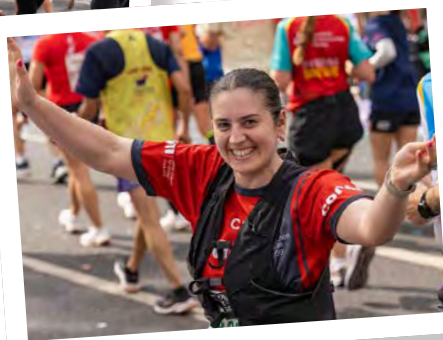
will be supporting us. September will see City Giving Day, an event where companies celebrate and encourage volunteering, and Macfarlanes will be hosting a Coram Beanstalk Readathon alongside a number of other activities to support Coram. And to kick off next year, another brave ten Macfarlanes staff members will run the gruelling 26.2 miles for 2027's London Marathon.

Over the intervening time, some of our teams, including Coram Kidscape and Coram SCARF, will also deliver some interactive Lunch and Learn sessions for Macfarlanes staff, focusing on how parents can support children and young people. Themes will include bullying, online safety and mental health which are cornerstones of Coram's support for children and how parents can do so themselves.

We thank Macfarlanes, and you, for supporting Coram in whatever way you do so. If you're interested in getting your organisation involved, you can nominate Coram as your next charity partner. Please contact Ghadeer, Head of Corporate partnerships at ghadeer.shawareb@coram.org.uk to find out more.

Macfarlanes' generosity has been an unforgettable part of Coram's year, and we'd like to thank them for everything. Whether it was baking banana bread, putting on some Lycra and getting on their bike, taking those first daunting runs to train for the marathons or giving up their lunch hour to read with some young people.

We hope this has inspired you on a few simple ways to support young people around the country. This could be as simple as heading to our donation page, as challenging as entering our London Landmarks Half Marathon (turn to the back page for that), as inspired as fundraising at your own work with a delicious bake off inspired event, or as generous as giving an hour here or there to help children read as a Coram Beanstalk volunteer.



Coram Children's Legal Centre: leading the way for more vulnerable children than ever before

This last year has been a banner year for Coram Children's Legal Centre (CCLC). It saw an increasing impact in national policy, and more children and families supported than ever before. Half a million online visitors sought help from CCLC for a range of reasons, from school admissions to special educational needs, with 12,000 individual clients receiving support in one form or another.

Coram has been central on the national stage in the shaping of and reaction to policy which seeks to protect the most vulnerable children in society. This has included working on the consequences of the government's plans around immigration for migrant children. This has also manifested itself in the form of a groundbreaking report on the impact of school exclusions on children and welcoming reforms on social media access for under-16s from a young person's perspective. More information on these particular policies on pages 10 to 11.



As Rosalyn noted in her introduction to this newsletter, fighting for children's rights begins one child at a time through advice and casework services. Whether that be fighting for a young person who is not being properly looked after in squalid accommodation or ensuring a mother of a young child is granted indefinite and not temporary leave to enter the country, these are all cases that CCLC have successfully won.

We heavily encourage you to read more about these stories on our website but we would like to share one in particular with you with her permission. Lucy is one courageous young person who reached out to our senior solicitor for support and we were fortunate enough to be able to help. Here is her story...



Lucy's story

Lucy* was 15 years old when she turned to CCLC for support. She had been forced to leave her family home, with nowhere to go, and had been misadvised on the duties of her local authority to give her accommodation and support. This situation was having a huge impact on her mental health.

Kelly Everett, senior solicitor at CCLC, represented Lucy in challenging her local authority. As a result, Lucy secured accommodation and support and was provided with time to rebuild her life. She describes the legal advice she received as "incredible".

Lucy says: "I had a lot of childhood trauma. I ended up in a very uncomfortable place with children's

social care, and Coram helped me with all of my issues and to get the outcome that I needed. Kelly helped me...and gave me the confidence that I needed to stand my ground. She gave me reassurance that what I was asking for wasn't unreasonable. Feeling safe and feeling happy – that's not too much for any child to ask for."

Lucy is just one of many vulnerable children and young people that CCLC helps every year. As the leading source of free legal information, advice and representation across community care, education, immigration and family law, this is an essential service to ensure many can have a fair chance in life.





September: back to school but not back to square one...

September is the time children head back to school, and Coram has been working on policy in two areas affecting school children across the country.

The online world's impact

Coram has welcomed the government's announcement of social media restriction for under-16s, while flagging the need for careful development. There is evidence linking social media use to poor mental health and exposure to harmful content, a key reason to develop the policy fully. This major policy, alongside the recent report carried out by Coram, concerning growing up in the online world, has made clear that protecting children online is no longer a marginal issue.

It is a national priority. As Coram has long argued, childhood is being reshaped by digital environments in ways that are

not always visible, but are deeply felt in classrooms, homes and communities.

This is a moment of opportunity.

By acting decisively, and by placing children's development at the centre of policy, we can ensure that the online world supports, rather than undermines, their health and wellbeing so that they have better outcomes in the future.

School exclusions: a last resort

CCLC's Report into school exclusions offers an insight into how discrimination often lies at the heart of this measure. To showcase these findings and the need for further reports to prevent unnecessary school exclusions, we have highlighted some stories.

Sam's story

Sam* is 16 and in year 12, attending the sixth form attached to an academy school. He has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) outlining his diagnosis of autism, communication needs and a learning disability. His parents sought advice through CCLC's Child Law Advice Service after Sam started demonstrating new behaviours which led to someone getting hurt.

Sam's parents approached the school to try to negotiate the support outlined in Sam's EHCP, which was still not in place eight months in. Sam's parents were both told that the school may not be able to meet his needs and that he is at risk of permanent exclusion. Following a challenge by an advocate at a reintegration meeting

following a suspension, support was finally arranged, but the attitude of the school has since hardened, and the threats of permanent exclusion are becoming more frequent.

Sam's parents now feel that the head teacher is applying pressure on them to pull him from school of their own accord to avoid a permanent exclusion on his record. The parents would like to challenge the support provision but are afraid to do so due to the repeated threat of exclusion. Sam would like to stay at the school, but his parents are afraid to let him stay and are seeking alternative provision. They don't want to pull him out of school before a suitable alternative has been found, but fear this is the likely outcome.

Charlie and Abdullah's story

Charlie* is 14 years old and is autistic. Abdullah* is 15 years old, is autistic and has attention deficit disorder (ADD). Both have EHCPs. Both are Black and eligible for free school meals. Both Charlie's and Abdullah's head teachers made the decision to permanently exclude but then, prior to governing board review, cancelled the decision.

Very soon after the cancellation of the permanent exclusion, both Charlie and Abdullah were directed off-site without a timeframe for return. Both Abdullah and Charlie were denied the

scrutiny and right to challenge that are part of the permanent exclusions process; both were nevertheless effectively excluded. These cases will not appear in official DfE data, masking the reality of exclusion practices and denying parents the opportunity for procedural fairness.



Children finding their Voices

July saw a special tenth anniversary event of the Voices competition, run by Coram Voice, which celebrated the incredible writing of care-experienced children and young people.

The special night saw incredible performances of stories, poems and songs, all selected from across a decade's worth of entries. Unfortunately, space prevents us from sharing all 1,000+ entries we received since 2016, but we would love to share a few excerpts from the eight winners at the celebration night itself:

Does My Height Matter?

I put on a pair of my big shoes and
stand up tall and straight
Then look them in the kneecaps and
their bad behaviour, I won't tolerate.
I suppose a lot has happened in my
short history
Lots of stormy weather, combined with
'choppy' seas
But I can see land ahead and sunny
skies there too
Cos I'm as BIG as anyone and that
means as big as you!

Adam Conway, age 11



My Voice:

A Journey from Silence to Song

Adoption has taught me that belonging isn't about blood or DNA. It's about heartbeats—the ones we share and create. My voice is the sound of love that has carried me through every question and moment of fear. Today, I stand not as someone lost, but as someone found. This is my voice—a voice that speaks of love, the questions I ask, and the strength I've found in the spaces between silence and sound. A voice that tells the world I am whole, I belong, and I will always be heard.

Elizabeth Lydon De Miguel, age 12

My First Match

I'm rocking new Nikes,
Goalie trying to psych me,
Wanna tackle – try me,
Bang – top bins – bite me,
She's the loudest in the crowd,
Cheering me on proud,
Goal allowed,
I dabbled and bowed,
Man of the match I am crowned!

Jamie Davies, age 9



Different?

Adopted, different, short, they say,
In my uniqueness, I find my way.
So let them judge, let them
misunderstand,
For in my heart, a strength so grand.
I am different, a melody untold,
In my story, a brilliance unfolds.

Mali Charles, age 8

What makes me different?

For years I knew difference as
something to fear,
To fear all the bullies and the stories I'd
hear.
But time has flown by and I'm a new
person,
This new person I am, can say
completely certain.
That difference is no longer something
I fear,
It's something I welcome, now that I'm
here.

Evan Amery, age 17

at last, he speaks

at last, he speaks,
and healing comes slowly and painfully
and all at once – he is 17 and is just
beginning to know
what home means, or gentle touch
at last, he speaks, and he finds peace in
the embers of a massacre
at last, he speaks.

Mateo Santiago Maurera, age 17

Let me check that with Mike

The top of the hill is where I wish to
stand
as I make my journey and I follow my
plan
I feel myself sinking deep at times
but I catch, I latch, I hold on to what I
know which keeps me inline.
Team after team dream after dream;
you see me but you don't listen.
You've got guidelines and cash pots
that glisten.

Nathan Henville, age 20

The Girl Behind the Glass

I reached out to a girl I saw
Ravaged skin and defeated air
Her hand joined mine upon the glass
Rush of heart ache merged to beat
And a flash of recognition
I look up to a girl I see
Reclaimed body and affectionate gaze
Familiar face in the glass
She nods "we're okay, go on your way"
And I smile at my reflection

Sophia Alexandra Hall, age 21

Coram Family Lives, one of the newest members of the Coram family

Coram Family Lives joined us in April 2026 but has been running for over 50 years to ensure that all families have somewhere to turn to before they reach crisis point. Whether it be family breakdowns, navigating complex relationships and nurturing wellbeing, they offer vital free support via phone call, WhatsApp, email or live chat.

Some eye-opening insights into families under pressure

Coram Family Lives recently revealed in its latest report that families based across England and Wales are reaching crisis point before seeking help. The data shows there has been a noticeable rise in challenging behaviour among children towards parents. This is one such story...

Mark's story

Mark* contacted Family Lives through WhatsApp to ask for advice and emotional support related to the verbally aggressive behaviour of his 15-year-old daughter, Lily*.

Mark and his partner feel worn down and unable to cope with the constant conflict. The atmosphere in the household is tense, and the younger

children are becoming anxious and distressed, describing home as "like walking on eggshells." The family support worker (FSW) provides Mark with a calm, non-judgemental space to talk openly about what is happening at home.

Practical guidance is given on setting clear, consistent boundaries, responding to verbal aggression safely, and reducing conflict in the home. The FSW also refer him and his partner to the free online parenting course on challenging behaviour in teens from Family Lives. Mark reports feeling less overwhelmed and more hopeful after the call. He feels better equipped to respond to Lily's behaviour in a calmer and more structured way.

He feels confident that together they can introduce clearer boundaries and communication strategies at home, which will help to reduce daily conflict. Mark also feels reassured that the situation is not his fault and that support is available. The conversation helps him regain confidence and take steps towards restoring a safer, more stable family environment. He intends to register for the online course.

If you have been affected by any of these issues, or would like support, you can reach Coram Family Lives via their website or message via WhatsApp on **07441 444125**. Read the full Families Under Pressure: The State of Family Life report at www.coram.org.uk



Remember a Charity Week: 7-13 September 2026

Doris is a Coram Charter Patron who has also remembered Coram in her Will. She told us about her decision to support Coram in both these hugely impactful ways: 'I was a Coram kid myself! I was born during the war, and my mother took me to Coram when I was six months old as she wasn't able to look after me.

I was adopted at aged 7 and I believe I was one of the first ever children to be adopted by their foster parents. I will always be grateful to Coram for giving me the start I had; I've gone on to live a very happy life. I choose to support Coram both as a Charter Patron now, and with a gift in my Will for the future,

because to me it is totally, totally logical, necessary and personal. I see it as my turn now to help others who are in the same boat I was in as a young child.'

Your gifts enable us to give children a fair chance in life, provide them with a voice that's heard, teach them skills for the future, and ultimately ensure they have a loving stable home. That's why we want to say thank you, not only for your generosity, but for your trust in Coram to carry forward your values and compassion. Every gift, large or small, is a powerful statement of hope and belief in a better future for children who need it most.

If you are considering leaving a gift to Coram in your Will, or would like to take advantage of our free Wills scheme, please get in touch with Rachael Corns on rachael@coram.org.uk or **020 7520 0306**, for more information.



Looking ahead to Christmas

It seems early to be thinking about Christmas, but with just a few months before the inevitable buildup begins, we wanted to leave you with this. Home is where the start is, for all children, and many across the country are either not receiving enough support at home or have no place to call home full stop. Here at Coram, that will be our focus over this Christmas: to ensure children have the stable loving home, relationships, therapeutic and family support they need to thrive.

We will be in touch about how your support can help us this festive period, but we would again sincerely like to take the time to thank you for everything you have done for Coram.

Join Team Coram for our 10th edition of the London Landmarks Half Marathon!

Alongside experiencing cultural landmarks and the city's hidden secrets, by joining Team Coram for our 10th edition of London Landmarks Half Marathon you will receive...

A personalised Coram 'Champion for Children' running vest, a motivating cheer point along the route, a post-race reception for you and up to four

loved ones, regular support from a dedicated member of the Challenge Events Team and more.

Apply with us today and create better chances for children tomorrow!

Date: **Sunday 4 April 2027**

Registration fee: **£30**

Minimum fundraising target: **£350**

To apply, please visit www.coram.org.uk/training-and-events/llhm/ and complete the application form.

Keep up to date through our channels:

Website: **coram.org.uk**

Facebook: **Coramsince1739**

Instagram: **Coram.uk**

Youtube: **Coram**

X: **Coram**

If you have any questions, please contact our supporter care team on

Tel: **020 7520 0330**

Email: **supportercare@coram.org.uk**

*Some images and names changed to protect identities

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