



Every child should be respected and protected

2018 marks the birth, 350 years ago, of Thomas Coram, England's first campaigner for children.

For 17 years Thomas Coram fought to give abandoned babies and children the protection and care they needed, lobbying until he was granted a royal charter to establish the first dedicated safe haven for them.

Today, Coram is proud to continue his vital work and to address the inequality and deprivation that continues to blight young lives.

We fight for children's rights. We find them permanent loving homes, we promote their voices, and we will not rest until every child is respected and protected.

Sign our pledge to show your support
pledge.coram.org.uk

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for children
since 1739


Digest of achievements 2017–2018




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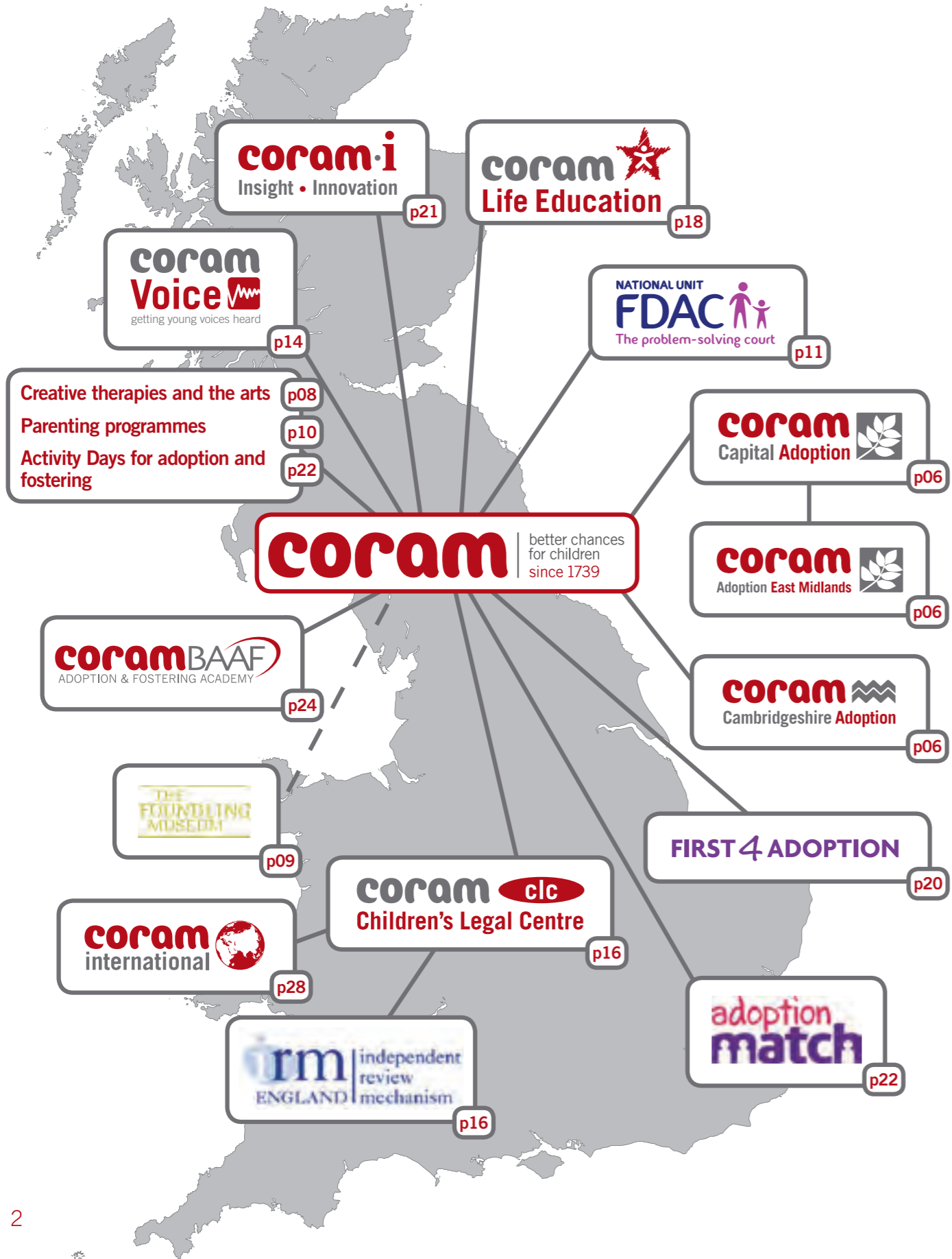
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Celebrating the 350th anniversary of the birth of Thomas Coram



Coram is the oldest and most innovative children's charity. We develop services that are the first and best of their kind, changing lives today and creating solutions for tomorrow. We assist those who are marginalised or at risk, and work with schools, local authorities, and young people themselves, to increase skills and build resilience and sustainability.



Better chances for children since 1739

During 2017-18, the Coram group has directly worked with more than 100,000 children, families and professionals, and benefitted more than one million others through specialist information and advice. To celebrate the 350th anniversary of the birth of Thomas Coram, Coram has called for all children to be *Respected and Protected*, identifying areas where change is needed and how we will realise the charity's vision that all children have the best possible chance in life.

"Thomas Coram believed that every single child has a worth and value that should be respected. It is a different era but the same important principles remain"
The Rt Hon Harriet Harman QC MP



The Rt Hon David Lammy MP and The Rt Hon Harriet Harman QC MP at the *Respected and Protected* launch in January 2018.

Digest of Achievements

This Digest of Achievements summarises the outcomes and progress during 2017-18, which has seen Coram extend its work across the UK and in 27 countries worldwide, with a particular focus on those who have experienced separation and loss, who are overlooked or dependent on the state for support.

The number of children in care proceedings is at an all-time high. This year Coram aims to ensure their voices will always be heard with the launch of the national advocacy safety net and by publishing the largest survey of their views on their own wellbeing.

Coram worked to advance early permanence by developing a new national quality mark, was instrumental in 11% of all adoptions, and worked with agencies to provide long term placements and improve practice.

Coram championed access to justice, including for unaccompanied and migrant children, ensured children can develop the skills they need to navigate the risks they face and contributed to the development of policy and legal systems.

Call for change

Respected and Protected was launched in January 2018, with a reception hosted by The Speaker of the House of Commons.

Distinguished leaders in human rights helped to make the case that more must be done. As Britain re-aligns its relationship to Europe and the world to realise the commitments of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Coram commits to:

- Strengthen the legal framework for children
- Ensure the voices of children are always heard
- Provide secure loving families for children who need them
- Realise access to justice for all children
- Make routes to permanent status fair and accessible
- Timely and sufficient PSHE and therapeutic support
- Tackle educational exclusion
- Build capacity and consistent quality in services.

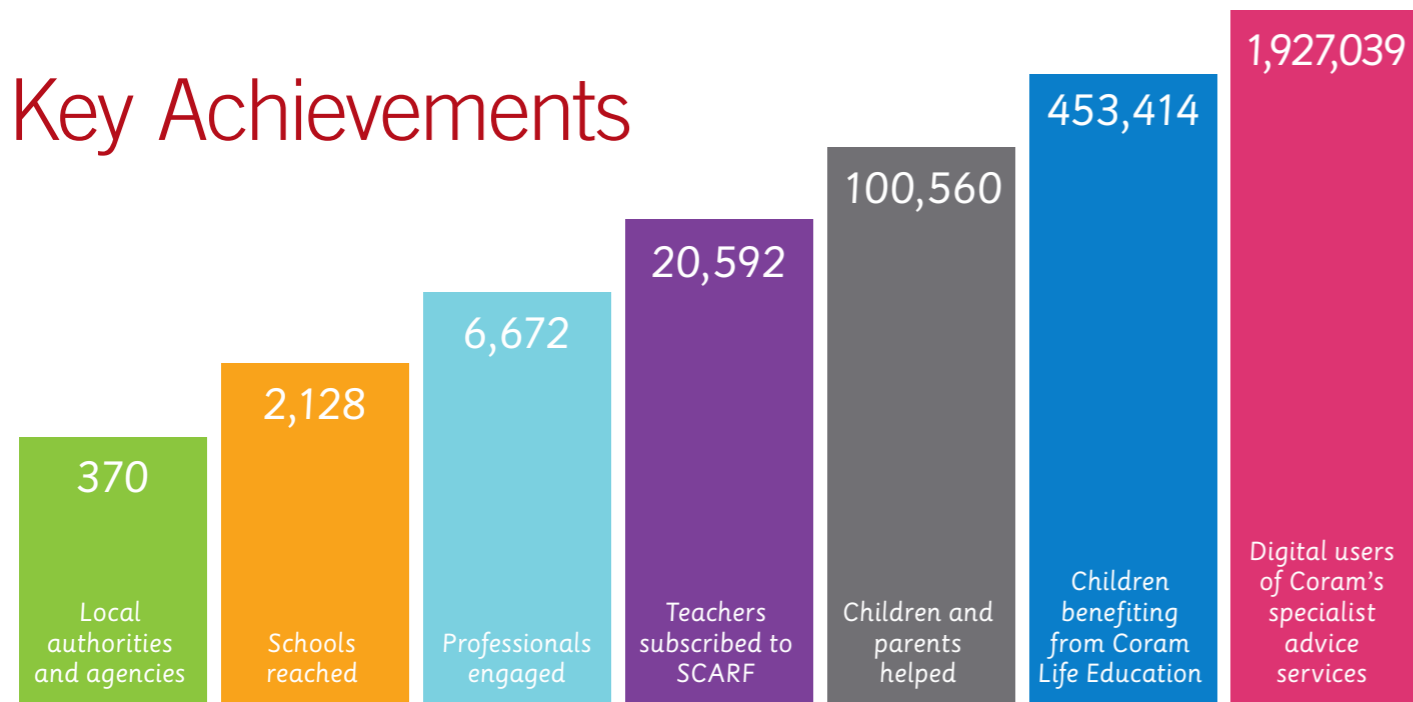
Looking ahead

In the coming year, Coram will celebrate the 350th anniversary of the birth of Thomas Coram, the first champion for children. Coram will publish a book to enable young people to reflect on the origins and development of their rights. The charity will debate issues that matter most to children and will work to stimulate a new revolution in children's social care, tackling the big issues that children face – continuity in positive relationships, educational engagement and identity.

Coram will open The Queen Elizabeth II Centre, creating better chances for children as a national centre of excellence, and will welcome new charity partners to Coram's regenerated historic campus in Bloomsbury, featuring:

- The Centre for Children's Rights ensuring access to justice is a reality for children
- The Story Centre to enable young people from care to tell their story
- The Centre for Impact to create sustainable solutions to improve the lives of children and young people.

Key Achievements



Securing access to justice, information and advice

Coram more than doubled the reach of its specialist information and advice services.

- The **Child Law Advice Service** exceeded its expected usage targets, with 1.5 million information pages downloaded by its online visitors.
- Coram's help and advice lines supported 27,700 telephone callers.
- **Coram Voice** launched **Always Heard**, the new national safety net that provided information and secured access to advocacy for nearly 10,000 children and young people in or leaving care.

- **CoramBAAF** provided specialist case advice to **1,800 professionals** and trained a further **2,700**.
- **First4Adoption** completed its five year contract with the Department for Education, having won the public sector **Digital Service Award**.

Achieving permanence for children and young people

Coram was instrumental in **11% of adoptions** in England and delivered or supported the adoption and fostering services of **10 local authorities**.

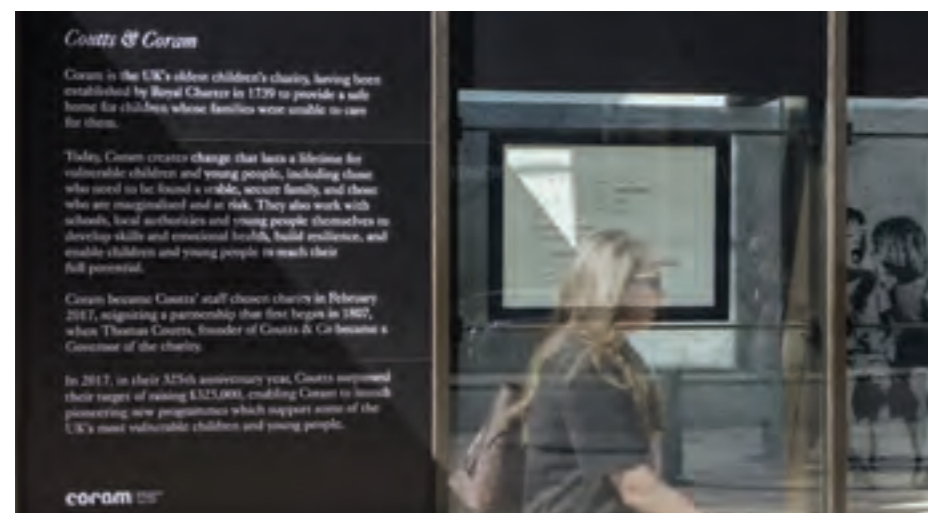
- **Coram Capital Adoption** was judged **Outstanding** in all categories by Ofsted, alongside **Coram Adoption East Midlands**.

- **Coram Cambridgeshire Adoption** exceeded its expected numbers and was awarded Good by Ofsted.
- **Kent Coram Adoption** support service won **Excellence in Practice** at the National Adoption Awards.
- Channel 4's **Finding Me A Family** documentary portrayed the work in finding families for children who wait the longest and achieved a remarkable **25% placement rate**.
- **Lorraine Wallis** of Coram East Midlands Adoption won **Adoption Support Practitioner of the Year** at the National Adoption Awards.
- **Adoption Match** secured adopter access to the National Adoption Register and increased direct matches for children waiting by **18%**.
- Coram is partnering with Harrow and four other local authorities to develop a **new regional adoption agency**.

Building support and sharing values in partnership

This year, our sustained multi-year fundraising partnerships included:

- **Club Peloton**, whose extraordinary cyclists have raised more than £1m over six years for Coram's work.
- **Coutts**, which is supporting Coram for two years, reflecting the historic link between the organisations.



Coutts showcased the Voices creative writing competition at the company's headquarters on the Strand as part of its ongoing partnership with Coram



HRH The Duke of Cambridge with Professor Dame Carolyn Hamilton, made Dame Commander of the British Empire for her service to children's rights in The Queen's Birthday Honours 2017 (PA Images)

Specialist practice and development resources

- **CoramBAAF** supported **1,132 members**, including **93%** of local authorities, and sold **32,000** books and publications.
- Coram group directly engaged **6,672** professionals in training.
- Coram Life Education launched the new **Relationships Education** programme, based on its national survey of headteachers, at the House of Lords.
- The new **Belonging Toolkit** and **The Adoptables** resources were accessed by over 500 schools.
- **Coram Cambridgeshire Adoption** developed training on the approaches to the assessment of siblings.
- **Coram-i** provided improvement partnerships with four local authorities.
- **Coram Centre for Early Permanence** launched a new **National Quality Mark** with an independent panel.
- Coram, with the Alan Turing Institute, developed **data visualisation** modelling to help inform local authority decision-making for children in care.

Influencing the future through policy and innovation

- **Our Lives, Our Care** examining subjective wellbeing was published by Coram Voice, the **largest-ever survey** of children and young people in care.
- Coram's work was cited six times in the **Fostering Review**, by Sir Martin Narey and Mark Owers, calling for the Bright Spots approach to be implemented nationwide for looked after children.
- Coram International's **Final Evaluation of the Justice for Every Child Project** was cited by UNICEF as one of the **best evaluations of the year**.
- Coram Children's Legal Centre published **Rights without Remedies** which reviewed the consequences of changes to legal aid and made recommendations to ensure that no child is left without access to justice.
- To inform early permanence practice, a **15-year longitudinal study** with families who adopted children through concurrent planning, was published.
- The Coram group conducted research on vulnerability for the **Children's Commissioner for England** and is now working with the **Children's Commission for Wales**.



Building new futures

- Construction continued for **The Queen Elizabeth II Centre**, a flagship centre of excellence for children, due to open early 2019.
- The **Centre for Impact** launched to build capacity and sustainability in the charity sector.
- The Voices writing competition for young people more than doubled its entries.
- 57 young people benefitted 60,000 others through the **Help, Advice and Legal Opportunity (HALO)** programme.

Quality Recognition

- **Investors in People Gold Award**
- **Ofsted 'Outstanding' for Coram Capital Adoption and East Midlands Adoption**
- **LEXEL accredited Legal Practice**
- **Department of Health Information standard (CLE)**
- **Accredited by the PSHE Association**
- **ISO27001 Accreditation**

Loving families that last

Each year there are around 4,000 children in England who, unable to grow up with their birth families, are adopted by loving, permanent families. Many of these children have been neglected or abused and will need devoted care to help them recover and thrive.

This year Coram agencies directly placed 107 children and, along with the charities wider national matching services, were instrumental in 11% of adoptions across England.

Excellence in practice

Coram Capital Adoption – which also provides adoption services for local authorities in Harrow, Redbridge, City of London and Thurrock – was again judged Outstanding in every category by Ofsted. There was particular praise for the London Adoption Support Gateway and impact nationally, as well as direct benefit to children and families.

Coram Adoption East Midlands developed its new concurrent planning service to support capacity for early placement in the region and extended the reach of its new Gateway for adoption support, providing case assessments to ensure children get the support they need.



For her work in young people's participation, Lorraine Wallis of Coram Adoption East Midlands won 'Adoption Support Practitioner of the Year' at the National Adoption Awards



Jeanne Kaniuk OBE with Dr John Simmonds OBE, Director of Policy, Research and Development at CoramBAAF and Dr Carol Homden CBE, Group Chief Executive

Outstanding leadership

After 38 years of service, Jeanne Kaniuk retired as Managing Director of Coram's Adoption services. Her achievements, which were recognised in a special reception attended by colleagues from across the sector, have included the pioneering of concurrent planning over 17 years, the first delivery of local authority adoption services, recognition for Lifetime Achievement in the National Adoption Awards and an OBE for services to children. Sarah Byatt, Managing Director of Coram Cambridgeshire Adoption, now assumes the management of the service.

Jeanne remains the Associate Director of the Coram Centre for Early Permanence and a member of the board of the Consortium of Voluntary Adoption Agencies.

Partnership working

Coram Cambridgeshire Adoption (CCA) was again rated 'Good' in all categories by Ofsted, which found that "partnership working is embedded into practice"



finding that the "collaboration with Cambridgeshire County Council is particularly effective in supporting prompt and good adoptive placements." CCA exceeded its expected level of adoptions and undertook ground-breaking work in identifying the best approach in practice to the difficult task of sibling assessments, producing well received training in this complex area.

Outstanding recognition

-  Coram Capital Adoption and Coram Adoption East Midlands rated 'Outstanding' in every category by Ofsted
-  Coram Cambridgeshire Adoption was rated 'Good' by Ofsted in every category
-  Kent Coram Adoption Support Partnership won the Excellence in Practice category in the National Adoption Awards

Leading the way in adoption support

Adoption Gateway

Launched in 2016 by Coram and other partners, the Adoption Support Gateway provides adoptive families with fast, easy access to a range of experts and programmes. Cited as "outstanding" by inspectors, it provides art and music therapy, mentalisation-based therapy and child and family psychology among a rich menu of programmes.

Parents and social workers who accessed the Gateway from September 2016 to August 2017 agreed it offered a seamless response. Great Ormond Street Hospital recently joined the Gateway offering an additional specialist referral pathway.

In the coming year the Gateway will extend its work with Special Guardians as well as adopters.



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Care For Me First

A new pan-London Practice Improvement project, Care For Me First, aims to improve early placement for young children by recruiting and preparing more approved carers for both fostering and adoption and by giving additional support through specialist groups. It also aims to improve access to services and enable early signs or issues – such as disrupted sleep or language development – to be addressed with psychotherapist input.

A pan-London referral process is building capacity of agencies and will be working with the adopter peer support network 'We Are Family' and local authorities. Some 500 carers and professionals are set to benefit.

Supporting schools

Many adopted young people tell us they experience difficulties in school. When and how do they tell their friends they are adopted? What happens if they do?

To address these questions, The Adoptables, Coram's national network of adopted young people, developed a new lesson plan. Downloaded 500 times this year, this resource helped schools and pupils understand more about the issues adopted children face.

Coram Adoption Cambridgeshire's training programmes on attachment and trauma supported 100 teachers in its region with schools often requesting multiple places and re-attendance and this will be offered more widely in the coming year.

National Quality Mark



Designed in consultation with local authorities and voluntary adoption agencies, the Early Permanence Quality Mark is a new standard of excellence awarded to adoption agencies in England wishing to achieve good practice in early permanence.

Initiated with support from the Department for Education's Practice Improvement Fund and developed by Coram, it is shaped by what agencies have said is important in child-centred practice. The award is independently moderated and CCS Adoption became the first agency to receive the award in March 2018.

Supporting national learning

The Coram Centre for Early Permanence (CCEP) works to advance practice to ensure more children can live with their potential permanent carers at the earliest possible stage of the care process.

The National Network, of local authority and independent voluntary agencies, last year placed more than 100 babies and young children in Fostering for Adoption.

This year the network benefitted from new materials, including films incorporating the testimony of early placements carers and from the publication of *Messages for Policy and Practice*, reporting on the tracking of the longitudinal outcomes from Coram's early placements over a 15-year period.

Next steps

Coram will continue to build on its successful adoption partnership approach as part of a new Regional Adoption Agency in the capital. Led by London Borough of Harrow, and including Redbridge, City of London, Bromley, Slough and Wandsworth councils, the agency aims to go live over the next two years.

Changing lives with the arts

Throughout its history, Coram has maintained a strong association with the arts, with the author Charles Dickens, artist William Hogarth and composer George Frideric Handel as early supporters.

Through the arts, Coram today supports hundreds of children to overcome adverse experiences, explore their identity and engage in education.

Coram's clinical team is pioneering the use of creative therapy projects to benefit children and young people and build evidence of their impact in changing young lives.

These programmes are made possible with thanks to the generous support of the Pears Foundation, as well as schools, commissioners, partners and other organisations.



Art therapy for at-risk or excluded young people

The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea has extended its contract with Coram to provide art therapy to young people aged 13-19, in or at-risk of being involved in the criminal justice system.

Over the past year, art therapists have worked with 18 young people through 1:1 and group sessions, to build confidence, self-esteem and resilience to prevent problems from evolving and having a lasting negative impact on their lives.

To help manage the transition between schools, Coram ran a combined art and music therapy programme for

students at a local pupil referral unit. Coram hosted *Tree of Life* workshops for Syrian refugee children and ran family workshops for refugee women.

Coram continued to provide art therapy in specialist schools in Camden to help address behavioural and communication difficulties. Working with young people who have been excluded from mainstream education, therapists aim to develop positive connections with peers and staff, and improve educational attainment and life chances for students.



“Coram played such an important role in her whole healing process”

Foster carer to a finalist in the *Voices* writing competition 2018

Developing positive relationships between babies and carers

Coram's senior music therapist has been running weekly groups to develop communication and attachment between babies and carers. The sessions aim to help parents develop positive relationships with their baby at an early stage, and have access to specialists, clinical input and advice without the perceived stigma of a child or family needing 'therapy'. The programme has enabled parents to progress to attend the evidence-based Incredible Years Parenting Group.

At the World Congress of Music Conference in Japan, Coram's senior music therapist presented a paper on Coram's early years preventative work, and music therapy, to delegates from around the world.



Illustration exploring 'identity' by an at-risk young person who attended Art Therapy

**“ I don't stand here asking for glory and fame
I merely stand here wishing to state my name
For I am not a statistic, I am not a number
I'm a young person who has the government as my mother ”**

Excerpt from *Let Me Just Check That With Mike* by Nathan, winner of care leaver category, *Voices* competition



Creative writing competition for children in care

The annual *Voices* writing competition celebrates the powerful and unique voices of children and young people in and from care.

This year, 203 children and young people entered the competition, more than doubling entrants from last year.

An esteemed panel of judges and host Peter Capaldi praised the young writers on their creative expressions of 'who or what makes you proud' at the awards ceremony held at Coutts.

The generosity of Coutts extended to having winning entries showcased in the Coutts window display, a prime location on The Strand, for one month.

Public Acts

In 2017, Coram was selected to partner with the National Theatre as part of its ground-breaking Public Acts programme that uses the arts as a force of change.

Over the first eight months of the partnership, the National Theatre has delivered a series of workshops with 16 to 25 year olds from groups supported by Coram's young people's programmes: young parents; adopted young people; care experienced young people; and young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds. The workshops have developed the young people's voice, storytelling and public speaking skills, as well as giving them confidence to speak out in their roles as Coram ambassadors.

These workshops will culminate in a production featuring performers from eight charities alongside a cast of professional actors, which will be performed on the National's Olivier stage in August 2018. The production will be a new adaptation of Shakespeare's *Pericles* written by Chris Bush, and directed by Emily Lim.

Recovery from trauma through sleep

A specific trauma intervention to help regulate sleep for migrant children and children in care was developed by a consultant systemic psychotherapist. Coram developed sleep packs to help migrant children experiencing sleep problems following their traumatic journeys.

In June 2018, Coram, with the Mayor of London's Peer Outreach Team, will present *Wherever I Lay My Head*, a play by award-winning writer Jamila Gavin, author of *Coram Boy*. Produced and performed by the National Youth Theatre, the play is based on the testimonies of unaccompanied teenagers who travelled or were trafficked to the UK from areas of conflict, arriving in Kent. The play will be hosted at City Hall.

Engaging the public in Coram's story

The Coram collection of art, including major works donated to the organisation by the artist William Hogarth and others, is displayed in Coram's historic home The Foundling Museum. This year, more than 46,000 visitors learned about Coram's heritage and development. Special exhibitions included *Picturing Hetty Feather*, a family-friendly exhibition exploring how Hetty Feather brought the history of the Foundling Hospital to life, and *Sea*, an exhibition by Jodie Carey responding to the textile tokens in the Coram archive.

Coram also played a key role in developing an understanding of children's rights with its exhibition, *Respected and Protected*, showcased at the Central Family Court. This exhibition captivated over 1,000 visitors including 800 school children, teachers and university students.

Enabling parents to support their children

Coram provides parents with the advice they need at all stages of parenthood. Our specialist training groups enable parents, foster carers and adopters to gain the skills and confidence they need to help their children thrive, from infancy to the teenage years. Our legal practice and advice lines provide vital information to parents in court proceedings or in addressing contact, residence and education issues.

If parents are struggling to cope, Coram offers early help so they can become empowered in providing a loving and secure environment for their children, or, if this is not possible, to ensure that a decision is made in an appropriate timescale for the benefit of the child.



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Early years in adoption

When children are adopted at a very young age, parents might need help in overcoming the impact of the early adversity their children have experienced. This is often difficult to access in mainstream settings.

Coram's 'stay and play' events are supported by a child psychotherapist to enable adopters to build suitable foundations for their child's development and access additional help if needs are identified.

Parenting for adopters

Coram offers parenting programmes tailored to the unique needs and ages of adopters and adopted children. Parents of children aged eight years or under took part in the Parenting Skills for Adopters programme, based on Webster-Stratton's Incredible Years, and parents of teenagers took part in STOP which aims to build trust and tackle the complexities of adolescence. 94% of attendees were satisfied with these programmes and 97% would recommend to a friend.

Young parents

Coram is a specialist in the support of young parents, enabling them to develop the skills needed to care for their baby and engage in education.

Coram's Young Parenthood peer education programme gives young parents the opportunity to raise awareness of their experience by delivering a personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education module in secondary schools. In the last year it reached 493 pupils, doubling its previous reach.

"FDAC supported me to be strong and brave enough to face my addiction"

FDAC Mother, 2017

Managing risk for children

Coram works in partnership with the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust to implement the Family Drug and Alcohol Court (FDAC). There are currently 10 specialist FDAC teams in the UK working with families and their professional networks to achieve better outcomes for children and families during care proceedings. By helping parents control substance misuse and other related problems, FDAC works at safely reuniting parents with their children. When this is not possible, it aims to ensure that parents feel they have been fairly treated in court proceedings. Research found FDAC to be more successful than ordinary proceedings in helping parents achieve abstinence.

In October 2017, the National Unit was awarded an 'in principle' grant from the

government's Life Chances Fund, supported by a Social Impact Bond, to work with 11 local authorities to develop a FDAC Outcomes Contract. As Sir James Munby, President of the Family Division stated in his 12th View from the President's Chamber: *"The FDAC approach is crucially important. The simple reality is that FDAC works... [it] is not merely the right thing for children and their families; as both experience and research shows, it actually saves money!"*

Since launching in 2015, the national FDAC community has:

- Worked with over **717** families, **1,105** parents, and **1,157** children.
- Established **10** specialist FDAC teams, working in **15** courts and serving families in **23** local authorities.



Child Law Advice

The Child Law Advice Service (CLAS) provides parents with legal advice and information on child, family and education law through its website and advice line. Parents were equipped with information on topics such as contacting a child in care, family mediation and accessing legal aid.

Over the past year, information pages on CLAS were downloaded over 1.5 million times and the advice line answered over 17,000 queries, with 100% of callers reporting they were satisfied with the advice received (see more on page 16).



Parenting service achievements in Thurrock

Since 2009, Coram has worked with Thurrock Borough Council to deliver a range of accredited parenting programmes and one-to-one parenting interventions. These focus on building parental and family resilience and strengthening family and community attachments.

In 2017 the service was successful in being awarded a further contract in Thurrock to continue the respected and valued work with parents and carers in this borough.

The new contract brought the parenting service together with a range of other services as part of the Brighter Futures agenda. The aim was to develop closer partnership working, with a view of providing a single entry point for a range of services for families who require assistance and support.



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This year, 117 parents in Thurrock took part in parenting programmes and/or received one-to-one support from Coram.

The service expanded by adding Incredible Years, a parenting skills course for those who had children under the age of eight years; STOP, a parenting programme for parents of teenagers; and Pit-STOP, a one-to-one version of STOP. It also continued its successful Mellow Parenting project, a 16-week intensive programme focusing on complex attachment issues and a parent's own childhood experiences.

Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities (SFSC)

SFSC is a 13 week preventative parenting programme for parents in Thurrock with children aged three to 18 years. This universal programme aims to increase parental self-esteem and achieve positive long-term changes in family relationships. Participants saw particularly significant benefits to their emotional wellbeing, with 86% of parents indicating improvement. Feedback from parents was consistently positive about the changes the programme had on their families.

Enabling young people to help others

Coram believes that young people can change their own lives and the world around them by taking social action as young ambassadors, peer educators and volunteers. By providing opportunities for volunteering and employment, Coram enables young people to further their own skills and access careers in law, advocacy, communications and social care. At the same time, it helps inform services for young people in need.

As a result of the generosity of The Queen's Trust support for the Help, Advice and Legal Opportunity (HALO) programme, young people continue to raise awareness on key issues and address the challenges facing adopted children, young parents and young migrants and refugees.



Young people engaging in a National Theatre workshop. (James Bellorini Photography)

LawStuff

LawStuff, the website that gives free legal information to children and young people was visited by 49,174 users this year.

Developed by a young editor volunteering as part of Coram's HALO programme, the website enables children to understand their rights and obligations.

66 young people went on to contact Coram Children's Legal Centre after receiving information about their rights and entitlements through LawStuff.



Police and law



At what age can I...



Online safety



Health and drugs

57 young people created a HALO effect for 60,000 others



"HALO has given me hope that young people out there in similar situations as me have a fighting chance"

HALO Youth Rights Trainer, Migrant Children's Project

The Adoptables

The Adoptables is a national peer network that provides a platform for young ambassadors aged between 13 and 25 years to address issues faced by adopted young people. Working alongside families and professionals, The Adoptables run workshops for prospective adopters, young people and parents.

This year ambassadors chose to address the lack of conversation online about adoption from a young person's point of view. Ambassadors created vlogs to start the conversation, raise awareness and provide an online peer support network for other adopted young people. They also provided social media training for parents.

The Adoptables is continuing to expand into new areas of England and the team their first alumni seminar. This was a great opportunity to showcase how they have developed over the last four years from a new initiative to an established network that works with nine local authorities and engages over 100 young people in local and national programmes.

Over the coming year, The Adoptables will expand further and support regional adoption agencies to include the perspective of adopted young people as they design their new agencies. The Adoptables also began to make connections with the Virtual Schools network, aiming to raise awareness adopted young people's schooling needs. This will be supported by the ongoing use of The Adoptables Schools Toolkit, which has been downloaded nearly 500 times since its release.

Young Citizens

Young Citizens is a vibrant and unique ambassador programme for young people, aged 16 to 25, from migrant and refugee backgrounds. The programme enables young people to co-produce and deliver solutions to the issues they face. With on-going training and support, they are given the skills and confidence to get their voices heard and effect change.

Young Citizens and specialist educators of Coram Life Education launched a new toolkit for schools. Through interactive activities and films, the lesson and assembly plans explore the theme of belonging. The resources are linked to Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) Association Learning Opportunities, including empathy for others and respect for diversity, and meet Citizenship and British Values requirements in the curriculum. To date, the toolkit has 316 subscribers, reaching approximately 4,740 students.

In 2018, Young Citizens' launched a project in partnership with professional photographer Arteh Odjidja. The portrait-based 'Stranger' series showcases the inspirational stories of young migrants and refugees.

The Young Citizens are developing a series of images to showcase their hopes, dreams and aspirations to challenge public perceptions and inspire children and young people from similar backgrounds. The photographs will be exhibited during Refugee Week in June 2018 and beyond.

HALO: Help, Advice and Legal Opportunity

Coram's innovative Help, Advice and Legal Opportunity (HALO) programme provides opportunities for skilled 16-25 year olds to help other young people. Now in its second year, this initiative has recruited 57 young people into roles across the charity, benefiting not only those young people but a further 60,503 people who would not otherwise have benefitted from Coram's vital work. Their roles included:

- Youth Rights Trainers who have direct experience of the immigration and care system. These trainers developed new courses on children's rights and co-delivered training to 193 practitioners.
- Care experienced Peer Researchers, who developed and circulated Coram Voice's Bright Spots survey, measuring the wellbeing of children in care and care leavers.
- Volunteer advisors in the Child Law Advice Service and Coram Voice advice lines. These volunteers provided direct support to 2,403 additional children and young people.
- A Trainee Solicitor who has delivered direct legal support in community care and educational law cases, supporting approximately 102 children to receive the rights they are entitled to.
- Seven interns placed within the professional environment of Coram.



Rakiba's story

"On the Young Citizens project we work to help other children and young people from similar backgrounds. We can do this because we understand what they've been through. At the moment we are doing a photography project, learning how to take photos and edit them in a professional way. Our aim is to show our dreams and hopes through the photos - what we are proud of and where we want to be. The photos show that we are positive even through the barriers that we have in our lives. We hope that the photos will make people think about us differently."

My hopes for the future are to go to university and become a successful person who my family and I will feel proud of. I hope that when other children and young people from migrant backgrounds see our photos it will inspire them and give them hope for their futures. No matter what struggles you have to go through in your life you'll get what you want in the end if you have the desire."

- Rakiba Alnahr, Young Citizens Ambassador from Syria

Helping young people influence decisions about their future

In England and Wales there are currently a record number of children in care at 76,670, with 389,000 more needing some level of support from children's services.

Over the last year, Coram Voice directly worked with 7,872 children, providing 1-1 advocacy support, 'missing from home' interviews, and specialist child protection advocacy, as well as independent persons, independent visitors and participation and engagement services for children in care.

Coram Voice is a leading children's rights organisation that gets young voices heard in decisions that matter to them and works to improve the lives of children in care, leaving care and those who depend on the help of the state.



A Voice for Children

Coram Voice has concurrently worked with local authorities, Ofsted and the Office of the Children's Commissioner, to address children's lack of access and improve these vital services.

Using the experience of delivering a national advocacy helpline for over 20 years, Coram Voice, through contract with the Department for Education developed 'Always Heard'. 'Always Heard', provides telephone and online advice so children and young people in, and leaving care, get immediate support, understand their rights and are able to access their local service. Crucially, it provides any child who cannot get advocacy from their local service with an advocate, ensuring they receive the support they need. Since June 2017, 'Always Heard' has provided support to 9,819 children from 113 local authorities.

Independent and Project Advocacy

Coram Voice worked with Essex Police force and related local authorities (Essex, Southend and Thurrock) to pilot the police service led outreach project 'Project Advocacy'. For young people who are victims of crime or at risk of criminalisation, police officers made direct referrals to 'Always Heard'.

In November 2017, a partnership between Article 39, the National Children's Advocacy consortium (co-chaired by Coram Voice Managing Director, Brigid Robinson) and NAIRO, launched the Children's Independent Advocacy Campaign. This campaign, which continues to grow, calls for access to advocacy to be extended to all children in state care and institutions.



Bright Spots

Bright Spots, developed by Coram Voice with the University of Bristol and supported by the Hadley Trust, now undertakes the largest national survey of the subjective experience of children and young people in care. Over the last year, Coram Voice worked with 31 local authorities and received 3,746 unique responses from children in care. The survey was extended to six local authorities through a partnership with the Welsh Children's Commissioner's Office.

In February 2018, the national report *Our Lives, Our Care: Looked after children's views of their well-being in 2017*, and a summary of findings was released. This year, Coram Voice was pleased to see that the final Fostering Stocktake report included recommendations for all local authorities to adopt Bright Spots for strengthening of advocacy in guidance.

Bright Spots published *Care leavers' views on their transition to adulthood: a rapid review of evidence* in October 2017. With funding from the Social Care Innovation Fund, the Bright Spots programme also piloted the survey *Your Life Beyond Care*.

"Voices gives children and young people a platform to express themselves in their own words"

Peter Capaldi, *Voices* 2018 Awards Ceremony Host

Voices 2018 writing competition

Celebrating its third year, Coram Voice's national creative writing competition for children in care and young care leavers received 203 entries, from rap and song lyrics to poems and stories. Finalists were invited to a creative writing and public speaking workshop hosted by Coram Voice, and to the awards ceremony, held at Coutts and hosted by long-term supporter Peter Capaldi (see page 9 for details).

Independent Services

Coram Voice is the leading provider of Investigating Officers for the Children Act complaints process, and of Independent Persons, who review whether children are legally being held in secure accommodation under the Children Act (1989). Over the last year, Coram Voice has provided Independent Officers for 37 complaints and Independent Persons for 219 secure accommodation reviews.

Homeless Outreach

Over 30% of homeless people have a care background. Through the Coram Voice Homeless Outreach Project, support is given to this vulnerable group of young people. Coram Voice provides access to services, moves young people off the streets into safe housing, and continues to support them beyond this process by helping them re-engage with the system and access financial, housing and educational benefits.



Care leaver finalist Tychique meets Peter Capaldi at *Voices* 2018 Awards Ceremony

Independent Visitors

Over the year, Coram Voice provided 97 children in care with Independent Visitors. Independent Visitors volunteer their time to ensure children and young people in care are provided with a long term, positive relationship with an adult outside children's services.

Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive: young man 'H', aged 18, stated it was *"one of the relationships I really cherish... she has been involved in important life decisions."*

A National Voice

Co-production with care experienced children is at the heart of Coram Voice. In July 2017, A National Voice, run by and for care experienced young people, joined Coram. Over the coming year, programmes to champion a change in attitude and promote the ambitions and achievements of children in care will be developed.

Next steps

In the coming year, Coram Voice will provide 100,000 children and young people with access to information and advice and at least 4,000 with direct, intensive support.

'Always Heard' information and advice pages were visited **23,670** times by **10,061** users

Directly protected **145** children from abuse by providing a safe space to share their experiences

100% of feedback for Independent Persons was a rating of 'good' or 'very good'

More than **15,000** web users were provided with support through the Coram Voice website

210 homeless young people were supported to gain access to services

The *Voices* writing competition has **203** entries, **111** more than the previous year

161 volunteers donated **10,023** hours of their time to Coram *Voices*

99% of children receiving community advocacy support said Coram Voice had helped them

Upholding rights for children in the UK

Coram Children's Legal Centre (CCLC) is the dedicated children's rights centre in the UK, upholding the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. CCLC provides free legal advice, works to influence policy and provides legal representation as well as working to address legal and policy issues affecting migrant children in England.



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Resolving legal issues for children

This year, CCLC's Legal Practice Unit (LPU) continued to provide legal advice, assistance and representation to clients – predominately those who are eligible for legal aid – across four areas of law: community care, immigration and education, family (children) and education.

The LPU is proud to maintain its Lexcel accreditation. This year the LPU also gained accreditation with the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner and was selected by The Legal Education Foundation to host a new trainee solicitor post under the Justice Fellowship Scheme. Noel Arnold, Coram's Director of Legal Practice became co-chair of the Association of Lawyers for Children and continues as a member of the Family Law Advisory Board and Children Law Sub-Committee of The Law Society of England and Wales.

The LPU was successful in its appeal concerning legal costs in the First Tier Tribunal. The case, *MG v Cambridgeshire County Council*, clarified the law and procedure which should apply to these sorts of applications for costs in Special Educational Needs and Disability tribunals. The LPU was featured in *The Law Society Gazette* as one of only two legal aid services that provides advice to children and young people with special educational needs.

Sophie Freeman, Immigration Solicitor, was shortlisted for the Legal Aid Lawyer of the Year Awards. The LPU also presented at the Southwark Women's Forum and the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies and this year acted for CCLC in two interventions in appeals before the Supreme Court.

Child Law Advice

Coram's Child Law Advice Service (CLAS) provides legal advice and information on child, family and education law through its dedicated website and advice line. It remains the only free legal source of information, advice and representation to children and young people, families, carers and professionals in England. In 2017/2018 it continued its volunteer project and link with Essex University.

This year, users of CLAS downloaded over 1.5 million information pages to assist them with their legal issues, a growth of 150% over the previous year.

CLAS handled nearly 17,000 calls to its advice line, where topics such as family contact, issues at or before court, special education needs, exclusions and education complaints, were discussed. 100% of callers felt better prepared and satisfied after phoning the advice line, while 96% of callers did not need to go elsewhere for further advice. 98% would recommend to a friend.

Independent Review Mechanism (IRM)

The IRM provides people in England who have been to a fostering or adoption panel, either as first time applicants or approved foster carers or adopters, with the opportunity to be reviewed by an independent panel.

The IRM is run by Coram Children's Legal Centre on behalf of the Department for Education. During the past year, 114 applications were accepted; 106 fostering cases and eight adoption cases, the highest ever level.

The IRM has implemented a new database so that cases can be tracked more effectively and this year will be working to develop digital panels.

"I will support young people I work with better and be more confident in speaking up on their behalf"

Professional who received training from CCLC

Migrant Children's Project

The Migrant Children's Project (MCP) promotes the rights of all refugee and migrant children, young people and families, working to ensure that they receive adequate protection and support.

From April 2017 to March 2018, the MCP advice line dealt with 1,150 queries with 100% of service users reporting they were satisfied with the service. The MCP outreach advice scheme in Greater London benefited a further 1,271 children and young people involved in 440 cases. A further 44,000 web visitors accessed MCP's legal resources on supporting refugee and migrant children, young people and families, through the CCLC website.

Together with the LPU, the MCP met with legal aid policy officials from the Ministry of Justice in June 2017 to discuss the Government's review of legal aid.



Youth Rights Trainer, Olayinka Taiwo, at Speaker's House in January 2018

Improving practice

CCLC trained 1,300 social work professionals, front-line workers and young people on the rights and entitlements of migrant and refugee children. 99% of respondents reported the training increased their knowledge of refugee and migrant children's rights, with 94% stating they had put that knowledge into practice.

As part of Coram's HALO programme, 16 Youth Rights Trainers, aged 18 to 25 with direct experience of immigration or care systems, delivered training on children's rights. This training supported nearly 250 frontline workers from 100 agencies, including 25 different local authorities.

Policy and legislation development

CCLC has led the children's sector in raising concerns about the broader impact of Brexit on children by placing a joint letter in the Times and engaging with the Immigration and Children's Ministers about issues regarding settlement for EU national children.

In September 2017, Coram arranged an event with the University of Liverpool to lobby on the EU (Withdrawal) Bill. The event, hosted by Lord Russell and co-chaired by Helen Grant MP, called for greater protection for all children's rights after Brexit throughout its passage in the Commons and the Lords.

In January 2018, CCLC published *Rights Without Remedies*, on the impact of 2013 legal aid cuts on children's access to justice. CCLC also engaged with the Ministry of Justice on the Post-Legislative Review of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012.

The MCP continued as co-chair of the Refugee Children's Consortium and the National Asylum Stakeholder Forum children's subgroup with the Home Office. Statutory guidance on the care of unaccompanied migrant children and child victims of modern slavery was also re-drafted.

Trained over **1,500** professionals and **25** local authorities on the rights of migrant and refugee children

The Migrant Children's Project assisted **44,000** web visitors and **1,271** children in **440** cases

1.5 million Child Law Advice Service information pages downloaded

Over **18,000** queries answered through legal advice lines



Next steps

Following the *Respected and Protected* report, CCLC will continue to champion children and young people's rights.

In the coming year, CCLC will contribute to additional system inquiries and reviews, including the School Exclusions Review by Edward Timpson CBE and the Department of Education.

The LPU will expand its work in its four areas of law and the MCP will continue tackling migrant and refugee children's lack of access to legal advice and education.

Enabling children to manage risks around them

Coram Life Education (CLE) is the UK's leading provider of high quality personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education. Aligned with the Ofsted framework and Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence, interventions include challenging social norms – misperceptions of peers' engagement with risky behaviour – to encourage more positive behaviours.

CLE remains at the forefront of a growing range of online resources and targeted programmes, which this year included workshops for exceptionally able children, and new peer education in schools.

CLE works in **1 in 9** primary schools across England and Scotland

453,000 children in over **2,100** UK schools benefited from CLE

With **20** delivery partners and branches, Life Education's work extends to Finland, Barbados and Cyprus

20,592 teachers in the UK are subscribed to the SCARF online resource

CLE maintained it's **NHS England's Information Standard** and achieved the **PSHE Association's quality mark**

A whole-school approach to wellbeing

CLE's online SCARF resources offer a framework of lesson plans, planning and assessment tools to help busy teachers to embed a comprehensive Wellbeing and PSHE programme throughout the primary years. SCARF (Safety, Caring, Achievement, Resilience and Friendship) represents CLE's core values for children.

Since its launch in 2017, 20,592 subscribers now either use SCARF alongside CLE's mobile classroom delivery, or as a stand-alone resource.



"I congratulate CLE for looking to ensure every child & young adult has the right preparation for happy, healthy and appropriate relationships in future life"

President of National Association of Head Teachers

Mental health and relationships education

CLE has developed new approaches to help children and young people navigate the world – both real and online – they are growing up in. CLE's evidence to the government's Health and Education Select Committees was published in its report on the role of education in children and young people's mental health.

With a generous donation from the Ecclesiastical Insurance Group, a comprehensive Relationships Education programme for primary schools was then produced.

This programme, launched in the House of Lords, followed the announcement of statutory Relationships and Sex Education and is built on the foundations of CLE's online SCARF programme. The programmes' resources combine the themes of keeping safe, relationships and growing and changing, meeting schools safeguarding and emotional wellbeing requirements.

In 2018, CLE also submitted its evidence and was invited to represent the primary school perspective at a series of round table discussions on relationships education, hosted by the Department for Education.

Building resilience and understanding

Coram Life Education runs a range of programmes to help build children's understanding and resilience. With Ansvr Insurance's continued support, CLE's local educators are trained and equipped to promote our programmes:

bCyberwise, CLE's internet safety programme, promotes positive cyber citizenship and teaches children how to be respectful and safe online.

Time for Change is a module on puberty, which is delivered alongside the Relationships Education programme.

Captain Coram is a module which links the History, Art and English curricula by exploring the story of Thomas Coram and his vision to secure children with their rights. In 2018, this resource enables schools to celebrate the 350th anniversary of Thomas Coram's birth.

Promoting positive social norms

In 2018, Professor Wesley Perkins, leading figure in social norms theory, visited Coram and offered further insight into the social norms theory and approaches used across CLE programmes. CLE's programmes focus on the choices children and young people make based on their view of what is normal for their peers, for example overestimating tobacco and alcohol use. Positive norm messages, over time, increases young people's capacity to change their own attitudes and behaviour to be less harmful.

Raising awareness of adoption experiences

The free Adoptables Schools Toolkit contains lesson plans, teachers' guidance, films and activities designed to raise awareness of the school experience of adopted young people. The toolkit has been downloaded nearly 500 times and was awarded the PSHE Association's quality mark.



iStock

Supporting great learning every day

Memorable life skills programmes are delivered by expert educators using Harold the Giraffe in a mobile classroom. CLE takes a three-strand approach, addressing children's knowledge, skills and attitudes, leading to greater resilience, confidence and healthy choices.

CLE will soon launch its new portable 'LifeSpace' alternative to the mobile classroom. This will enable educators to reach more schools using a pop up structure, and all the resources and educational expertise children and schools associate with a unique and magical experience.

Tomorrow's Achievers

Tomorrow's Achievers enrichment 'masterclasses' were enjoyed by more than 550 exceptionally able children, helping schools to raise attainment and harness the talents of their most able pupils. The programme also offers a bursary scheme so every child has the chance to attend.

These classes give children experience of a wide range of subjects – including science, coding, maths, philosophy, virtual reality, literature and the arts.

In April 2018, Tomorrow's Achievers partnered with Rubik's and launched a series of new masterclasses for children to learn how to solve problems, based on the world's bestselling puzzle, the Rubik's Cube.

CASE STUDY:

SCARF in Frizinghall Primary, Bradford

"Frizinghall Primary realised we needed to find a new approach after meeting to discuss behaviour issues, particularly in Upper Key Stage Two. We chose SCARF because not only was it new to us, it enabled the children to have an input into how behaviour should look in school, and its links with our PSHE lessons promised to give children lots of reminders of our expectations of their behaviour. It linked really well to other things we were already doing – Investors in Pupils and Restorative Circles and importantly it allowed us to focus our effort and attention on good behaviour – not unwanted behaviours.

What is going to be fascinating to watch is how our children develop using the ideals of SCARF as they move through the school, and seeing if embracing SCARF has a positive and lasting impact on their behaviour as they get older."

- Tim Palmer, Acting Deputy Head at Frizinghall Primary School

Inspiring a new generation of adopters

People considering adoption often report feeling confused about the process and unsure about where to go for advice. During the past five years First4Adoption (F4A), England's national service for adopters and professionals, established itself as a national hub for independent adoption information, was recognised for the quality of its helpline and won major national awards as a public service digital provider.

As one of the biggest adoption awareness-raising initiatives in England, National Adoption Week ensured that adoption hit the headlines in major national newspapers and magazines, and directly helped to find adoptive families for the children profiled.

"First4Adoption provides adopters with all the advice, guidance and support that they need"
Edward Timpson, former Minister for Vulnerable Children and Families

In the past five years, First4Adoption supported:
17,028 telephone calls
1,156,911 unique website visitors

In the past year, National Adoption Week generated:
443 media articles, including 30 national media stories
45% increase in enquiries to agencies during the Week

First4Adoption
First4Adoption provided independent and impartial advice to adopters across the country, receiving 3,539 calls, 1,276 emails and 293,616 unique visitors online in the past year. 24,917 web visitors went on to use the online agency search, which helps potential adopters locate agencies in their area.

During the year, 3,362 adopters used the Firststeps e-learning course, 970 more users than in 2016-17.

The contract to run this national gateway service was completed this year, exceeding all targets since its launch five years ago.

National Adoption Week

National Adoption Week was once again managed and coordinated by First4Adoption. The fact that more than 50% of those children waiting to be adopted are in sibling groups provided the principal focus for the 2017 campaign.

To start the week, Mirror Group newspapers ran a story featuring Alfie, a young boy who was adopted as a result of appearing in the 2016 National Adoption Week family finding campaign. For 2017, The Mirror then profiled five groups of children from around England. First4Adoption subsequently received a number of credible enquiries relating to the featured children. These were passed to social workers and, at the time of writing, one adopter is awaiting a decision from the matching panel. There were a total of 443 National Adoption Week media stories across the week. These included 256 online, 30 national media pieces, 135 in regional newspapers and 22 magazine features.

With nation-wide coverage, National Adoption Week generated a 45% increase in enquiries to agencies.

Next steps

To ensure this vital support continues, Coram is developing an extended information service which will encompass support for special guardianship, step-parent adoption and foster care.

Working with local authorities to improve adoption and fostering practice

Coram-i works with local authorities to help them improve their services for looked after children. The team, which includes social care experts, consultants, analysts and researchers, has developed a strong reputation for delivering high quality and effective support. Their work has helped to advance Coram's profile as an innovative leader in tackling isolated or systemic issues facing local authorities.

"Coram-i is now integral to the way we offer services and informs our practice from the beginning of the adoption journey to the placement of children and, of course, beyond"
Sarah Skinner, Head of Adoption, Kent County Council



New partnerships with local authorities

Coram's partnership with Northamptonshire County Council continues, with Coram-i now providing support to the county council's fostering service. The team's work with the adoption service was completed this year, having successfully embedded a number of improvements that resulted in the Council avoiding £1.7m expenditure over the life of the three-year partnership.

Social Care Innovation Programme

In 2016, Coram-i was awarded a grant by the Department for Education's Children's Social Care Innovation Programme to develop robust planning structures, systems and processes to find permanent homes for children by working with four local authorities.

The aim is that children are matched and placed with suitable permanent foster carers without delay, by focussing on four key priority areas. First, that the quality and timeliness of permanency planning is improved. Second, that delays to achieving permanence are minimised by identifying suitable permanent foster placements, ensuring sufficient support is provided, and by developing ways that make them last beyond the age of 18 wherever possible. Third, that the

wellbeing and care experience of children is improved by using findings that inform and shape service delivery, whilst involving children in this decision-making process. And finally, Coram-i is focussing on better understanding the experience of care leavers, by developing a care leavers survey on wellbeing and using the results to inform service delivery, and by helping local authority care leaver services better manage their data.

Coram-i has provided performance surgeries and tracked meetings to focus and monitor progress in individual cases. Coram-i and its partners have also instigated process change to support good quality permanence work that avoids unnecessary delay.

In 2018 Coram-i started new partnerships with Lambeth and Bromley, and sold licenses for its online tracking tool to Adopt Central England RAA's four local authorities.

Novel approaches to adoption matching

In the coming year, Coram will support the development of London regional adoption agencies (RAAs). Coram-i currently has 17 London agencies participating in the project which runs until October 2019. Coram-i aims to develop a pan-London approach to identifying potential adoptive matches for London's looked after children and create a common process across London's RAAs.



Securing family matches for the children who wait the longest

Coram contributes essential services towards the national infrastructure for adoption and fostering, working to ensure that children in England have the best opportunity to find suitable families. The Adoption Match service secured homes for 277 children, while Coram's Activity Days for adoption and fostering have achieved impressive outcomes in finding families for a further 142 children, who were perceived as harder to place.

"It is probably the best (sic) day of the year. I would give it 10/10 or even 100/100"
 Reece, aged 8, who attended an Activity Day



Increasing adoption success

Adoption Match is Coram's national matching service that currently operates the statutory Adoption Register for England. In the past year, 1,903 children who had not been found a local match to a family within 90 days, as well as 934 families looking for a child to adopt, were referred to the Register.

The service matched 277 children who had been on the Register for an average of 186 days. More than 130 of these were confirmed from links made by the team of Regional Business Partners carrying out child-specific searches and the remainder via National Exchange Days.

In November 2017, adopter access was extended to all agencies. This allows all adopters the opportunity to access the Register directly in order to search for and identify links. As a result of all searches carried out, there has been a 70% increase in links made through the Register this year.

In addition, the team carried out more than 1,300 court searches for practitioners considering a child's permanence and received more than 3,000 calls from adopters and practitioners seeking to find suitable homes for children.

70% increase in links made through the National Adoption Register

18% increase in direct matches secured

600 children attended Activity Days and **142** children matched with families

Activity Days

Coram's Activity Days give prospective adopters and foster carers the opportunity to meet children in a safe, supported and fun environment. This helps them to discover whether they feel an emotional connection, rather than relying on a written profile. Introduced in England and Wales six years ago, Adoption Activity Days have a one in four success rate. Following a successful pilot scheme last year, Activity Days for Fostering have now been extended to foster carers wanting to make a long term commitment to a child.

The last year has been very successful for Activity Days, with the highest number of children benefiting from this family finding method since 2013. More than 600 children have attended Activity Days in the last year alone and this now includes children who require permanence via fostering.

With one in four children matched via Activity Days, more agencies are investing in this complementary family finding activity for children who traditionally wait the longest for a permanent family.

Following the well-received Channel 4 series *Finding me a Family* broadcast in December 2017 (see right), there has been a significant increase in agencies requesting commissioned Activity Days for children waiting for adoption in their region.

Sir Martin Narey and Mark Owers' independent review of the fostering system in England, published in February 2018, referenced Activity Days as "positive examples of the use of adopter-led family finding techniques", and encouraged agencies to make use of this new opportunity for securing permanence for older children who have a plan for long term fostering.

Northamptonshire County Council is one such example of collaborative working where initial matches were made that should result in many children finding a permanent home.

"Coram's approach to fostering activity days turned one dimensional child profiles into the reality of loving children needing loving forever families. The failures of the traditional approach to permanence are all too obvious to see now we have adopted Activity Days as standard practice."
 - Andy Logie, Head of Corporate Parenting, Northamptonshire County Council.



Chris and Sharon moments before they meet Lewis, who they then adopted

Having fun at an Activity Day

Channel 4's *Finding Me a Family*: behind the scenes at Coram's Activity Days

The work of Coram's Adoption Activity Days team and those supporting children waiting for the security of a permanent home was the focus of *Finding Me a Family*, a two part series on Channel 4 in December 2017.

Cameras followed a group of children as they attended an adoption activity day organised by Coram. Produced by Ricochet Productions, the programme sensitively captured the moments when children and adopters meet and interact for the first time, explored the process and chemistry of matching, and saw foster carers and social workers express their hopes for the children they look after.

Children and adopters were supported throughout the process with the help of a safeguarding consultant. For children who are old enough, the focus of an Activity Day is that it is an event where there is the possibility of meeting a new parent, but, primarily, it is a day to have fun. They were reassured that if a match didn't occur, the team would keep on trying.

The programme was widely featured in the press, inspired discussions on *Mumsnet* and encouraged many people to come forward to find out more adoption.

Dozens posted on Twitter to say how they had cried tears of joy when it was revealed that one of the boys, six-year-old Lewis, had found a 'new mum and dad', Chris and Sharon, at the event - and moved in with the couple just in time for Christmas.

Six-year-old Lewis had been placed in care, along with his two younger siblings, but for his benefit was separated from them after they struggled to find any adopters able to take all three.

Speaking on the programme, Sharon said: "What we've got to offer is love, lots of love. Everyone wants babies and toddlers and the older ones don't seem to get that chance."

#FindingMeAFamily

Leading adoption and fostering policy and practice

CoramBAAF's members continue to make up the largest community of agencies and individuals dedicated to securing the best outcomes for children separated from their birth parents. The multi-disciplinary organisation supports agencies and professionals and acts as an advocate on behalf of its members across the UK.

The CoramBAAF Policy, Research and Development Team has been at the forefront of shaping and responding to key developments, such as regional adoption agencies and new models for adoption support and foster care services. CoramBAAF also represents sector interests at the highest level by hosting conferences and issuing practice guidance.

CoramBAAF's representation on a number of influential bodies, including the Adoption Leadership Board and Adoption Support Expert Advisory Group, as well as its advisory role within the Fostering Stocktake, enabled CoramBAAF to represent the views of its members. Continuing partnerships with AFA Cymru and AFA Scotland and its position as chair on the Kinship Care Alliance strengthened CoramBAAF's UK-wide focus.



Elaine Dibben of CoramBAAF on BBC Newsnight, 31 August 2017

Learning events

Local authorities continued to commission bespoke training for their staff. Popular courses were *Life Story Work*, *Secure Base Model*, *Roles and Responsibilities of Different Panel Members* and *Making Good Assessments*.

In addition, CoramBAAF ran a variation of the STOP programme (a supportive programme for parents of teenagers) for foster carers.

This was tailored to improve family communication and help foster carers increase their skills in effective behaviour management.

CoramBAAF's conference programme covered a wide range of subjects including transitions into adoption, special guardianship, health and neuroscience, aggression and violence in foster care and adoption support.

"An excellent opportunity to reflect on practice issues from different perspectives, a great learning resource when implementing or enhancing Fostering for Adoption services in your industry."

- Ana Parr, Group Manager for Adoption, London Borough of Bromley on *The Role of Fostering for Adoption* conference

"The quality of research and advice continues to ensure that CoramBAAF is at the centre of policy and practice development"

Ian Brazier, Executive Director,
The Foster Care Co-operative

Providing advice and resources

In response to the steady increase in enquiries to the CoramBAAF Advice Service, CoramBAAF appointed a dedicated adviser and created an integrated Advice and Information team. This allowed for a 50% increase in enquiries this year with 1,800 queries from members, government departments and news media services. Over 70% of queries concerned policy practice and procedural issues, where in response CoramBAAF helped identify relevant literature, provide access to resources and guidance, and helped members prepare for court with the appropriate research and case precedents.

To assist members in making the best practice assessment, CoramBAAF published a number of highly rated guides, including *Dealing with Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder* and *The Role of Fostering for Adoption*, revised existing best-selling guides and produced a new handbook, *Caring for a Child who has been Sexually Exploited*.

The *Adoption & Fostering Digest*, offering a UK-wide monthly update on the latest research, policy and practice developments, consultations and statistics, increased circulation from 1,000 to 5,500.

CoramBAAF launched its new website with enhanced content, improved search and navigation facilities and exclusive resources for members.



In the news

CoramBAAF continued to raise its profile as the independent voice in the sector, largely through feature in *The Guardian* and *The Lancet* and on *NewsNight*, *Sky News*, *The Jeremy Vine Show* and *The Victoria Derbyshire* show.

Consultants contributed to sector debates on topics such as children's mental health; contact after adoption; special guardianship assessments and legislation; the Fostering Stocktake; the launch of Regional Adoption Agencies; and the challenges of finding the best placement for sibling groups.



The Guardian, 1 September, 2017

Next steps

The CoramBAAF agenda for 2018-19 includes further developments around special guardianship; the provision of support to adoptive, special guardianship and other families; mental health issues; and the recruitment of prospective adopters.

CoramBAAF will run four free conferences for members and will publish good practice guidance on mental health, placing siblings, child to parent violence and the role of the supervising social worker. Handbooks for adopters and foster carers will be published and an innovative approach to caring for children in long-term foster care will be published.

Internationally, CoramBAAF will work on an EU funded project to develop training materials in six countries for social workers and foster carers caring for unaccompanied migrant children.



The Daily Mail, 23 November 2017

Membership included:

144 local authorities in England

31 local authorities in Scotland

All **22** local authorities in Wales

All **5** health and social care trusts in Ireland.

2,764 professionals trained via:

123 training days

36 workshops

7 conferences

1,800 queries answered via

CoramBAAF's advice line.

32,000 books sold

Improving outcomes through evidence

Coram is committed to developing and promoting best practice in support of children and young people. The charity's diverse range of experts conduct research and evaluations, influence policy developments, and speak out on the issues that matter most to children.

Coram's Impact and Evaluation team undertakes projects across the sector to identify if and how programmes help children. Findings influence policy and improve professional practice, international research and practice development.

670,000 children in England are growing up in 'high risk' family situations

Children's Commissioner report, July 2017

Evaluation Consultancy

Assessing the numbers and experiences of vulnerable children

Commissioned by the Office of the Children's Commissioner (OCC), Coram's Impact and Evaluation team worked alongside Coram International on *Children's Voices*, a project to estimate the number of vulnerable children in England.

As well as providing technical papers for the analysis approach for estimation, the team produced five thematic studies which explored the perspective of vulnerable children through their own experiences.

The five reports on subjective accounts of their wellbeing covered children excluded from schools and in alternative provision; children in detention; children subject to immigration controls; children involved in gangs and children with mental health needs.

Art and music therapy effectiveness

The team published an international review that assessed the effectiveness of art therapy and music therapy in five broad areas – adoption, attachment and parent-child bonding, mental health, behavioural and social interaction difficulties and special educational needs.

The report reviewed 49 quantitative studies and was launched at a sector event that generated interest in future national collaborative studies.



Evaluating Social Care Innovation Programmes

Coram's Impact and Evaluation team has, once again, been successful in receiving status as an Innovation Programme evaluation partner. Evaluation of a programme that supports disabled children in residential care with specialist foster care has now begun. The team was also invited to submit another proposal for follow-up evaluation on the effectiveness of pre-proceedings of family group conference (the stage when a local authority decides whether or not to apply to court to take a child into care).

Mentalisation-based therapy

Coram published a paper co-authored with the Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families that outlined preliminary evaluation results of adoptive families (parents with children aged four to 16 years-old) who undertake mentalisation-based therapy at Coram.

Longitudinal study of Early Placements

Longitudinal research was conducted as a deep dive with twelve parents who adopted their children through Coram's concurrency programme seven to 15 years previously.

This is the first sample to be followed through concurrent planning over such a long period. Evaluation found that early permanence offers the opportunity to build secure attachments from the earliest age and has, despite difficulties, created stability of placement. It also demonstrated that early placement services need to be designed and resourced on the basis that the majority of children will need support, including into and through adolescence. The findings were reinforced through qualitative interviews with two young people who shared their experiences of being adopted through concurrency.



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Evaluating new approaches in adoption services

At the request of a regional adoption agency, the team evaluated the effectiveness of its new service structures and processes.

The benefits and challenges that the changes brought were assessed, especially in terms of accelerating timescales for linking and matching, clarity of responsibility, key processes to prevent drift and how different services learn from each other through forming a regional agency. The contribution of voluntary adoption agencies (VAAs) was also analysed.

Care leavers diagnostic

A care leavers' diagnostic tool has been developed to see how well local authorities are achieving the standards set out in guidance for leaving care.

This works alongside the Bright Spots *Our Lives, Our Care: Looked after children's views on their wellbeing* report, published in February 2018. Based on the largest survey of its kind, it includes the views of 3,410 looked after children in 23 local authority areas.

A new survey, *Your Life Beyond Care*, which focuses on the thoughts, feelings and experiences of care leavers, is now being widely extended following two pilots. So far, the views of 475 care leavers from six local authorities have been gathered.

Data visualisations in children's social care

Working with researchers at the Alan Turing Institute and funded by the Nuffield Foundation, Coram explored how data collected on children in care can be modelled and visualised to help inform the decisions of local authorities. By using the wealth of available data in relation to children in proceedings or pre-proceedings, as well as those in care, creatively, Coram found there can be better decision-making and understanding of where children are in the system, and resources can be allocated according to expert analysis.

New revolution in care

To improve the outcomes for children in or around the care system requires a multi-professional response built on shared insight and innovation in practice. For Universal Children's Day Coram explored the international evidence on trends in violence against children, with discussion between Sir James Munby, President of the Family Division and Professor Dame Carolyn Hamilton of Coram International. Coram also examined the issue of *Securing Lifelong Health* with Sir David Behan, CEO of the Care Quality Commission and Dr Max Davie, of the Royal College of Paediatricians. In the coming year, Coram shall host an event exploring approaches to a 'New Revolution in Children's Social Care.'

National Representation

Coram Group Chief Executive, Dr Carol Homden CBE, was a member of the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales, the Children's Inter-Agency Group and National Adoption Leadership Board. She is a board member of the Association of Child and Adolescent Mental Health, Chair of the National Autistic Society and is Chair of the National Recruitment and Matching Forum.

Dr John Simmonds OBE, CoramBAAF Director of Policy, Research and Development, serves on the advisory board of the Rees Centre, the Department for Education's Adoption Leadership Board and Adoption Support Advisory Group. Jeanne Kaniuk OBE, Early Permanence Associate Director, is a member of the Department for Education's Expert Group on Early Placement.

Brigid Robinson, Coram Voice Managing Director, is Chair of the National Children's Advocacy Consortium and Linda Briheim-Crookall chairs the Alliance for Children in Care and Care Leavers. Kamena Dorling, Coram Children's Legal Centre Head of Policy, chairs the Refugee Children's Consortium, and Noel Arnold, Director of Legal Practice, is Vice Chair of the Association of Lawyers for Children.

Centre for Impact

Combining evaluation with expertise in policy and commercial development, the Centre for Impact supports charities benefitting children through innovation and representation. Work included impact evaluation of Tomorrow's Achievers masterclasses for primary age groups and academic mentoring for young people in Science, Technology, English and Maths (STEM) subjects by Generating Genius.

In 2018, the findings of the evaluation of the Carers' Trust and Young Carers in Schools Programme will be launched and the Impact Centre approach with new charity partners will be developed.

Upholding children's rights across the world

Coram International has continued to promote and implement children's rights across the world, through work with UN agencies, governments and civil society. During the last year the team undertook projects in 27 countries worldwide. As well as conducting research on issues relating to children and young people, the team's work has contributed to: the development and evaluation of policy and programming; legal reform; capacity building; and systems strengthening to ensure that children's rights are respected, protected and fulfilled worldwide.



Child protection in Thailand

Commissioned by UNICEF Thailand, Coram International concluded a qualitative and quantitative baseline assessment on the functioning of the child protection system and the coordination of child protection services in Thailand. The assessment will provide recommendations on laws, policies and practices, particularly on child protection case management work, and will enable UNICEF Thailand to demonstrate progress over the next five years, when the current country programme will be assessed.



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Promoting and protecting the rights of children in Cambodia

Over the past year, Coram International conducted a formative evaluation of UNICEF's child protection work in Cambodia. The study assessed the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of UNICEF's work with the Government of Cambodia, national and sub-national institutions, provincial authorities, social service providers and communities.

The results of the evaluation will be used to underpin evidence-based contributions to UNICEF Cambodia's new country programme 2019-2023, and child protection programming in the East Asia and Pacific Region.

Preventing violence against children in Bulgaria

Contracted by UNICEF, Coram International is leading a study into the scale, prevalence and driving factors of violence against children in Bulgaria. The study will examine the knowledge, social attitudes and practices in relation to violence and assess national capacities to prevent, identify and respond to violence against children. The study will pay particular attention to groups of children who experience demographic characteristics that make them more likely to experience violence. The study will inform the National Programme for Prevention of Violence and Abuse of Children in Bulgaria.

Development of a national diversion framework in Zambia

Working with the Government of Zambia, Coram International created a national operational framework for the diversion of children in conflict with the law. Developed following an in-country assessment and a workshop with key stakeholders, the framework sets out the scope, criteria, process and options for the use of diversion in Zambia.

In line with international and human rights standards, the framework, and its accompanying training manual, assists stakeholders in responding to child offending not by incarceration, rather, with programs out of the formal Criminal Justice System.



Tackling child trafficking in Vietnam

The team continues its two-and-a-half year project *Casting light in the shadows: combating child trafficking and slavery in Vietnam*, funded by the Home Office's Child Trafficking Protection Fund (CTPF). The project aims to reduce children's vulnerability to exploitation and contributes to the Home Office's efforts to support trafficked children.

In partnership with UNICEF UK, UNICEF Vietnam, government agencies and a Vietnamese research institution, Coram International carried out a wide range of research, including a household survey on youth, migration and work. The team will publish the initial findings of this research in 2018, before moving on to the next stage of the project to strengthen multi-agency coordination, prevention and response through workshops and capacity building.

Child rights monitoring in Montenegro

Contracted by UNICEF Montenegro, Coram International completed an evaluation of the child rights monitoring system in Montenegro and UNICEF's planned approach to child rights monitoring reforms.

The evaluation provided knowledge and recommendations for UNICEF, the Government of Montenegro, the Parliament, the Ombudsperson, civil society and academia to inform the development of joint-programming under the country programme 2017-21.

Child justice in Nigeria

Coram International has continued its co-operation with UNICEF Nigeria working across Lagos, Cross River, Plateau and Gombe states.

Work has included drafting regulations on child protection, fostering, adoption and children's homes in Lagos State and Cross River State, enabling the government to implement and enforce child rights laws. Protocols between the police and the ministry responsible for child protection in Lagos were also developed. Work with the police force will also develop Standard Operating Procedures when dealing with child victims and witnesses, and children in contact or in conflict with the law.

In addition, prosecutor guidelines have been developed with the Departments of Public Prosecution of the four States on handling cases where children are in conflict with the law. A week-long training on the new guidelines was also provided.

A group of social work trainers have also received intensive training and will now be able to train local social workers in children protection in the four states.



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-  Completed the first nationally representative study on violence against children in Libya, with the Libyan Government, UNICEF and the National Centre for Disease Control.
-  Conducted the Final Evaluation of Justice for Every Child, assessing UNICEF's Justice For Every Child project in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The evaluation was rated by UNICEF as one of the 13 best evaluation reports in 2017.
-  Commissioned by the Children's Commissioner's Office, undertook a series of studies with Coram Impact and Evaluation Team entitled Children's Voices. The study reviewed evidence on the subjective wellbeing of children in England, focusing on mental health, immigration control, detention, school exclusion and gangs.
-  Published a research report on the influence of law on young people's access to sexual and reproductive health in Nepal. This is the final report in a series of collaborations with the International Planned Parenthood Federation.
-  Concluded a project with UNICEF Pacific where the team finalised situation analyses of children and women for 14 Pacific Island countries and published a regional report.
-  Carried out a situational analysis on children for UNICEF Philippines and a separate report on the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

Media highlights



Best Magazine
27 March 2018



The Lady Magazine
18 January 2018

Time Magazine
2 February 2018

Sunday Express
15 April 2018



BBC Victoria Derbyshire
18 April 2018



The Guardian
18 April 2018



BBC One Sunday Politics
22 April 2018



Champion supporters

Coram's mission is to develop, deliver and promote best practice in the support of vulnerable children and young people. Coram has a vision to create better chances for children by giving them the best possible chance to lead a fulfilling life, whatever their background or circumstance.

Much of Coram's vital work would not be possible without the support of trusts, companies and individuals. Thank you to all those who help Coram excel in its mission.

Club Peloton

Coram is the main beneficiary of Club Peloton, a fundraising charity that uses cycling as a platform to raise money for good causes. During the last six years Club Peloton's riders and sponsors have raised over £1 million for Coram, making them a hugely valued partner.

2017 marked the fifth annual pedElle cycle challenge and fifth Cycle to MAPIC. In March, 187 riders embarked on the challenging 1,500km Cycle to MIPIM sponsored by Legal & General Real Assets. Two days before this event, 77 riders took on the inaugural Northern Power Leg from Leeds to London, completing their journey where the Foundling Hospital once stood. Combined, these two rides raised a record-breaking £725,000 for Coram and Club Peloton's other charity beneficiaries.



Club Peloton riders embarking on Cycle to MIPIM event (Joolze Dymond / Club Peloton)



Peter Flavel, CEO of Coutts, opening the Voices 2018 Awards Ceremony

Coutts

Coram's charity of the year partnership with Coutts exceeded its target of raising £325,000 for their 325th anniversary – thanks to a variety of employee fundraising initiatives, challenges and donations including via the 'Thank You from Coutts' scheme.

The partnership has now been extended and the aim is to increase total fundraising from this partnership beyond £350,000 in celebration of Thomas Coram's 350th birthday.

The fundraising plan includes a range of activities including a staff ball, client dinner, challenge event and a children's party.

"The short term pain and suffering was just so worth it, for such a worthy cause – the money raised will make such a huge difference to the lives of those supported by Coram!" – Jon Munday, Coutts employee and 2018 London Marathon runner



"We love working with Coram. The passion and drive to give children the start in life they deserve is infectious"

Nick Hanmer, CEO,
Club Peloton

Strategic funding from trusts and foundations

By focusing the support of institutional charitable funders on our longer-term, strategic work, Coram seeks to ensure it's work is financially stable over several years, builds vital evidence of sustained impact and addresses the needs of the most marginalised in practice and policy.

This year Coram was fortunate to partner with many inspiring grant-making organisations.

- **The Queen's Trust** continued its support of young people's work placements in several of Coram's services Coram's IT, security and Centre for Impact. The Queen Elizabeth II Centre, funded by The Queen's Trust and visionary partners including **ZVM Rangoonwala Foundation**, the **Garfield Weston Foundation** and the **Cadogan Charity**, is scheduled to open in early 2019 (see p35).
- **The Hadley Trust** pledged its continued support to the Bright Spots programme for the coming year. The project is unique for putting children's experience and voices at the heart of how we measure success in children's services (see page 14).
- Coram is delighted that the **Pears Foundation** has renewed its support for Creative Therapy to support work in the Pears Pavilion. This work benefits children and young people to improve emotional resilience after experiencing trauma and loss (see page 8).



Ecclesiastical Insurance visit Hempstead School to promote CLE in May 2018.

Corporate support

Many companies supported Coram through foundations or staff engagement. Principle supporters this year include:

- **Ansvar Insurance, Ecclesiastical Insurance, Delancey and Sodexo Stop Hunger Foundation** which all donated generously to Coram Life Education.
- **Balfour Beatty**, which continued its support for Activity Days, Coram Life Education and Creative Therapies.
- **ColladoCollins, Havas Media and Gleeds**, who chose Coram as their charity partner for 2017/18.
- **Warburton's**, which assisted East Midlands Adoption.
- **Terra Firma Capital Partners**, which funded projects at Coram South London Adoption.

- **Groundwork**, supported by **Tesco's**, funded the new Creative Therapy garden.

Sheila's Fund

In 2018, Sheila's Fund was established by former Coram Governor Martyn Smith and his family, following the loss of his mother, Sheila, in the Grenfell Tower tragedy.

In recognition of Sheila's difficult early years and the values she held throughout her long and remarkable life, Martyn and his family made an initial donation of £50,000.

The fund aims to bring hope to children affected by trauma and to support Coram Life Education and Creative Therapies.

Individual support

Coram's dedicated individual supporters have raised valuable funds to help Coram advance numerous projects, carry out research and expand services.

- The Coram team of 30 runners raised over £88,000 in the **2018 London Marathon**.
- Coram congratulates Life Governor Philippa Dodds John which this year received an MBE and organised the sellout **21st Handel Birthday Concert**. This concert raised over £15,000 and featured leading international soprano Rebecca Evans and virtuoso trumpeter Crispian Steele-Perkins, who led a team of talented young musicians.
- The **Coram Christmas Celebration** was compered by James Naughtie and featured singer Clare Grogan, author Jamila Gavin and a special performance from Messiah by tenor Ian Bostridge CBE and choir of the Trevor-Roberts School.
- Coram launched its *Respected and Protected* report at **Speaker's House**.
- Coram's Charter Patron's contributed over £240,000 in the past year.
- **BBC Radio 4 Appeal** recorded for Coram by **Peter Capaldi** raised in excess of £40,000 through the appeal and individual giving activity.
- Thank you to the many individuals who support Coram in their wills or support the charity's work **anonymously**.



Martyn Smith with his daughter Harriet, who joined Team Coram in the 2018 London Marathon.

National centre of excellence for children: learning from the past to inform the future

Thomas Coram was born in 1668. Today, too many children are still alone and afraid on the streets, traumatised or abused, excluded from education, unable to influence decisions that matter to them or marginalised from society without advice or choice.

In the coming year Coram will celebrate the achievements of Thomas Coram and open The Queen Elizabeth II Centre as a national centre of excellence to champion children's rights, promote evidence of impact and tell their story to ensure that all children can have the best possible chance in life.

The origin of children's rights in the UK

Born in Lyme Regis, Thomas Coram went to sea at the age of 11. After his apprenticeship as a shipwright, he established a shipyard in Taunton, Massachusetts and was a key figure in the emergence of commerce and trade. Influenced by the spirit of America, Coram called for the education and inheritance rights of girls and was involved in the design of the progressive principles of the Commonwealth of Georgia.

Coram returned to England, with his wife Eunice, in 1704. Appalled at the sight of the bodies of babies on the streets of London, he campaigned for 17 years for his "darling project" to create the Foundling Hospital, now simply known as Coram.

To achieve his vision, Thomas Coram petitioned King George II with '21



ladies of quality and distinction' whose names are recorded in his pocket book.

Arthur Onslow, longest serving Speaker of the House of Commons, presented a prayer book to Thomas Coram in 1736.

The pocket book and prayer book will both be displayed on the Coram Campus for the first time to mark the 350th anniversary of Coram's birth, whilst the Foundling Museum will



Coram's social historian, Carol Harris, with the Prayer Book presented to Thomas Coram by Arthur Onslow



"I believe every one ought, in duty, to do any good they can"

Thomas Coram, 1738

commemorate the centenary of women's suffrage and pay tribute to the '21 Ladies' who helped Thomas Coram create his charity, the first dedicated to children.

In order to give all children the chance to read the story of the man who championed their rights and welfare, Coram launched its first crowdfunding campaign to produce a new children's book, *Captain Coram: Champion for Children*.

Designed by Robin Ollington and illustrated by Albany Wiseman, Coram will provide this book as a gift to primary schools across the country to mark *Tell a Story Day* in October 2018 and to complement the new Assembly Programme on children's rights and Key Stage 2 module available from Coram Life Education.



Queen Elizabeth II Centre

The **Queen Elizabeth II Centre**, made possible by the generous support of the Queen's Trust, will open in the coming year to provide dedicated facilities for the development of Coram as a national centre of excellence for children. It will also welcome three new charity partners to the Coram Campus.

Children's rights continue to be the bedrock of any modern society, but for all too many, those rights are not realised. In its new home, the **Centre for Children's Rights** will strive to secure access to justice across family, community, immigration, and education law and through access to information, advice and advocacy.



Dr Carol Homden CBE, Group Chief Executive, lays the first brick of the Queen Elizabeth II Centre

Under the **HALO programme** this year, 57 young people ensured Help Advice and Legal Opportunity for 60,000 others. Coram will continue to advance co-production with young people to tackle the issues faced by children and ensure they are always heard in decisions that matter to them.

The **Coram Story Centre** will provide a new dedicated archive reading room, environmentally controlled to enable work on site with items from the Coram Archive, and the Story Studio, as a specialist space where young people can explore their own stories and tell the story of care.

The **Rangoonwala Conference and Learning Centre**, made possible by the ZVM Rangoonwala Foundation, will enable us to train professionals and build evidence, promote debate and innovate with the **Coram Centre for Impact**, supporting the sector in addressing the challenges we face in improving outcomes for children.



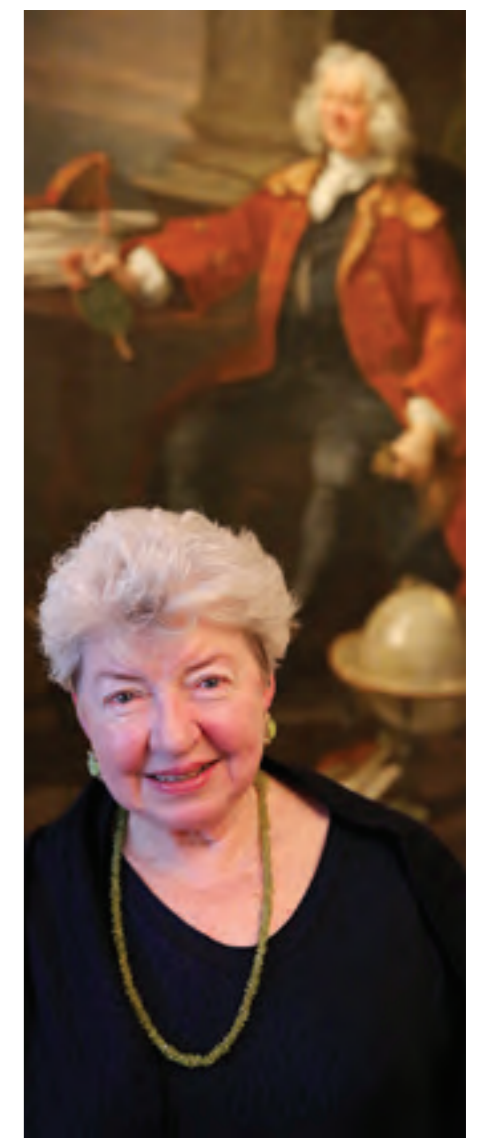
Championing change for children

Thomas Coram campaigned for 17 years to create his charity; Jeanne Kaniuk OBE (pictured right) retired from her role leading Coram's outstanding adoption and permanent families services after 38 years. This included 17 years pioneering early placement for infants in the care system so that they can benefit from a safe, loving home as early as possible in their lives whilst support is provided to their parents.

In the coming year, **Coram's Centre for Early Permanence** will support agencies across the country to utilise a new National Quality Mark launched to make best practice a reality in the era of regional adoption agencies. Coram will work with others to improve access to support and to share learning and expertise.

350 years after Thomas Coram's birth, we are still fighting for the care of children. We are still calling for consistent best practice and justice for all, so that all children are *Respected and Protected*.

We shall not rest until all children have the security, love and education they need and are entitled to.



Jeanne Kaniuk OBE, retired as Managing Director of Coram's Adoption services after 38 years