



# Action for Children Report to Synod

## Spring 2024

### Introduction

Action for Children's work continues to go from strength to strength, impacting thousands of children's lives. We thank you for your immense support through your prayers, tireless fundraising, campaigning, and many other ways.

With your support, alongside our regular givers, corporate partners and volunteers, we helped 765,905 children, young people and their families in 2022/2023 - nearly 95,000 more than the year before. Our annual report outlines our 2022/23 achievements – including our Parent Talk online service which supported a staggering 539,842 families.

You can read our annual report by visiting: <https://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/about-us/annual-reports/>

### Methodist Conference President and VP visit



Each year we offer a visit to one of our services to the President and Vice-President of the Methodist Conference. This year it was a privilege to welcome the Revd Gill Newton, President, and Kerry Scarlett, Vice-President (pictured above) to our services in Chesterfield.

Gill and Kerry heard from staff working on Build Sound Minds, Young Adults (attached to Building Sound Minds), Space 4 U and the Derby and Derbyshire Emotional Wellbeing Service.

Find out more about our services across Derbyshire here: <https://services.actionforchildren.org.uk/derbyshire/>

### Secret Santa 2023 - £1.48m raised

Our Secret Santa fundraising exceeded its £1.4 million target, raising a staggering £1.48 million including gift aid, and we are still counting.

We would like to say a huge 'thank you' to our Methodist Secret Santas. Together, we have helped vulnerable children feel the magic of Christmas. Children like Chloe, whose mum Natalia described how much Action for Children's support meant to Chloe as the "the best feeling ever."

### Starry Night Gala

Our first fundraising gala was a night to remember with famous attendees and Methodist representatives, and incredible performances, including our very own Young Carers Aloud choir, led by celebrity vocal coach Charlotte Church. We raised over £150k.

Held on 30 November, the Starry Night gala took place at the stunning Grade II listed Battersea Arts Centre. It was an extraordinary evening of theatre and heartwarming moments, which raised vital funds to help give more children the safe and happy childhood they deserve.

### 'Children at the Table' - our general election coalition campaign



Launched on 24 January 2024, our coalition campaign with leading children's charities expresses our concerns that for too long, children have not been a priority for successive governments, or for political parties generally.

This means that more children are facing more challenges - babies going without support from health visitors; children growing up in poverty; and young people waiting months on a mental

health waiting list. These trends are going the wrong way.

That is why we have come together with other leading children's charities: Barnardo's, The Children's Society, the National Children's Bureau and NSPCC. Ahead of the upcoming general election, we must make sure the next Prime Minister does more to make good childhoods a national priority.

On 24 January, 25 young campaigners went to Parliament to tell MPs their vision for a better future. We surveyed 1,000 children and 1,000 adults and discovered that 62% of UK children think politicians don't understand the issues affecting them.

Please [sign our petition](#) to ask the Next Prime Minister and Chancellor to be champions for children:

<https://take.actionforchildren.org.uk/page/142209/petition/1?ea.tracking.id=intcom>

### Reunification: working alongside the NSPCC



Our Policy and Research Team worked with the NSPCC on a 'reunification' project - this is where children return home to their family from care.

This January, Action for Children launched a new [policy report](#) in partnership with NSPCC, on the importance of reuniting children who leave care with their families. More children leave the care system by returning home than through any other route. Sadly, this move back home often fails, meaning lots of children return to care.

#### Contacting us

- Your regional fundraiser: <https://bit.ly/fundraiser-contact>
- Supporter Care Team: 0300 123 2112 (open 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday) or [ask.us@actionforchildren.org.uk](mailto:ask.us@actionforchildren.org.uk)

#### Connect with us on social media

@actnforchildren /actionforchildren actionforchildrenUK

To make sure that children who return home continue to stay with their families and do not re-enter care, we recommend that national reunification guidance is developed and investment in reunification practice evaluations across England should be made.

To read the report, visit:

[www.actionforchildren.org.uk/our-work-and-impact/policy-work-campaigns-and-research/policy-reports/returning-home-from-care-family-reunification/](http://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/our-work-and-impact/policy-work-campaigns-and-research/policy-reports/returning-home-from-care-family-reunification/)

### Action for Children Sunday

We are looking forward to this year's Action for Children Sunday on 14<sup>th</sup> July, when churches set aside time to pray for us and collect a special offering to support our work.

If your church plans to hold an Action for Children Sunday service or has not held one in recent times, and would like support with planning one, please contact your Regional Support Officer (<https://bit.ly/fundraiser-contact>). They can offer advice and send you the resources you need. We will also place downloadable information and materials on our website here:

[actionforchildren.uk/worship](http://actionforchildren.uk/worship)

Please help us to track your funds by adding a reference to payments you make by cheque and through your bank (BACS). It might be your church name or postcode, or even your Constituent ID, if you have it.

If you would like an HSBC deposit card to pay at your local Post Office, please contact our [Supporter Care Team](#) on 0300 123 2112.

I wish you an enjoyable and enriching time at Synod. Thank you for your support.

Blessings,

Faith Partnerships Lead  
[karis.kolawole@actionforchildren.org.uk](mailto:karis.kolawole@actionforchildren.org.uk)

### Safe and happy childhood

Action for Children protects and supports children and young people, providing practical and emotional care and support, ensuring their voices are heard, and campaigning to bring lasting improvements to their lives.

