

## Action for Children Report to Synod Spring 2026



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This report comes with warm greetings and heartfelt thanks from all of us at Action for Children. Your support year in year out means so much to us. Childhood is precious. We don't have long to get it right. That's why every action you take is so vital. Every bake sale. Every carol concert. Every person you tell about our work. Every faith-filled Action for Children Sunday service. With every pound, every prayer, every raised voice – you really do help change the lives of children and young people. Thank you!

We'd like to thank the Methodist Conference President, Revd Richard Andrew, and Vice President, Matthew Forsyth for visiting our services, where they saw firsthand the impact of your generosity. Matthew visited Northampton Short Breaks service which gives children and young people with disabilities a safe, fun place to make friends, grow in confidence and build independence. Revd Andrew visited Spring Leam Lane in Gateshead, where he learned how our nurseries help children thrive and support families, especially where early years provision has been reduced. We are grateful for their support and prayers.

### How we're making an impact with your support

Children and young people are at the heart of everything we do, and this year, we are doing even more to make sure they have what they need to thrive. Thanks to your sensational support, we're working to create safer, more stable homes; building spaces where disabled children can fulfil their potential; and being there for children who are struggling with their mental health and wellbeing.

Every child deserves stability, care and the chance to stay close to their communities and the people they love. Sadly, more children than ever need safe, loving and specialist homes. So, we're creating even more places where children can thrive across the UK. Last year, we opened eight new homes across the UK to support children with emotional and behavioural difficulties, disabilities and neurodiversity. This year we'll open four new ones between April and October 2026 in Swansea, Warwickshire, Flintshire and Northumberland.

In England, we are growing our network of specialised, accessible homes so more disabled children have safety, comfort and the chance to flourish in a stable and nurturing home. Rouncil Lane in Warwickshire and Acorn House in Northumberland are being transformed into three-bed homes for disabled young people, fully furnished and upgraded thanks to supporter donations. Silverton Home in Hamilton is being redeveloped into a long-term, nurturing home for two disabled children. In Edinburgh, we opened Al Rahman House, a bespoke home providing 24/7 specialist care for a young person with highly complex needs.

Thanks to our supporters' generosity, we're upgrading the sensory rooms, playgrounds and facilities at Camden and Islington Short Breaks, creating a welcoming space where disabled children can relax, play and thrive for years to come. A generous donation from longstanding supporters has enabled us to install specialist outdoor play equipment at Renfrewshire Short Breaks, Kilbarchan, and Castlelaw near Edinburgh, transforming the experience for the children who use these services.

As mental health challenges among young people rise, we're strengthening our support, so they don't face them alone. We offer one-to-one emotional wellbeing support, counselling and guided self-help to help them understand and manage their feelings.

We know more needs to be done. Everything we learn along the way helps us influence the Government to make lasting, meaningful change, so children and young people across the UK can live safe and happy lives. We're using the current focus on those not in education, employment or training to show how our work can help them into meaningful jobs. We're also sharing new research on the barriers care leavers face when looking for work, thanks to funding from the John Lewis Partnership.

In Scotland, we're committed to reducing child poverty and improving access to family support. Ahead of the 2026 Scottish Parliament elections, we launched our Investing in Scotland's children manifesto, which calls for safer, happier childhoods. Key recommendations include a national strategy on child criminal exploitation and an increase to the Scottish Child Payment.

There is so much incredible work underway, and our ambitious plans for children and young people are only possible because of supporters like you. We are truly grateful for your support and are looking forward to everything we'll achieve together in the months ahead.

### Helping us communicate and support you better

We truly value our relationship with the Methodist Church, so we asked how we can communicate and support you better. Your thoughtful insights shared through focus groups and a survey will guide us going forward. Thank you to everyone who took part.

You told us your support is rooted in Christian values, authentic stories and our shared commitment to giving every child a safe, happy childhood. You also said you would like us to be more visible in your communities. Our online Faith Space offers updates directly from frontline staff, young ambassadors and fundraisers. Join here [actionforchildren.org.uk/faith-space](https://actionforchildren.org.uk/faith-space)

You told us that practical resources—such as posters, leaflets and real-life impact stories—are the most useful for fundraising, so we're working to make more of these available. Guest speakers and videos also remain powerful tools for inspiring giving. We've created a new inspirational video featuring Revd Helen Cameron and Christopher, a young person we've supported: <https://youtu.be/aCsofBliNdc>

Many of you highlighted the challenges of smaller congregations and reduced local contact—but we were encouraged to hear how churches are finding creative ways to fundraise, from coffee mornings to seasonal events.

The feedback is already helping shape how we communicate with and support you in the year ahead.

### Upcoming fundraising activities

Your tireless fundraising continues to contribute thousands of pounds to our work. Thank you to everyone who donates and joyfully organises events and Home Collection Boxes. Your commitment and creativity are truly inspiring.

We love **Action for Children Sunday** - a powerful reminder and celebration of what we achieve together. It is an important opportunity to highlight the challenges children face today and raise vital funds. Please celebrate with us on 12 July (or on any convenient date). The theme 'Everyone's welcome' shines a light on the life-changing impact of our fostering work. An all-age service booklet with worship ideas, stories, videos and crafts will be available in April at [actionforchildren.org.uk/faithFR](https://actionforchildren.org.uk/faithFR). Whether you host a service, a lunch, a bake sale, or something wonderfully unique to your church family, every effort—big or small—helps transform the lives of children who need us most.

With brighter weather ahead, we invite you to take part in **Step Out for Children**, our sponsored walk supporting children without safe and loving homes. A new guide to help churches and faith groups plan will be shared soon through District newsletters.

For more fundraising ideas or support with your plans contact your local fundraiser at [actionforchildren.org.uk/your-local-fundraiser](https://actionforchildren.org.uk/your-local-fundraiser).

Once again. **THANK YOU** from all of us on behalf of the children and families we support. I wish you an enjoyable time at Synod.