

Spring 2022

Newsletter

Catholic
Children's
Society



CCS supporters help thousands of children & families over the winter

Your support has made a huge difference to disadvantaged families over the challenging winter months.

With rising energy prices and food costs, many parents are having to work extra jobs – and even longer hours – just to cover their rent, pay bills and put food on the table for their children.

For these families who live hand to mouth, life can be very uncertain. When an unexpected crisis happens, through no fault of their own, their whole world can unravel.

Thankfully, supporters of the Catholic Children's Society (CCS) have been there for the most vulnerable families this winter, giving them support and hope when they needed it most.

“When I became ill I thought that we would be evicted and I was so scared.

Your help made such a difference and got my family through this horrible time.

Thank you for your kindness.”

A mother of three young children who had just been diagnosed with breast cancer.

How you helped Michael when he could not provide beds for his children



Michael lives with his wife and three boys aged five, four and six months. He works as a caretaker and lives with his family in a two-bed flat.

In December the block of flats became infested with rats. The rats got into their flat through the children's bedroom and their beds became soiled with rat faeces. They had to throw away the children's beds and the family all slept in the parents' bedroom. Mum and the three boys shared a double bed whilst Michael slept on the floor.

Michael complained but the landlord refused to do anything. The family could not afford to move - Michael's salary only just covered food and bills. Not knowing where to turn, Michael approached his children's school for advice.

The school got in touch with CCS to see if we could help. We guided Michael through the complaints procedure and helped him draft a formal letter to his local MP.

The landlord finally took action and called in pest control. The family were incredibly relieved that the rats had gone but they were left with no beds or bedding for the children.

CCS were able to provide a bunk bed, cot and bedding so that all the children had somewhere warm and comfortable to sleep.

The Headteacher got in touch to say:

"I just told the children the news . . . I can't tell you how excited the boys are to be getting their very own beds. Seeing their faces was such a magical moment. Thank you for this incredible gift."

Leave a gift in your will and transform the lives of children and families

By leaving a gift in your will, you can help the Catholic Children's Society provide support for disadvantaged children long into the future.

The will company Kwil are currently offering CCS supporters a free will writing service. For more information about Kwil or other ways you can leave a gift, please go to our website <https://www.cathchild.org.uk/leave-a-gift-in-your-will/> or contact Katie Waring by calling **020 8969 5305** or emailing katiew@cathchild.org.uk



A record 2,151 people helped through this year's Christmas Gift Appeal!

With the help of individuals, parishes and schools, we were able to distribute food, presents and vouchers to more children than ever before.

Gifts were given to vulnerable families facing a range of challenges. Those who received gifts included refugee children, young carers, families fleeing domestic violence and children who had recently lost a loved one.

This year we were also able to help women and young children who have been trafficked. Your gifts brought these children and their families so much joy and hope at Christmas.



"I cannot believe your kindness and that there are strangers out there who don't know me or my children but still want to help us. I can't wait to give my children their presents on Christmas day, thank you so much. You have saved our Christmas."

A mother living in a safe house after being trafficked with her young children

How you helped Charlotte when her grandmother died

CCS trains schools to deliver the Rainbows Bereavement Support Programme, which helps children who have experienced a significant loss in their lives.

Since the pandemic began, we have scaled up this service and trained over 1,100 staff from across 83 schools.

Nine-year-old Charlotte is just one of hundreds of children who have been able to access this programme. Charlotte and her grandmother were incredibly close. Her grandmother used to collect Charlotte from school and they spent every day together during the holidays.

Last year Charlotte's life changed forever when her grandmother died of Covid. Charlotte was completely devastated and her character seemed to change overnight.

She went from being happy and polite to having frequent angry outbursts. At home she would shut herself away in her room and refuse to speak to anyone.



Charlotte joined a Rainbows group at her school. By attending weekly sessions with other children, Charlotte saw that she was not alone and that other people had lost someone too. Children in the group spoke about how they were feeling and she realised they also felt angry and sad and that this was completely normal.

Charlotte's mum said:

"She is so much calmer now. She loves coming to the group, she says she feels safe there because she can talk about how she's feeling and not feel judged. We are so grateful for this help."

CCS brings children back to the Cathedral

In December, thousands of children returned to Westminster Cathedral for the CCS Advent Carol Service.

After a year away from the Cathedral, the children were very excited to return and hear this special telling of the Christmas story. Clover the donkey and Lily the goat were also very pleased to see the children again.

A Headteacher got in touch to say:

“It was so lovely to be back here again. This is a highlight of our year and the children have been so excited. Everything feels normal and happy - and that is so important for the children.”



Thank you for joining us at the Benefactors' Mass

Thank you to all the supporters who were able to join us in December for our annual Benefactors' Mass.

St Etheldreda's Church looked particularly beautiful, and our Chairman Fr Michael was delighted to meet some of our supporters in person. You are warmly invited to this year's Mass, which will be held on Sunday 27th November at 2pm. We very much hope to see you there!



Nine spaces available for this year's London Marathon!

On Sunday 2nd October, take on this iconic event for disadvantaged children and families.

Our four runners did a fantastic job in 2021 and raised over £9,000 for CCS! One supporter, Mark, is running for CCS again this year – and not just the London Marathon, but four more marathons too!

If you or anyone you know would like to join Mark and run the London Marathon for CCS, please contact Emily Mundon by emailing emilym@cathchild.org.uk

