

**Achieving
for Children**

**IMPACT
REPORT
2024-25**



**achieving
for children**

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Welcome

We are Achieving for Children (AfC), a not for profit organisation that is focused on supporting the children and young people of the Royal Borough of Kingston, the London Borough of Richmond and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, to live safe, happy, healthy and successful lives.

This is our impact report for 2024/25. It sets out what we have been doing over the past 12 months and highlights some of our proudest achievements. This year marks a significant milestone for Achieving for Children, as we celebrate 10 years since our launch on 1 April 2014. As we reflect on a decade of delivering high-quality services for children and families, we also look ahead with renewed focus.

In 2024, we refreshed our strategic plan to ensure it reflects the evolving needs of our communities and builds on the strong foundations we've established. This has led to a busy and productive year, not only in delivering our core services, but also in driving forward new initiatives that support our long-term vision.

View [Achieving for Children's Strategic Plan 2024 to 2029](#).

Section One: Who we are

We are a workforce of more than 1,700 dedicated professionals, all committed to improving the lives of children, young people, and their families. At the heart of our work is a firm belief in co-production and listening to the voices of those we support. We ensure that children and young people help shape the services they use, not only within Achieving for Children, but also across our wider partnership networks.

Our integrated delivery model brings together education, health, and social care to provide responsive support. By working in a coordinated way, we strive to create seamless experiences that help children and families thrive.

Strong partnerships underpin our approach. We collaborate closely with local authorities, schools, early years settings, colleges, health and care providers, police, and voluntary organisations. Together, we champion the best outcomes for those who live, learn, and grow up in our communities.

We are good at what we do

....as demonstrated by a range of positive inspection outcomes.

- 100% of schools across Kingston and Richmond rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding'
- 93% of Windsor and Maidenhead schools rated as 'Good' or 'Outstanding'
- Our children's social care services are judged by Ofsted as 'Outstanding' in Kingston and Richmond, and as 'Good' in Windsor and Maidenhead, with 'Outstanding' in Windsor and Maidenhead for care leavers, representing significant progress since 2020
- Our independent fostering agency (IFA), which operates across all three boroughs, has been judged 'Good'
- We are 'Good' across all areas following the Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection of our Health Visiting and School Nursing Service in Windsor and Maidenhead
- Our youth offending services in Kingston and Richmond, Windsor and Maidenhead are judged as 'Good'
- Our residential children's home in Richmond is rated as 'Good'
- Our Way to Work apprenticeship is rated as 'Good'

While we're proud of the external recognition we've received, we know there is always more to do. We remain focused on continuous improvement, ensuring our services evolve to meet the changing needs of our children, young people, and families.

Key information about Achieving for Children



124,824

children and young
people aged 0 to
19 across the three
boroughs



5,329

children and
young people

We support 5,329 children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities who have an education health and care plan.



9,074

additional
school places

Since 2014, we have delivered **9,074** additional school places, including expanding SEND* provision in mainstream schools and five new free schools.



165

of schools across
the three boroughs

We support **165** schools to deliver high quality teaching and learning.



10,000

young people

More than **10,000** young people each year regularly use our youth services to take part in positive activities that develop their interests and talents.



13,031

families

More than **13,031** families attend children's centres or family hubs for health appointments, to access local childcare, or for activities that help their children get ready for school.



1,785

families

We have completed early help assessments for **1,785** of our families to identify what support they may need from us.



2,890

children and young
people supported by
social care services

733 who are children in need
404 on child protection plans
384 who are children looked after

*Special education needs and disabilities

Section Two: Stories of impact

The following section showcases just a few examples of the meaningful impact we have made in the lives of children, young people, and families over the past year. While we achieved a great deal more than we can capture in a single report, we are proud to highlight these moments as a reflection of our dedicated workforce and the positive difference we continue to make.

Strategic priority 1: Safe and healthy

We are committed to equipping children, young people and families with the tools, skills and confidence they need to navigate life's challenges and lead healthy, independent and fulfilling lives. Our services take a reflective, collaborative and strengths-based approach, working with the whole family to build on what's already working well. By supporting parents to make positive and lasting changes, we help create safe, nurturing environments where children can thrive.

Befriending and mentoring scheme

In Kingston and Richmond, this year marked the second year of the befriending and mentoring scheme funded by the Department for Education, which continued to provide valuable one-to-one mentoring support to young people newly arrived in the UK. Ten young people accessed regular mentoring sessions, with the aim of strengthening their connections to the local community and supporting them to feel more confident and settled in their new country.

Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. One young person shared:

“Well, X is a very good person and very kind and self-controlled, and I have never seen her get bored or angry with me for asking her a lot of questions. She listens to you, never disrespects you, and respects your words, culture, everything. I really don't know how to describe her. She's a very good person.”

A mentor reflected on the progress of the young person they supported:

“During our last session we visited the Science Museum. M seemed laid back, he enjoyed himself, talked about things he likes and was in very good spirits. I've seen a change in his commitment to learning, which is really positive – he's now willing to look things up and ask questions, which he didn't do before.”

Families First and Families Together teams

In Kingston and Richmond, the Families First Team is a multi-disciplinary team of practitioners working with families that present with a trio of vulnerabilities (domestic abuse, mental health, substance misuse). Over 445 families have been supported and data has shown that for most families, where the Families First Team provides support, they are less likely to need as much help going forward and are better equipped to help themselves.

Here is what some of our families had to say about the support they received:

“ It felt really different and important to be working one-to-one with [worker] on my own mental health. It helped me recognise the ways in which I could prioritise myself, which resulted in me being able to make better choices and be more present in my parenting. It also helped support me in recognising and naming an emotionally abusive relationship for what it was and helping put safe boundaries in place. ”

“ I have loved working with my worker. I always felt understood, supported and listened to, never any judgement or pressure. ”

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Connective parenting course (Kingston and Richmond)

This intensive eight week program, informed by trauma-focused cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), saw 90% to 100% reductions in child-to-parent violence and verbal aggression, and 100% increased child-to-parent positive interactions among participants..

Parent feedback included:

“ I’ve learned so much about myself and my son’s needs and strategies to use. ”

“ The violence has gone from 100% to 15%. This course has changed our lives. ”

“ It has made me focus on the benefits of staying calm... and... My relationship with my daughter has completely changed—she actually wants to spend time with me now. ”

Practitioner feedback:

“ Ideally, I would love every parent with ADHD children to access this. It would align with NICE guidelines and be a real resource for Families. ”

“ (4 year old child’s) behaviour at school has improved so much due to parents’ improved ability to respond to him. ”

“ There are a million books that tell parents what to do; it’s the understanding that is missing, and that’s what makes this course so valuable. ”

Mental health and wellbeing services

Our Wellbeing Service in Windsor and Maidenhead, established in 2015, supports children and young people with mental health concerns, including a Systemic Wellbeing Service launched in May 2023. Our strengths and difficulties questionnaire (SDQ) performance has improved, with 89% of children having an SDQ score submitted by December 2024, enabling timely identification and support for emotional distress.

In Kingston and Richmond, the Emotional Health Service (EHS) is embedded in teams, providing consultations to social workers and direct work with children and young people.

Since its 2021 launch, the emotionally related school avoidance (ERSA) toolkit has helped increase overall school attendance, in particular by 1.9% in Windsor and Maidenhead schools this year. The Pupil Inclusion and Educational Psychology Service hosted a multi-agency event to co-produce a graduated ERSA pathway for schools and local services, with child voice at its heart. This pathway offers a tiered approach to identifying, assessing, and supporting children, young people, and families experiencing ERSA.

The Anchor Centre is a specialist social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) hub offering a 12 week intervention programme supporting pupils with school readiness and emotional regulation. Of the 17 children supported at the Anchor throughout the academic year 2024-25, 15 transitioned back into their school successfully.



Strategic priority 2: Positive futures

Our aspiration is to provide good quality and inclusive provision, enabling young people to stay within their home communities and close to established networks. We continuously evaluate local provision needs and work with partners to build a strong local offer, including education, employment, social care, and health services.

Kinship care

Kinship care refers to the arrangement where a child is looked after by relatives or close family friends when their parents are unable to care for them. Kinship care helps maintain family and community connections, providing children with stability and a sense of belonging during challenging times. We are working on creating a stronger model of kinship care across Achieving for Children.

- Kingston: Connected placements with relatives or friends: 11 to 15 (December 2023 to 2024)
- Richmond: Connected placements with relatives or friends: 9 to 10 (December 2023 to 2024)
- RBWM: Connected placements with relatives or friends: 12 to 23 (December 2023 to 2024)



Local accommodation for children in care

We are investing in and developing local and good quality accommodation options for children who cannot live with their birth families.

In Kingston, a new three bed children's home is progressing and is expected to be operational in 2026.

In Windsor and Maidenhead, Cabinet approved plans in July 2024 to develop an in-borough children's home, expected to be operational by September 2025.

Both of these new children's homes will act as sister sites to our existing provision, Hope House, in Richmond. Expanding our in-borough provision will mean that more children can stay closer to familiar surroundings, schools, friends, and family whilst ensuring the support they receive is consistent and high quality

Excellence in education

We are really proud of the excellent school standards in Kingston, Richmond, and Windsor and Maidenhead that are amongst the highest in the country. Outcomes remained high in summer 2024 across all key stages.

Achieving for Children's Attachment Aware Schools Award programme has enrolled 93 schools across Windsor and Maidenhead, influencing all aspects of school life to promote relational approaches to behaviour and reduce exclusions.

The Transition Hub in Kingston and Richmond, targeting children with persistent absence, has seen 77% of its cohort improve their school attendance.

Way2Work apprenticeship programme

As an approved apprenticeship training provider, Way2Work offers high-quality apprenticeships and supports vulnerable learners, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and care leavers. 97% of learners' progress into higher apprenticeships, employment, or further training, and 92% rate the quality of teaching and learning as good or better.

Feedback from learners included:

- “ It gave me a starting point and access to my university course of primary education. ”
- “ Way2Work are very supportive. They make sure to help you in every aspect if that's different skills, communication, different services that may be in your job role. They also make you feel like you are the best and that you are doing a good job. A massive mention to Ann as she was the best assessor. She would help me with everything from work and apprenticeship bits and even my anxiety. I would 100% recommend Way2Work! ”

Preparing for adulthood

Achieving for Children and TAG Youth Club successfully organised and hosted a comprehensive transition and careers event, specifically designed for young people aged 14 to 25. The event welcomed numerous school groups, as well as families, parents, carers, and young people from the wider community.

This impactful gathering served as a vital platform for young people and their families to connect directly with a diverse range of professionals, service providers, and employers. The primary aim was to empower attendees to strategically plan and 'piece together' their futures, particularly as they navigated the crucial transitions into adulthood.

Attendees had the valuable opportunity to explore a wealth of local resources and support. The event featured a wide array of exhibitors and services, including local colleges and employers, employment support services, supported internship and apprenticeship providers, social care and health services, leisure activities, youth services and voluntary sector organisations.

Dedicated breakout areas facilitated in-depth discussions on key topics such as transition planning and employment opportunities. Throughout the event, participants actively engaged with stallholders, learning about their specific offerings and participating in activities.

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Inclusive services for young people with special educational needs and disabilities

Significant progress has been made over the past 12 months to improve the quality of key areas within the SEND system. To keep pace with evolving local needs, the emergence of Integrated Care Systems, and the national SEND and alternative provision improvement plan, Windsor and Maidenhead has a robust SEND strategy, while Kingston and Richmond have updated their respective SEND futures plans. These strategies and plans detail how our local area SEND partnership will continuously improve services for children, young people, and their families, all within our available financial resources.

Our work has successfully supported young people like Harry, who has autism, to secure paid employment after participating in AfC's not in education, employment or training (NEET) programmes and a supported internship with a local large multinational company. During his time at the company he was able to carry out a project with their document handling team and was able to use his photography skills to support the team with digital marketing. As a result he was able to secure paid employment at a local arts centre.

Harry...

“ I'm extremely grateful for the support I received from AfC and the experience I gained (at the company) and Project Search as both experiences helped me to be more confident in a workplace. ”

A spotlight on the Windsor and Maidenhead Inclusion Summit

The sixth Inclusion Summit was held on the 20 May at the Royal Windsor Racecourse in Windsor. It was an amazing opportunity for professionals in education, health and the voluntary sector to come together with parents and carers to discuss the progress and steps we can take to make RBWM, a place of inclusion for all children and young people (0 to 25) with special educational needs and disabilities.

The Inclusion Summit was co-produced by SEND Voices RBWM (our parent and carer forum), Achieving for Children, the Independent Advice and Support Service (IAS), Children and Young People's Integrated Therapy Service (CYPIT) and schools.

The marketplace was a bustling environment with 16 stalls made up of different services and all providing information on the support they can provide families and professionals. The marketplace included the Children and Young People's Disability Service and SEND, Pawsable, GEMS, the Local Offer, Citizens Advice Berkshire and AV1 Robots by No Isolation.

The day included:

- 143 attendees
- 16 exhibitors in the marketplace
- 6 different workshops
- Berkshire Healthcare Health Bus and Stand Out for Autism Sensory Bus
- School Dog of the Year Award - The winners were Lanson from Manor Green School and Poppy from Hilltop School, both receiving a very yummy and fun doggy hamper
- Sensory Space competition - The winners were Eton Wick First School and Newlands Girls School, both receiving a £500 sensory equipment voucher
- The star attraction of the day, a performance by the children from Manor Green School



What some participants had to say about the event

“ **Very Informative. Lots more available in the local borough, of which I knew nothing about before.** ”

Parent

“ **Really encouraged by the genuine passion for continuous improvement.** ”

Health professional

“ **The room was buzzing with ideas and connections being made at the Inclusion Summit. It was clear that many passionate people are working hard to make our schools more inclusive, and I was impressed with the creative ideas for improving inclusion in RBWM. The guest speakers and workshops were of high quality, and as a parent, I found them valuable.** ”

Councillor Amy Tisi

Strategic priority 3: Stronger families

We aim to support families and young people to develop the skills, knowledge and confidence they need to navigate life's challenges and build independent, fulfilling lives. Our services take a whole-family approach that is reflective, collaborative and strengths-based, focusing on what is already working well. By working in partnership with families, we help parents make positive and lasting changes that strengthen the care and support they provide to their children. The following examples highlight how we have contributed to building stronger families across our communities.

Developing family hubs

Based on our successfully established family hubs for Windsor and Maidenhead, we have progressed development of family hubs in Kingston and Richmond which aim to provide universal, early intervention, and targeted support for families. Over 800 children have received one-to-one support, and over 7,000 children and young people have attended group sessions on various topics such as digital safety, drug and alcohol awareness, and self-esteem. The impact of family hubs means that families, children and young people have a single access point for services, allowing them to receive help and intervention at an earlier stage, addressing issues before they escalate.

We provide a full menu of interventions to improve parents' skills and knowledge, such as the positive parenting programme and baby massage classes. Our family hub model includes our health visiting services, which offer all families with a new baby a health assessment within two weeks of birth. It was inspected this year and we were really pleased to receive a 'Good' Ofsted rating which demonstrates the positive impact we are having.

Our Family Hub in Kingston achieved the prestigious UNICEF Baby Friendly Level 3 Award. The assessment report recognises the range of support offered to new parents, the excellent knowledge and real enthusiasm shown by the staff team, and their approachability, kindness and warmth.

Further family hubs in Kingston and Richmond are due to launch in October 2025, at Old Malden in Kingston, and Heatham House in Richmond.



Holiday activities and food (HAF) programme - FUEL

In its fifth year, FUEL, which stands for 'feed your everyday lives' programme in Kingston, Richmond, Windsor and Maidenhead provided fun activities and food to children eligible for free school meals during school holidays. 52 different partners delivered the programme, with over 3,000 children and young people attending, including over 200 children with additional needs.

Some of the feedback from parents and children included:

- “ I love coming here (Wilderness forest school), I get to dig things up and see all the worms. ”
- “ I really liked the food. Today we made pizzas and I got to pick the toppings I wanted. I put peppers on and I called it a pepper pizza. ”
- “ I loved football and go karts, it is super fun and the coaches are very kind. ”
- “ I booked my daughter into the (FUEL) programme because I needed essential childcare whilst I was working and to provide a fun day out for her, something I would otherwise not have been able to do. The free hot lunch was a welcome bonus! Koosa Kids holiday club was recommended to me and the location was very convenient. ”
- “ It was so helpful not having to worry about a packed lunch, but knowing they were having a hot, healthy meal everyday! ”

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Parenting programme offer

Our evidence-based parenting programmes in Kingston and Richmond conducted 23 courses, with 76% of 119 individuals completing the entire course. The Parent Champion Network has recruited 20 parent volunteers in Kingston and supported 864 parents in Kingston and Richmond through group sessions, workshops, and coffee mornings. Windsor and Maidenhead offers a variety of parenting courses, including Triple P, Incredible Years, and the Freedom Programme, in groups and one-to-one

Strategic priority 4: Dynamic workforce

We want Achieving for Children to be an adaptable, inclusive and forward-looking organisation that is able to respond to the changing needs of children, young people and families across our boroughs. By creating an efficient and supportive working environment and investing in a stable, skilled workforce, we aim to ensure our teams have the tools and support they need to make a lasting difference.

The following examples showcase how we worked to shape brighter futures and improve outcomes for the children and young people we serve.

Staff recognition

Over the past year, we've continued to celebrate our colleagues through the Kudos recognition scheme and our much-anticipated in-person annual staff awards. These initiatives are a key part of how we acknowledge the everyday efforts and exceptional contributions made across the organisation.

This year's staff awards were more popular than ever, with an impressive 630 nominations, an increase of 34% from last year's total. The nominations reflected the creativity, commitment, and compassion of our teams, with award categories including Everyday Hero, Rising Star, Diversity and Inclusion, Rise and Shine, Voice of the Child, Bright Ideas, and Champion for Children.

In total there were:

- 37 winners
- 28 runners up
- 44 honourable mentions

We're deeply committed to celebrating and retaining our incredible workforce, yet we also recognise the significant challenges many managers face in recruiting new talent. In today's competitive market, effectively promoting the comprehensive benefits package we offer is absolutely vital for our current employees and prospective new hires.

We understand the need to review and adjust our approaches to attracting and retaining talent in our organisation. To help our managers, we have developed a range of resources to improve recruitment attraction, selection, and onboarding. For example, we now have 'cheat sheets' for managers to use when hosting interviews, resources that help showcase Achieving for Children as an employer of choice, and training that promotes safer recruitment.

Staff training and development

Once in a role at AfC, we are committed to providing opportunities for career progression across our teams. For example, the organisation supports a number of different routes into the social work profession, which includes 'Step up into social work and the social work apprenticeship offer.

Learning and development plays a pivotal role, spanning our Social Work Academy and our Leadership Centre of Excellence. Ensuring we have leaders equipped for the future means we have adapted our programmes of support. There is now a one-stop shop of resources, training, and useful contacts that our leaders and managers can use. This includes access to the annual week-long leadership summit. However, our training offer is not the only package of support, there is a comprehensive wellness at work programme, resources to support health and wellbeing, and a newsletter that shares blogs and wellbeing reminders - all of which is managed by our dedicated sub-group.

The positive impact of our workforce development initiatives is perhaps best captured by the direct feedback from our staff:

- “ Thank you Hilary for providing a really useful chronology training session for CWD Family Support Team. You made the session really engaging and the team will now be completing chronologies for all children open to the service. You're a star. ”
- “ Thank you for taking time out of your new role, to deliver comprehensive training for the team today. It was a valuable session and I am grateful you were able to make the time for it. ”
- “ This training provided me with an in-depth understanding of the subject, whilst also making it interesting and relevant to my current role. Many thanks. ”
- “ Thank you for organising and delivering the CPIPs competency training session for the Physio team. It was really helpful to refresh our skills! ”

Efficient working through digital

As an organisation, we are always trying to find ways to work smarter. Our newly published 'beDigital' strategy is defining how we will harness technology to adapt and excel in a rapidly changing digital world, ensuring we continue to improve our services.

This strategy builds on the successful, two-year modernisation of our ICT infrastructure, a collaborative effort with the Kingston and Sutton ICT Service. With beDigital, we are now embedding a digital mindset throughout AfC, fostering a joined-up approach that enhances how we collect and collate data, automate processes, upskill our workforce, and ultimately better the user experience for the families we work with, paving the way for our ambitious digital future.

- Our digital customer platform has improved access to services, enabling 24,712 submissions, 5,669 bookings, 5,894 payments, and the registration of 3,462 residents with online accounts. A total of 156 processes are now live and available digitally.
- In Windsor and Maidenhead, we successfully migrated to our new case management system, Liquidlogic. Practitioners will now be using a single system to record the outcomes of their work with families.
- We rolled out the Google Gemini AI assistant to all staff members to support more efficient, responsive ways of working.
- Working alongside care leavers, we've co-designed an AI-enabled support app, to transform how they access support, ensuring it reflects their lived experience.
- In children's social care, over 200 practitioners are now piloting Magic Notes, an AI tool designed to reduce administrative burden and enhance case recording.
- We continue to deploy robotic process automation (RPA) to streamline data processing in key services such as our Single Point of Access and School Admissions teams.
- We've also started leveraging machine learning for document translation, making content more accessible for families.



An inclusive and diverse workplace

Our strong focus on equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) has continued during 2024/25.

- Our staff-led EDI Board has continued to be instrumental in driving forward EDI improvements across the organisation.
- Our employee networks - we are delighted to have a fully established menopause, neurodiversity and LGBTQ+ Allies, networks led by staff.
- This year, the Ramadan Challenges returned to AfC with Muslim staff inviting colleagues to share one day of fasting with their Muslim colleagues to raise understanding and awareness of the challenges and rewards of observing Ramadan. Last year, colleagues who joined in the days fast felt humbled by the task and were keen to do it again the following year.



Section Three: Reflections and forward look

The past year, 2024/2025, has been a period of significant progress and dedication for Achieving for Children. We have consistently delivered on our commitment to support children, young people, and families across all our strategic priorities: ensuring they are safe and healthy, enabling positive futures, building stronger families, and fostering a dynamic workforce.

We have seen tangible impacts, from improved health outcomes and educational achievements to enhance support for our most vulnerable young people and greater engagement from families in shaping our services. Our continued investment in innovative programs, robust partnerships, and the development of our talented workforce underscores our ambition to continuously improve and adapt to the evolving needs of our communities.

As we look ahead, we remain focused on our mission to ensure every child

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Thank you

Our achievements over the past year have only been possible thanks to the continued dedication of our staff, the engagement of children, young people and families, and the strong partnerships we hold across our communities. We look forward to having further positive impact over the coming year.

To find out more about Achieving for Children and the work we do, please visit [our website](#).

