

Children in Scotland

ANNUAL REPORT 2015-16

OUR VISION

Scotland will become a world leader in securing the wellbeing of every child and improving the quality of every childhood.

Children in Scotland works to improve the life of every child in Scotland. We do this by working closely with children, young people, their families, our members, and partners on projects in a range of settings. We also provide a national voice for all in the children's sector to influence change and improvement in our legislation, policy and practices at national and local levels.

We are privileged to work with more than 550 children's sector organisations and individuals in our membership. With this broad reach, Children in Scotland fulfils a fully independent role of intermediary. We facilitate engagement, partnership, learning and communication with and among policymakers, practitioners and children and families, united by our shared ambition to improve the lives of Children in Scotland.

It has been both a challenging and rewarding year and we would like to extend our thanks to all who have worked with us to help achieve our vision.



2015-16: The year in brief...

Improving local and national policy and practice

556 members

Engaging and involving children and young people

9,100 Twitter followers

Improving opportunities for children and young people

276,756 website views

149 learning events

- The **Commission for Childcare Reform**'s final report published with key recommendations on how childcare in Scotland might be organised, delivered and paid for. Key calls debated at First Minister's Questions and National Strategic Working Group established.
- Corporate partners and funding secured to run **Food, Families, Futures** pilots in five primary schools, addressing links between food poverty, education and wellbeing.
- Ten-point **manifesto for improving children's lives** published in the run-up to the Scottish parliamentary election. Our calls focus on:
 - * Championing participation and inclusion
 - * Prioritising early intervention and prevention
 - * Removing inequalities and combating poverty.
- Children in Scotland **amendment to the Education (Scotland) Bill passed in the Scottish Parliament** requiring Children's Services Plans to report on how health boards and local authorities, as well as education, have contributed to reducing inequalities in pupil attainment.
- Provided **expertise to support drafting of guidance** on implementation of Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.
- Worked **collaboratively with children and young people** to:
 - * Establish the aims and objectives for the **2018 Year of Young People** (in partnership with Young Scot and Scottish Youth Parliament)
 - * Understand how Wheatley Housing Group could better meet their needs (**Beyond 4 Walls**)
 - * Represent their views in the **Children in Scotland magazine** with introduction of a new regular feature *In my own words*.
- Delivered **LifeSkills sessions to 4,000 young people** in areas of disadvantage across Scotland.
- Children in Scotland **leadership team created** to focus on the development of leadership across the organisation.
- Reached **highest membership level** since organisation began recording, with a 25% increase in 2015-16.
- Most successful annual conference yet with **more than 300 delegates** from across the children's sector.
- 70% increase in social media following to around **9,100 Twitter followers**.
- 20% increase in learning events to 149, delivering a **tailored programme of professional development for the children's sector**.

The best thing about being a member is: "The opportunities it provides to meet other members, debate ideas and establish partnerships."
Ben Farruglia, Sector Engagement Lead, CELCIS.

2015-16: continued...

- Cross-party Group on Children and Young People brings together more than 200 people. Produces the **Child Rights Manifesto** asking parliamentarians to put child rights at centre of policymaking.
- Five Children's Sector Forums with 147 attendees **enable members to engage in developing policy positions.**
- 28 **Consultation responses informed by our membership** on legislation and policies including: childcare; digital learning; voting age; the Education (Scotland) Bill and National Improvement Framework; and the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.
- All **recommendations of The Brock Report: safeguarding Scotland's vulnerable children from child abuse accepted** by Scottish Government.
- Children in Scotland magazine continues to provide **analysis, news, interviews and updates on legislation, research and best practice.** Highlights include: contributions from poverty advisor Naomi Eisenstadt and Cabinet Secretary for Education Angela Constance.
- Lead agency on the **International School Meals Programme** in partnership with United States Government, British Council and World Bank.
- Hosted **international conference in partnership with Eurochild** sharing learning and practice on the inclusion of disabled children.
- Expert speakers from across the UK and internationally provide **inspiration for Scotland's children's sector** including: Margo Sunderland; Rob Eastaway; Kobe Vanroy; and Biljana Janjic.
- Website developed to support the Scottish Government's **Realigning Children's Services programme**, with bespoke information for families and professionals.

Children in Scotland has continued to manage and support **key national services**

This year we are preparing to welcome **Parenting Across Scotland** to our head office in Edinburgh. The organisation aims to support families in bringing up their children by providing information and support for parents, carrying out research and influencing policymakers. We also continue to host:

- **Enquire**, the independent Scottish advice and information service for additional support for learning
- **Resolve**, the largest mediation provider in Scotland
- **National Parent Forum of Scotland**, which works to ensure that parents' voices are promoted locally and nationally to help every school pupil maximise their potential.

The best thing about being a member is: *"Being part of such a diverse network and opportunities to share our work with other Children in Scotland members."*
Cathy McCulloch, Co-Director, the Children's Parliament.

Providing information, advice, opportunities and inspiration for the children's sector

2,809 learning delegates

Achieving international reach

7,200 magazine readers

Supporting the delivery of key national services

56 mediation cases handled by Resolve

1595 calls to the Enquire helpline

Values and strategic priorities

These values underpin all of our work:

Respect and trust

We treat everyone with respect and trust and value their unique contribution – children, young people and their families, our staff and volunteers, our members and all our stakeholders.

Collaboration and participation

We are committed to working together, with active participation and inclusion of children, young people and their families, our staff and volunteers, our members and all our stakeholders.

Transparency and integrity

We share our thinking and are committed to honesty and openness in all our work.

Informed, focused and accountable

We are committed to keeping up to date, working towards defined goals and taking responsibility for our actions.

The best thing about being a member is: "Working on partnership projects that are firmly focused on improving children's lives." Maureen McKenna, Director of Education, Glasgow City Council

Our four strategic priority aims are:

Childhood

As well as supporting GIRFEC, we are providing leadership in increasing the provision of free childcare. This year the Commission for Childcare Reform published its recommendations.

Learning

We work to create a culture where children are empowered to be leaders of their own learning, and a society where schools are hubs providing support for their communities.

Health and wellbeing

We support children, young people, families, professionals and policymakers from all sectors to recognise the importance of wellbeing to achieving all outcomes for every child and young person, particularly those in poverty and with additional support needs.

A stronger children's sector

We maximise the power and influence of Scotland's children's sector by building and supporting our membership and by creating an increasing range of strong partnerships.

Financial report 2015-16

	£
Income	
Grants and contracts	1,594,373
Training, events & conferences	251,083
Membership	107,833
Donations	41,427
Publications	8,569
Other	25,775
Total	2,029,060
Expenditure	
Charitable activities	2,016,911
Total	2,016,911
Total surplus for the year	12,149
of which restricted (surplus)	90,026
of which restricted (deficit)	(77,877)

An overall surplus has been recorded for the year ending 31 March 2016.

There has been a utilisation of unrestricted reserves of £77,877 and an increase of £90,026 retained in restricted reserves for the continuation of specific projects. The utilisation of unrestricted funds in the year is as a result of operating in a very challenging environment throughout 2015/16.

Income increased from the prior year level of £1.8m to over £2m in 2015/16. This increase is as a result of the continuation of existing grant-funded work from the prior year, augmented by increases in fee income, events income and membership income.

As at 31 March 2016 the unrestricted funds of Children in Scotland stood at £102,717. A strategy is in place to gradually build up the unrestricted funds.