

Children in Scotland 2014-15

Annual Report

Our vision is that Scotland becomes a world leader in achieving the wellbeing of every child and improving the quality of every childhood



**439
Members
(5% increase
on 2013-14)**

**2,685 event
attendees**

**116 CPD
events**

**5,836
Twitter
followers**

**7,000
magazine
readers**

**1,880 calls
to Enquire**

**48 mediation
cases
(Resolve: ASL)**

**202 UK and
Scotland
media
mentions**



**BIG
FUND**

Children in Scotland
every child - every childhood

The year in brief...

2014-15 was a particularly busy period on all fronts at Children in Scotland. Changes in our infrastructure included a move of premises, a new membership management database and the launch of our new website. In spite of this, our active work across the sector continued “business as usual” and we were able to deliver on our commitments.

Sharing learning from all our project work is a priority. Examples of this across the year included our annual conference, held in partnership with Perth and Kinross council, drawing together more than 200 delegates from across the children’s sector; the launch of *The Brock Report* on child protection written by Chief Executive Jackie Brock, which captured wide-spread media and political interest; and a children’s summit for Scottish Government to help shape ideas and planning for the 2018 Year of Young People.

Other key projects were Better Eating, Better Learning (BEBL), where school pupils shared their thinking and work on how to improve school food services in Scotland; International School Meals Day, which reached more than 80 countries; the publication of an interim report from schools involved in our Leaders of Learning programme; a partnership event with NHS Lothian to launch their Children’s Services strategy; and our annual Enquire conference, exploring new thinking and aspirations in the field of Additional Support for Learning.

In March we responded to the interim findings of the Commission for Childcare Reform, established by the Childcare Alliance chaired by Jackie Brock, which outlined its vision of how to achieve high-quality, affordable and accessible childcare in Scotland. In advance of making its final calls, the Commission embarked on sessions across the country seeking views and challenges on its proposals.

Our social media profile continues to grow, with Twitter awarding us their coveted ‘Blue Tick’ status, usually reserved for organisations much larger in scale than Children in Scotland.

We launched our new “club membership” scheme in April 2014. The Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS) became our first club members at a reduced rate. This year we have exceeded our membership target, achieving the highest number of members ever recorded for Children in Scotland: 439.

We also found time to develop new work programmes for 2015, including further development on Self-Directed Support for children and families, and continuation of Leaders of Learning (LoL) and BeXcellent. Through our valuable parent engagement work with for Scotland’s Disabled Children we can now communicate with almost 300 parents about national policy positions that affect them and their children.

We continued to work with the Scottish Government on the development of the Guidance for the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act and the Education Bill, and in collaboration with CELCIS oversaw a significant report exploring the impact of Health and Social Care on Children Services with Social Work Scotland. We are also creating a new resource, the Pupil Audit, to help embed engagement with pupils in day-to-day practice and school cultures.

In recognition of the success of Enquire and the changes children and families are experiencing in children’s services, we have been engaged in extensive talks with the Scottish Government on the expansion of this service, the detail of which has been written into the current Education (Scotland) Bill.

This year we are pleased to have made progress in our strategic priorities of Childhood, Learning, Health and Wellbeing, and Developing a Stronger Children’s Sector. This report is an overview of the activity and achievements that have enhanced our profile this year, and we very much look forward to building on these achievements later in 2015 and 2016.

“The Brock Report captured political interest”

*The Honorable
Lord Kinclaven,
Convener*

*Jackie Brock,
Chief Executive*

Children in Scotland
Board of Directors

Our influence...

Children in Scotland is the only national membership body for organisations and individuals working with children and their families across Scotland. In 2014-15 we continued to make an impact in local and national policy and practice; in representing the views of children, young people and their families; and in ensuring that the priorities of our members have national and international influence. Highlights include:

- Following publication of *The Brock Report* into how to improve Scotland's child protection processes, all of the report's key recommendations were welcomed and accepted by the Scottish Government. The Cabinet Secretary for Education also announced a review of child protection, drawing on the report's recommendations, by February 2016.
- Our unique remit meant we could provide a space for important dialogue between the Scottish Government and the sector during development of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act. We coordinated information and briefings to the sector, MSPs and the media about the Named Person legislation, helping to build support and understanding about changes that will result in greater support for children, in line with our vision and purpose.
- Our Policy staff wrote 22 responses to government consultations on topics such as the Community Empowerment Bill, the Smith Commission and the Youth Homelessness Enquiry. We ensured our members had a powerful voice in these responses, involving them in round-table discussions, forums, interest groups and online surveys.
- We ran four influential Children's Sector Forum meetings for our members, including meetings on the Children and

Young People (Scotland) Act, the Care Inspectorate Review of Care Standards, and Transforming Transitions for Young People and Families.

- Our work on projects involving children and young people, such as Better Eating, Better Learning (BEBL) and the Pupil Audit, demonstrated how young people can inform policy on healthy eating and participation in school life.
- Our Barclays LifeSkills programme, offering practical advice for 11 to 19-year-olds, building their confidence and job skills, continues to illustrate the positive impact direct work with schools and young people can have.
- The draft recommendations of the Commission for Childcare Reform were widely reported and began to shape political debate about the link between childcare and poverty in Scotland.

> Read more about our influence at Children in Scotland's website: www.childreninscotland.org.uk



Pupils from six participating schools throughout Scotland came to our BEBL event in March

“Policy staff wrote 22 responses to government consultations”

Our membership...

In 2014-15 membership numbers reached 439 – the highest since the organisation began recording. In the past financial year we have seen the benefits of making bespoke approaches to organisations and tailoring our offering; building membership into training and project proposals; raising awareness through exhibiting at events; and sharpening the membership message in our membership flyers and marketing. Our member retention rate is 93%, up from 86% in the previous year.

Members' priorities continue to shape our consultation responses and media activity, with many examples in 2014-15 of proactive press work and joint sector statements in response to Scottish and UK Government legislation.

We represent our members on an array of strategic groups including the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 Health Reference Group; the Disabled Children and Young People's Advisory

Group; Eurochild National Partner Network; the Child Sexual Exploitation Ministerial Advisory Group; and the GIRFEC National Implementation Support Group.

Our Weekly Update, monthly magazine and policy briefings share with members our latest news, best practice and developments in the sector, while staff regularly survey members to assess the quality of their membership experience.

Speaking to staff earlier this year, Jim Carle (formerly NHS Ayrshire and Arran, now head of Health and Social Care at the charity Kibble) described the value of membership from his perspective: "Health Boards are, along with everyone else, moving to a new world where partnership with the third sector has become not just a priority but critical if we are to meet our objectives.

"Children in Scotland membership is a cost-effective way of developing these critical partnerships, offering advice, guidance, courses and support to organisations who need a little help in navigating the complex third sector landscape. I have found their weekly updates extremely useful as they cover a wide range of issues and offer a real insight into what is happening across children and young people's services, keeping me up-to-date.

"I am confident that Children in Scotland recognise that partnership working is the way forward if we are to make Scotland the best place to grow up for our children and young people."

Our membership focus is continually under review, and in the coming year we will be putting in place an improved benefits package with the aim of reaching a milestone of 500 members.

> [Read more about our membership](#)

"The member retention rate is 93%, up from 86% year on year"



Membership helps to share best practice and establish strong partnership working

Our learning and development

We share our learning and development through a combination of our events and training programme, engagement with children and families, and partnership with sector organisations.

Events and training

Developed in consultation with our members and with a strong emphasis on meeting our strategic priorities, our CPD programme is an essential part of Children in Scotland's remit. The number of delegates attending our learning events increased by 547 to a total of 2,685 in 2014-15, while events across the programme received a 97% satisfaction rating. 98% of delegates at learning events responded saying they believed their learning from the event was either good or very good, and 95% felt that learning was useful or very useful to them in delivering a better quality of service to children and families. In the coming year our aim is to secure a greater number of delegates across all our events, encouraging learning and strengthening our influence.

Leaders of Learning

Leaders of Learning (LoL) is a Scottish Government-commissioned cross-sectoral approach to consulting with children and young people with the aim of identifying how well they understand their entitlement to a broad general education under Curriculum for Excellence (CfE). The work is led by us in partnership with Young Scot and Scottish Youth Parliament. The project focused on emotional wellbeing and its impact on learning; planning around teaching and learning; and digital literacy and skills. The LoL team worked with groups of children and young people in primary and secondary schools to explore these themes and develop action plans for change within schools, with findings shared at a national Summit Day in March (right).

DRIVERS

DRIVERS (2012-15) was a major European research programme aiming to promote health equity through policy and practice. We contributed an early years case study focusing on three interventions designed to address health inequalities: the Lickety Leap theatre production; the Ruchazie Family Centre delivering support to families in deprived areas; and the North Ayrshire early years service for two year olds.

I Want the Same as You

Children in Scotland was funded by the Scottish Government to make recommendations for the future delivery of independent information and support on Self-directed Support. Following consultation with children, young people and families from 2013 to 2015, proposals included the development of a National Hub, local information and support services, and raising awareness about SDS amongst the professionals who are in contact with children, young people and their families.

> Read more about our achievements in learning and development



A young person taking part in our Leaders of Learning Summit Day at Glasgow Science Centre

“95% of our event delegates said the learning was useful or very useful”

Our voice...

Children in Scotland's values and strategic priorities are expressed through our communications work, our relationships within the sector and our emphasis on dialogue with members.

Media impact

In 2014-15, we generated 202 press mentions, including news stories, opinion pieces and blogs, and 12 media appearances by chief executive Jackie Brock (pictured below) and Children in Scotland staff on TV and radio. Over the course of the year we captured media attention with the launch of the Childcare Alliance and its pledge to identify a new model of childcare for Scotland; publication of the *Brock Report* calling for improvements to Scotland's child protection processes; our reaction to the judicial review decision on the Named Person legislation; proactive work on extending of the right to vote to 16 and 17 year olds in the referendum on independence; and our strong stance alongside other sector partners on proposed anti-terror legislation likely to impact on nursery and school staff.



Children in Scotland Chief Executive Jackie Brock

An enhanced digital presence

In September 2014 we launched our new website, improving the presentation of our CPD opportunities and member content. Twitter and Facebook continue to be vital digital communications tools, with a 67% increase in our Twitter followers since the last financial year. In June 2014 we were placed seventh in the 'TESS' list of most influential education bodies on Twitter, ranking above organisations including the National Union of Students and the Educational Institute of Scotland.

On the same page

Our membership magazine, published 10 times a year and reaching 7,000 readers, continues to represent members' views and share best practice. Plans for 2015-16 include publication of a new Professional Development Guide to showcase our training and events in 2015-16, and a major publication about mindfulness work with children and young people, produced in collaboration with Stan Godek, one of our regular trainers.

Channeling children's views

Amplifying the voices of children and young people is a key aim of our participation work. We have ensured that the BeXcellent website is a space where young people can communicate about Curriculum for Excellence, while young people's voices are a core part of shaping and reporting Beyond4Walls, a peer research project commissioned by Glasgow's Wheatley Housing Group.

Annual Conference

Our Annual Conference, held in partnership with Perth and Kinross Council in November 2014, was a highlight of the year, and drew a record 270 delegates.

> Read more about our communications

"Our monthly members' magazine reaches 7,000 readers"

Our partners and services...

Children in Scotland has continued to manage and support key national services covering additional support needs and mediation. This year we established an exciting new partnership with the National Parent Forum of Scotland (NPFS), which works to ensure that parents' voices are promoted locally and nationally to help every school pupil maximise their potential.

Enquire

We manage Enquire, the independent Scottish advice and information service on additional support for learning. During the past year the service, which is funded by the Scottish Government, has seen a marked increase in the number of enquiries, with 199 additional enquiries compared to the previous year. As a result there has been a significant increase in advice to parents and service providers in relation to additional support for learning. In September Enquire launched an online map of services entitled 'Find a service'. The map lists more than 1000 services that provide education or support to access education for children with additional support needs. In 2014-15 Enquire received 1,880 calls and distributed 26,181 publications.

RESOLVE:ASL

Resolve: ASL is the largest mediation provider in Scotland and continues to assist 13 local education authorities in meeting their mediation requirements. In March Resolve celebrated its tenth anniversary. Over the past decade mediation in education has become more strongly embedded and understood and has as a result been accessed and embraced much more readily by staff, parents and young people. Resolve: ASL has been the main player in encouraging people to experience the benefits that mediation can have in reducing conflict. The

service has had an excellent year, with 90 mediation cases, with a strong focus on restoring communication and relationships. Commenting on the service offered by Resolve: ASL in Spring 2015, an education officer praised the "calmness and patience" of the mediator and said he was "very grateful for the critical part [Resolve: ASL] played in bringing about a successful outcome".

National Parent Forum of Scotland

In May 2014 Children in Scotland and the National Parent Forum of Scotland (NPFS) announced a new working partnership. NPFS was set up to give Parent Councils and parents a chance to discuss and raise educational issues of mutual interest or concern at a national level. We are delighted to be working with an organisation that makes such an effective contribution to national education policy and is seen as the go-to place for parental involvement, influence and views.

Read more on our website about Enquire, Resolve:ASL and NPFS



Advice to parents and service providers about ASN has increased significantly in 2014-15

"Resolve:ASL demonstrates how mediation can reduce conflict"

Our finances...

Financial statement (year ending 31 March 2015)

Income	£
Grants and contracts	1,328,408
Training events and conferences	184,648
Membership	98,840
Donations	61,406
Publications	7,265
Other	160,398
Total	1,840,965
Expenditure	
Activities in furtherance of objectives	1,898,925
Governance costs	12,920
Total	1,911,845
Total deficit for the year	(70,881)
of which restricted (surplus)	51,084
of which unrestricted (deficit)	(121,964)

Financial review

The total utilisation of funds in the year was £70,881. This comprises the utilisation of unrestricted reserves in the order of £121,964, offset by an increase of £51,083 retained in restricted reserves for the continuation of specific projects. The utilisation of unrestricted reserves is representative of strategic decisions taken to enhance the professional image of the organisation and to improve cross-team working, productivity and IT infrastructure in support of revenue-generating areas. It includes the costs associated with our premises move and a significant investment in new computer hardware.

Our top-line income increased from almost £1.5m in 2013-14 to over £1.8m in 2014/15, largely as a result of the continuation of existing grant-funded work from the prior year, augmented by new grants. The most significant of these were from Education Scotland for the National Parent Forum of Scotland, and Barclays for the LifeSkills project.

Our core grant funding from the BIG Lottery Third Sector Early Intervention Fund of £0.4m has already been secured for 2015-16, along with a number of other grants delivered by our Policy and Research department.

Membership numbers have continued to increase as a result of the work of the Development Team. The financial benefit of this as compared with the prior year was in the order of £5k. Corporate membership opportunities are already being explored with a view to further developing this income stream in 2015-16.

Fees from both Service Level Agreements with local authorities and ad hoc mediation services provided by Resolve increased by just over £4k on the prior year.

The utilisation of reserves in the year has done much to modernise the organisation's image, as well as the infrastructure required to support our strategic and operational goals.

*A copy of our full audited accounts can be downloaded from:
www.childreninscotland.org.uk/annual-report*

**ANNUAL
REPORT
2014-15**

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