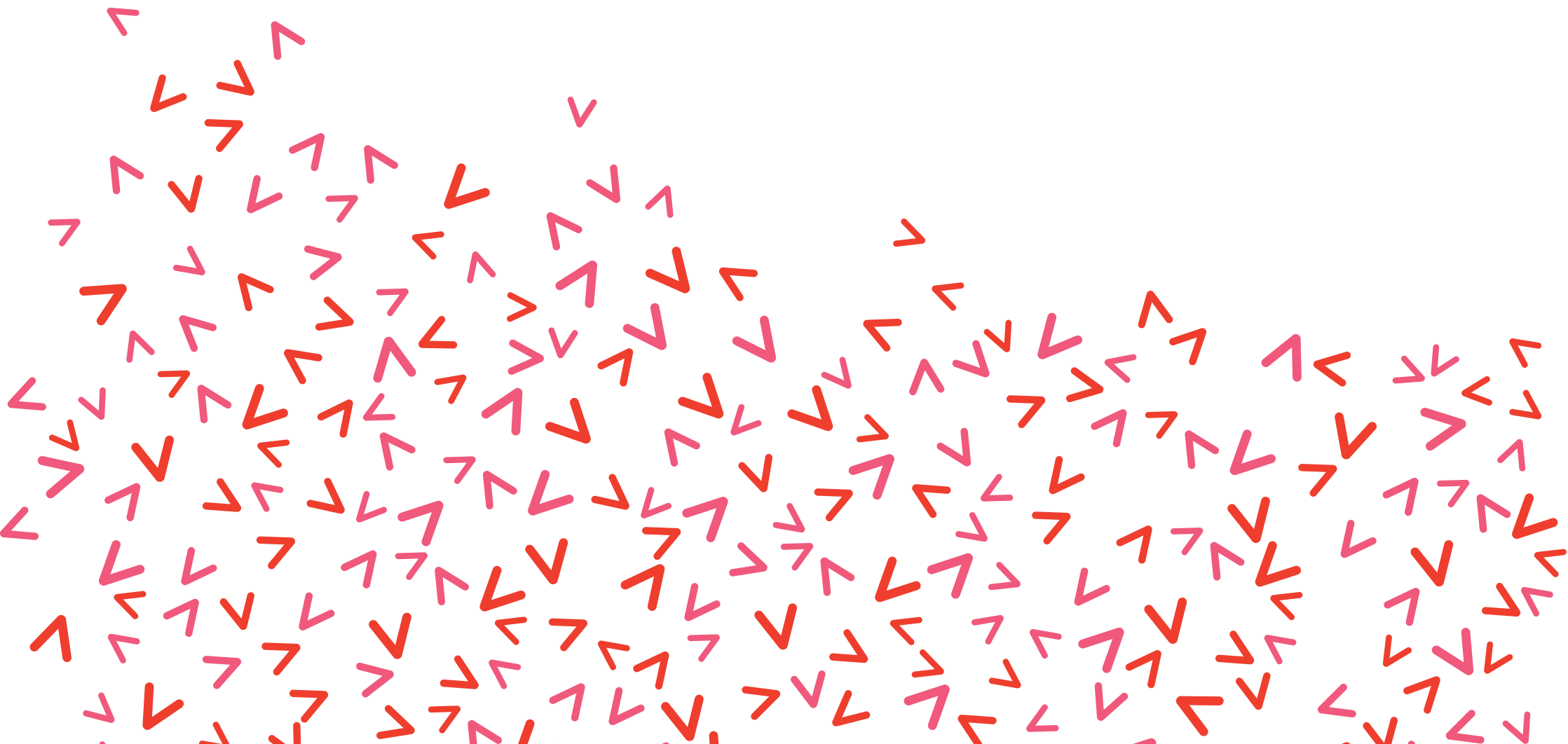




Children in Scotland

Our work in 2017-18





About us

Giving all children in Scotland an equal chance to flourish is at the heart of everything we do. By bringing together a network of people working with and for children, alongside children and young people themselves, we offer a broad, balanced and independent voice. We create solutions, provide support and develop positive change across all areas affecting children in Scotland.

We do this by listening, gathering evidence, and applying and sharing our learning, while always working to uphold children's rights. Our range of knowledge and expertise means we can provide trusted support on issues as diverse as the people we work with and the varied lives of children and families in Scotland.

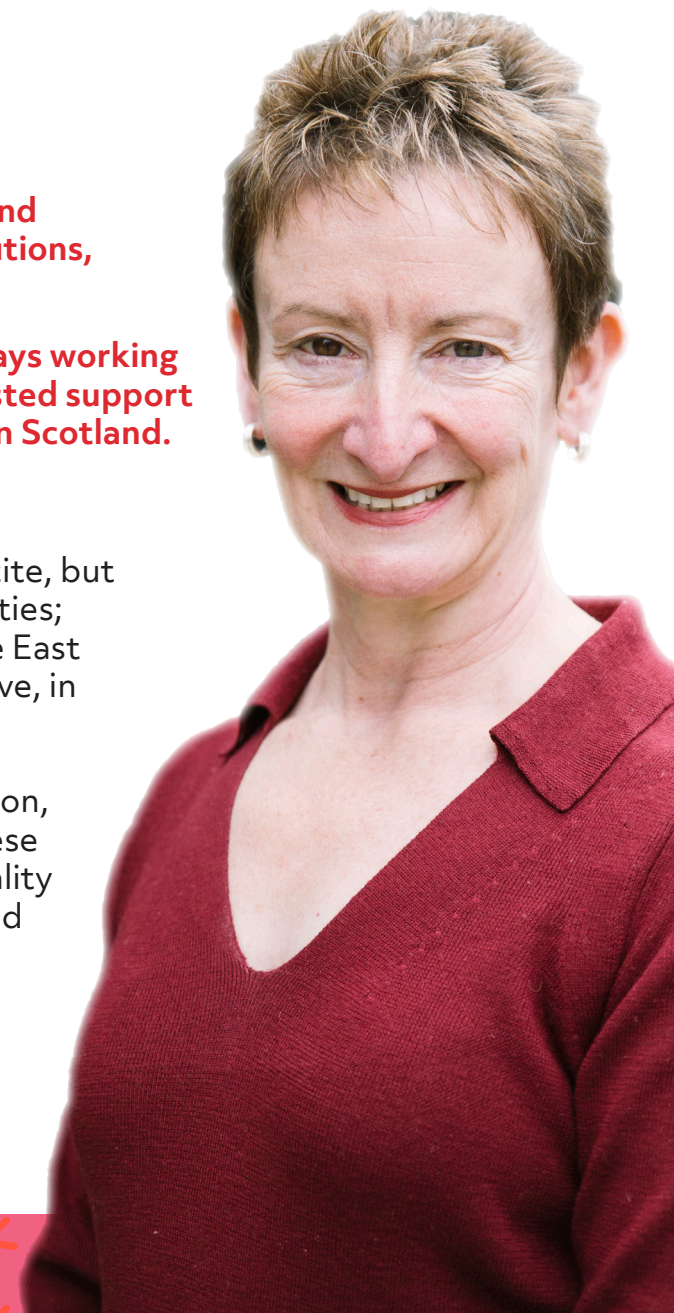
Overview

2017-18 has been an important year of progress for us. There are many achievements I could cite, but a few that stand out are the setting up of our young people's advisory group to guide our priorities; the success of our CHANGE project, working to create better childcare for communities in the East of Glasgow; and the continuing contribution made by our in-house services, Enquire and Resolve, in offering help to children and families on additional support for learning.

In autumn 2017 we changed our voice and look to better emphasise our values as an organisation, our role in convening diverse voices, and our ambitions to improve children's lives. We think these changes are paying real dividends in our ability to represent the children's sector and in the quality of dialogue we have with our members. We're serious about working in partnership with you and drawing on all our skills to achieve change.

If you want to be involved in our work, or there is an issue affecting children and families that you think is important, we'd like to hear from you.

Jackie Brock, Chief Executive, Children in Scotland



Project highlights

Bringing voices together, influencing change

Diana Children's Nurse Evaluation

Since 2014, three Diana's Children's Nurses (DCNs) have been employed by Children's Hospices Across Scotland (CHAS) to build capacity in palliative care services for children. Between 2015 and 2017 Children in Scotland was commissioned by CHAS to undertake an evaluation of the DCN service.

Through the evaluation we spoke to the team, CHAS staff, nurses, consultants, social workers, policy-makers and families. We interrogated data and produced case studies to describe how the DCNs work. Our findings revealed that the DCNs provided important emotional and practical support to families at a very difficult time in their lives, built the knowledge and experience of the wider workforce to respond to children's palliative care needs, and influenced national policy.

We recommended increasing DCN capacity to extend the reach of their work and improve palliative care support for children and families across Scotland.

"The baby had a superhero team. I had my midwife team and he [the father] felt that the DCN was his team."

Interview with mother, DCN Evaluation



Alternative Futures

Our Alternative Futures project aimed to understand how violence had affected the lives of young people in residential care across six European countries. The project worked with over 100 young people in residential care and over 200 staff who looked after them. It aimed to understand better how violence had affected their lives, so that fuller support could be provided and more positive outcomes achieved.

Some of what we learned was not particularly surprising – the adversity of the young people's early lives, disordered attachment, disrupted relationships (far too often by bereavement), and exposure to violence and abuse in multiple forms were widespread. In response, we delivered a four-day staff training programme on helping young people overcome the effect of trauma, developed a resource, testing out approaches within care settings and brought the findings together for a national conference.

Bullying and Harassment in Schools

In 2017 we were commissioned to provide evidence to the Scottish Parliament's Equalities and Human Rights Committee as part of its inquiry into bullying and harassment in schools. We conducted a brief literature review to gather evidence from children and young people about their experiences.

The resulting report took into account the views of children and young people in Scotland, some with direct experience of bullying, some without. Children and young people spoke about their perceptions of the reasons for bullying, ways in which bullying happened, the impact of bullying, support available and what would help improve things. The findings were incorporated into the Committee's final inquiry report published in July 2017.

"Bullying makes children feel horrible, abandoned and left alone.
You feel like no one ever cares about you."

*Children and Young People's Voices and Experiences
of Bullying and Harassment in Schools*





Food, Families, Futures

Our Food, Families, Futures project continued into its second year, focusing on improving the health and wellbeing of children and their families through food, increasing parental involvement in their children's learning and increasing support from local communities. In 2017 the project worked with communities experiencing significant levels of child poverty in Glasgow and West Dunbartonshire, Perthshire and Irvine in North Ayrshire.

We worked with a range of fantastic partners, including community chefs, youth workers, school staff, parents and children, and young people themselves. In 2017 the project won two accolades – a Third Sector Partnership Award from the Scottish Public Service Awards and the Herald Society's Partnership Award.

Responding, Jackie Brock said: "This award is testament to the incredible energy and dedication of our partners - Glasgow City and West Dunbartonshire Councils, PEEK, Dalmarnock Primary, and many other schools and individuals - who have taken part in Food, Families, Futures and made such a difference to children over the past year."

Participation Case Studies

We were commissioned by the Scottish Government to explore the nature and type of impact children and young people's participation has had on national and local policy-making in Scotland. We conducted six case studies exploring examples of where children and young people were involved in policy-making. These included the areas of policing, child rights, domestic abuse, care and sexual health.

For each project we carried out interviews with key stakeholders involved in the project including children and young people. We used the findings of the research to make recommendations for policy-makers to consider when including children and young people in decision-making. The Scottish Government published the final report, *The Impact of Children and Young People's Participation on Policy Making*, in February 2018.



ENQUIRE

Enquire helped to establish and promote the new support service for children My Rights, My Say – a partnership between Enquire, Children in Scotland, Partners in Advocacy and Cairn Legal. We launched a revised website incorporating feedback from parents and practitioners. Enquire took the areas we are asked about most often and focused on the rights of the child and practical steps parents can take. We distributed 3,428 copies of the Enquire parents' guide to additional support for learning and produced a new factsheet for parents on children's rights to education and additional support in school in light of extended rights for children.

Enquire staff spoke at the Education Scotland Dyslexia Conversation Day to 12 practitioners, the Northern Alliance Learning Festival to a group of 30 practitioners, and at the CALL Scotland conference. The Enquire annual conference was held in Aberdeen in March with 120 delegates attending. Highlights of the programme included Fintan O'Regan's keynote on supporting children with ADHD.

We represented Scotland as the National Co-ordinator on the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, attending bi-annual meetings and promoting Scotland's involvement in the Agency to key stakeholders and Scottish activity to the Agency.

"The information has provided a clear picture for us as to how to proceed with our daughter's education. We were at a loss and using snippets of possibilities before contacting Enquire."

Parent and caller to the Enquire helpline

"Thank you for your advice, which was very useful. I will be doing what you have recommended. It's great to have somewhere to go to get answers. Keep up the good work."

Parent and caller to the Enquire helpline

REACH

REACH, the website developed and run by Enquire, is designed to help young people find help and support for issues which may be affecting their school life and education. REACH spoke to 28 children and young people in schools in this period to review the website and inform future information strategies. As a result, the appearance of the site was much improved, and visits increased to 216,217 over the year. We posted new information on the Reach website about children's new rights under the amended additional support for learning act.



32,728
publications distributed

1,370
additional support or
learning enquiries responded to

1,139
services updated on the
map of services

120
delegates at the Enquire annual
conference

22
posts with key info on the blog for
children and young people

19
presentations on additional
support for learning

Influencing policy and legislation

We use evidence from children, young people, our members and research to influence policy and legislation across a range of areas relevant to the lives of children and young people.

Giving evidence

In 2017/18 we contributed to 19 government and parliament consultations on subjects important to children's rights and wellbeing. These have included the proposed changes to the governance of education, the 'presumption of mainstreaming' for children with Additional Support for Learning needs, the Diet and Obesity Strategy, the strategy to combat loneliness, and how the General Data Protection Regulation will affect children. We gave oral evidence to the Scottish Parliament's Social Security Committee on the Social Security Bill and the Public Petitions Committee on youth mental health. We have produced briefings for MSPs on a wide range of topics including violence reduction, bullying and harassment, internet safety and child poverty.

Parliamentary liaison

We have built on our good relationships with elected representatives to influence policy and contribute to the development of policy ideas. We have been represented at all major party conferences, using these opportunities to raise awareness of the need for better mental health services, and children and young people's participation and engagement. As co-secretariat for the Cross-party Group on Children and Young People at the Scottish Parliament, we co-ordinated meetings on several important issues such as support for children and young people with additional support needs, mental health, outdoor learning and children's rights. We produced information material for the local government elections in May 2017, with our calls to strengthen children's rights supported across all the main political parties' manifestos.



Supporting our members

In 2017-18 we worked hard to strengthen opportunities for our members to become more informed about, and to contribute to, national policy and strategy in Scotland. These include the Children's Sector Strategic and Policy Forum, where members have had the chance to discuss policies issues directly with decision-makers such as Deputy First Minister John Swinney and Permanent Secretary Leslie Evans, in her new role as the Scottish Government's Champion for Children and Young People. Read what our members think about being part of Children in Scotland on the following page.

Working internationally

The future of Scotland in Europe is an issue with significant implications for children and young people. We have continued to work with local partners in Scotland and with our counterparts across the UK and in Europe to ensure that the rights and aspirations of our younger citizens are not overlooked in the Brexit negotiation process. Our expertise on children's and young people's issues led to us being asked to contribute to events in Scotland and internationally. This included discussion of development of mental health services with colleagues from Finland and the Netherlands and providing advice on early years services in Bulgaria. We also provide consultation to support the expansion of a group in

19

consultation responses submitted

190

members of the Children and Young People Cross-Party Group

170

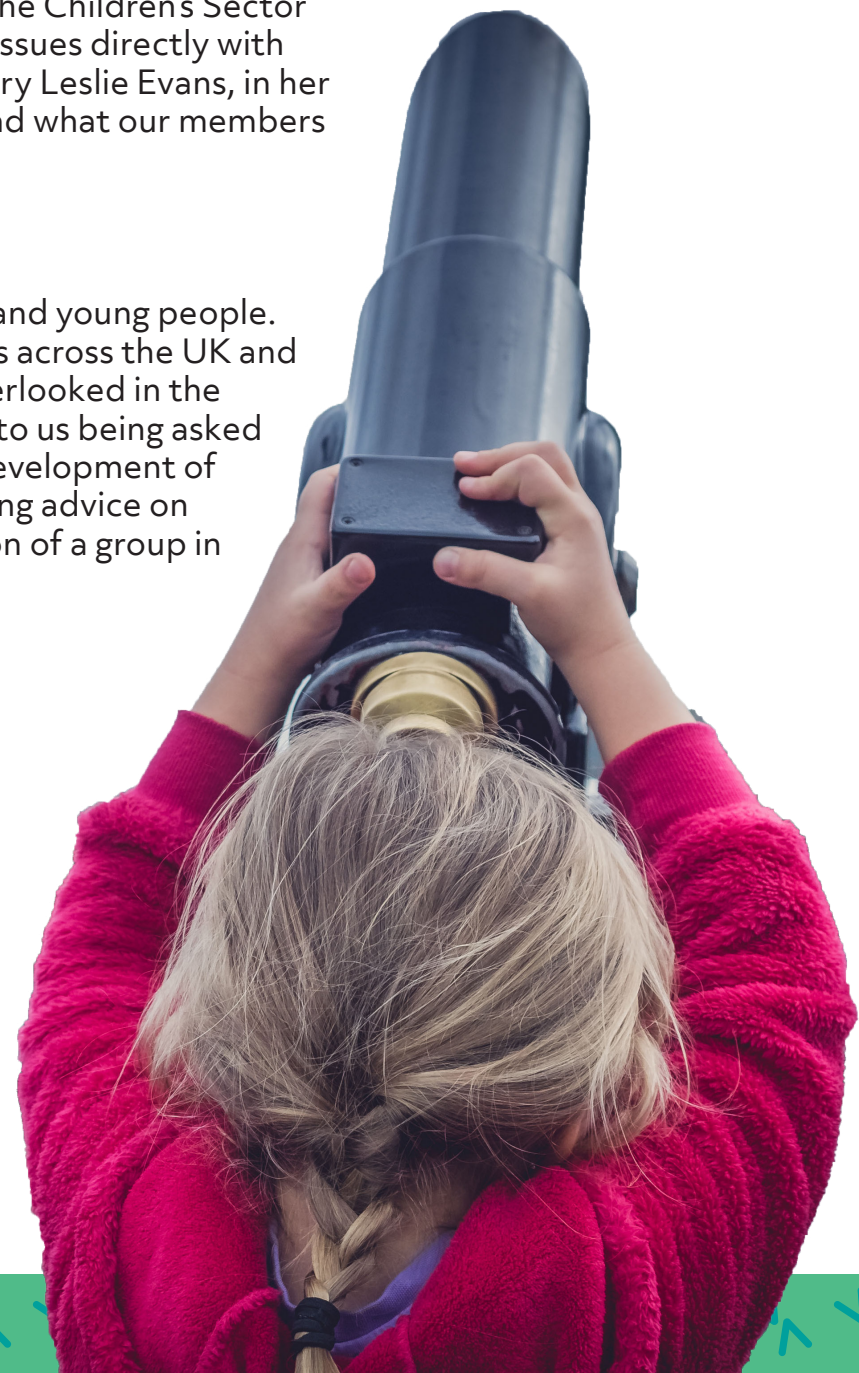
participants in our free policy events

38

weekly parliamentary monitors published

35

free member events



What our members have told us about being part of Children in Scotland

Katrine Phillips

Chief Executive, Child Accident Prevention Trust

Children in Scotland are hugely knowledgeable about issues affecting children and young people. You're so well connected, with links across charity, the public sector, the Scottish Government, from the frontline up to chief executive level. For us to be able to work in partnership with an organisation like that is hugely beneficial. We really benefit from the information we get from you: reading the magazine, picking up on news from your digital channels – it helps us improve our work in Scotland. We're absolutely passionate about tackling inequality, enabling all children to thrive, building partnerships, bringing people together. We see all those values reflected in Children in Scotland.

Mark Ballard

Head of Scotland, Save the Children

Children in Scotland has made tremendous strides over the past few years in using its convening power to bring people together. The sector needs to think more clearly about what individual organisations can do but also act more collectively. To do that you need a vehicle. You are it! We need the innovation cycle that involves taking a fantastic idea in a local context and projecting it onto a national stage, testing it, achieving policy change, then securing effective implementation. You need partnerships and an organisation that builds, maintains and occasionally repairs those partnerships. Children in Scotland is an excellent channel for doing that.

Lynsey Mackay

Scotland Director, Just Enough Scotland

The courses that are available and the amount of networking opportunities is fantastic. As a small growing charity like us who have just started in Scotland, Children in Scotland make so many companies, courses and advice accessible for us.

Celine Sinclair

Chief Executive, The Yard

Children in Scotland provides The Yard with frequent invaluable updates on both policy and practice and ensures that our team is able to keep abreast of any changes and developments within the sector. All of our team benefit from being members through the training they access, the information provided and the network of support.

Feedback on our recent members' events

'This training met and exceeded my expectations. I needed to 'raise the bar' on parent participation in nursery and this has given me important tools to do so.'

Attendee at 'The Spectrum of participation: effectively engaging parent and carers'

'Stimulating, engaging presentations by clearly knowledgeable and enthusiastic trainers – thank you.'

Attendee at 'The impact of imprisonment on families, children and young people'

'I'm not a person who ticks the excellent boxes out of habit but this was a great session.'

Attendee at 'Supporting young carers in educational settings'



Our partners

We work alongside Parenting across Scotland (PaS) and the National Parent Forum of Scotland (NPFS), who provide representation, support and advice for families.



Parenting across Scotland works in partnership to put a focus on issues which affect parents in Scotland. Our vision is: 'A Scotland where all parents and families are valued and supported to give children the best possible start in life.'

We work to ensure that parents have the information that they need to bring up their children. Through the website, parentingacrossscotland.org, we provide information to thousands of parents and practitioners throughout Scotland. We have also been working closely with NHS Health Scotland to develop universal information for new parents.

PaS has also been working to influence government policy to make sure it meets the needs of parents. Our primary areas of focus have been around Early Learning and Childcare, young parents, the new social security legislation and poverty. We have been working with the Scottish Commission for Learning Disability to push for better support for parents with learning disabilities. 150 people attended our Supporting Families conference in Dundee this year.



The Forum works in partnership with national and local government and other organisations involved in education and child wellbeing issues to ensure that parents play a full and equal role in education. Our overall aim is to help every child maximise their potential through their school life.

During 2017-18, we launched our Review of the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006. The Deputy First Minister, John Swinney wrote to NPFS in autumn 2017 to confirm that the Scottish Government would be accepting all recommendations from the review, and we have been working with stakeholders to implement them since then.

Other highlights from the year include working with the Child Poverty Action Group to complete the Cost of the School Day parent council toolkit. We also joined the new Scottish Education Council, ensuring that parents' voices are heard at the top level of government. More than 150 delegates attended NPFS's annual conference last year - our biggest yet.



Meaningful participation and engagement with children and young people

Providing opportunities for children and young people to communicate about the issues in their lives and offer creative solutions

Our participation work is underpinned by the United Nations Convention on the rights of the Child (UNCRC), in which Article 12 states that children and young people have the right to have an opinion and for adults to listen to them.

This year we have been doing a lot of work to strengthen our own knowledge, skills, practice and approaches to engaging with children and young people, and to support good practice across the sector and between our members.

This has included:

- Establishing the Children in Scotland's young people's advisory group Changing Our World. The group is made up of 15 young people from across Scotland aged 8 - 18. They will work with us over the next few years to help shape our work and make sure we are actively listening to the views of children and young people.
- Publishing our Participation and Engagement Principles and Guidelines, a resource about the key principles that underpin our work with children and young people and guidelines for inclusive direct delivery work.
- Developing and delivering a free members' training event on participation and engagement for 40 of our members. This sell-out event was such a success, we have agreed to build on it and make it part of next year's programme
- Our report on participation into policymaking, using six case studies to describe how children and young people's voices have influenced national and local policy making, for the Scottish Government.



In addition to our capacity building work, this year we have worked with approximately 2,000 children and young people to gather their views and perspectives on a range of topics. This year's highlights included:

- Continued engagement with children, young people and families involved in our multi award-winning Food, Families, Futures project, with a focus on how they felt about engaging with the project
- Our role as a partner in Year of Young People 2018. We have been active in supporting the 500 Year of Young People Ambassadors and the core Communic18 group, as well planning our own YOYP 2018 activities
- Involving approximately 50 children from communities in the East End of Glasgow to feed into the design of childcare services, as part of the CHANGE project
- Supporting the General Teaching Council Scotland's review and refresh of the Professional Standards For Teaching by sourcing the views of 700 children and young people on the topic 'what makes a good teacher'
- Working on our Heritage Lottery Fund project with various heritage partners across Scotland to explore with children and young people "What does Scotland's local and national cultural heritage mean to me?"

"No project is complete until the children and young people know how their voices have been listened to, what impact their contribution has made, what has happened as a result of what they said, and why."

Children in Scotland, The participation of children and young people: our principles and guidelines

**"I feel great about this summer club.
And I have fun!"**

Child participant, FFF food project



Strengthening the children's sector

We deliver multi-disciplinary training, events and resources for our members and the wider children's sector. This provides opportunities for networking and platforms for expert voices to bring information, advice and insight to enhance knowledge and strengthen practice

Two study trips to Finland

The first of these took place in September 2017 when we took 33 delegates from across the Scottish children's sector to learn about education and life within Finland. The second was a commissioned trip for our members the Learning Pathways Academy, based in Essex. Both trips started with a visit to the Finnish Ministry of Education and were complemented by trips to early years settings, primary schools and third sector organisations which support children and young people.

Sharing our learning with European partners

In November we welcomed 48 Dutch heads of education and social work to Edinburgh. They heard presentations from Children in Scotland, Enquire staff and the Scottish Government, and made visits to a number of our members around the Edinburgh area to learn about education and care in Scotland.



Annual conference

This year's conference was our biggest and most ambitious yet. Taking place in Murrayfield Stadium, the two-day event featured inspiring speakers such as Rochdale child sexual exploitation whistleblower Sara Rowbotham and 'Glasgow Girls' human rights campaigner Amal Azzudin. We were also privileged to be joined by a number of children and young people. They included our Changing Our World group who were social reporters for the event, and young people who led workshops for delegates on topics such as adverse childhood experiences, youthwork and the power of dance.

Growing our membership

Our membership reached 550 in 2017/18. Our diverse member organisations received a range of benefits, including 6 editions of our relaunched Children in Scotland magazine, access to 20* free member events, invitations to networking opportunities, access to our policy-focused members forums, free advertising, and exclusive policy briefings.

240
events

8
conferences

27
seminars

71
training courses

20
members' events

3
study trips

> 4,394 Children in Scotland
event bookings 2017/18

1,044 organisations were engaged
through attending a Children in
Scotland event

3,530 individuals
attended our events

