



# Our work in 2019-20

Giving all children in Scotland an equal chance to flourish



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## 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

2019-20 has been a year of unparalleled activity, in terms of its quality, its breadth and its scale, with projects across Scotland supporting our goals, broadening our network and increasing our influence.

Supporting our work, we have an exceptional Board of Trustees. At the start of this financial year, our outstanding Convener, Dame Dr Denise Coia was

forced to resign due to ill health. Sadly, Dame Coia died earlier in 2020. We remain very grateful for her warm and supportive leadership and we regret that her tenure as our Convener was so brief.

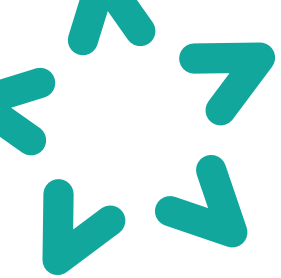
It was our honour to welcome Ms Maureen McGinn as our Convener in October 2019 and we were grateful for the support of our two vice-Conveners, Dr Patricia Jackson and Ms Jane Devine for their leadership in the intervening period. In addition, we were particularly proud to appoint two young people to our Board of Trustees. Together with the expansion of our children and young people's advisory group, Changing our World, children's views are increasingly embedded at all levels of the organisation.

There are many highlights from this year to demonstrate our activity and effective performance and I hope you will enjoy reading about some of the projects we are most proud of in this report.

### Jackie Brock

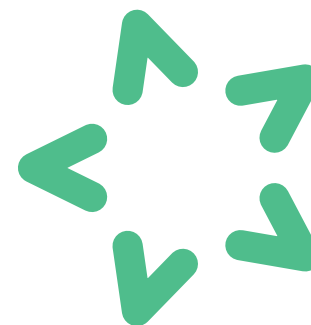
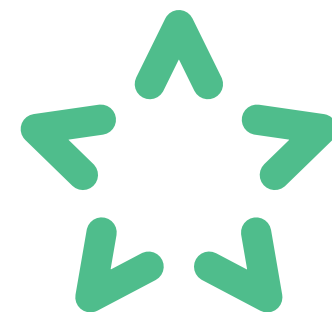
Chief Executive, Children in Scotland





# Project highlights

Bringing voices together, influencing change





# Health Inequalities: Participative Research

Children in Scotland was funded by the Wellcome Trust and guided by Niamh Shortt, Professor in Health Geographies at the University of Edinburgh, to deliver our Health Inequalities: Participative Research Project.

We worked with a group of young researchers aged 10-14 from Dalmarnock Primary School in Glasgow and Baldrigon Academy in Dundee to find out what they thought needs to change in their communities.

Taking a mixed methods approach which combined focus groups, ethnography (exploring areas using mapping and photography) and analysis, the peer researchers decided to focus on three topic areas which for them had the most relevance in considering the impact of place: 'Safety', 'Littering' and 'Family and Friends'.

Amber, a P7 pupil at Dalmarnock Primary, said:

*"It was fun and we got to learn new things. It was exciting and it always felt like an equal relationship working with the team from Children in Scotland. It helped us think about the places we live in, in a different way and working towards the things that we can change."*

Research findings were published in a final report in February 2020 that was launched with an event at Tynecastle Park, Edinburgh, attended by the young researchers and more than 50 partners from across the sector.

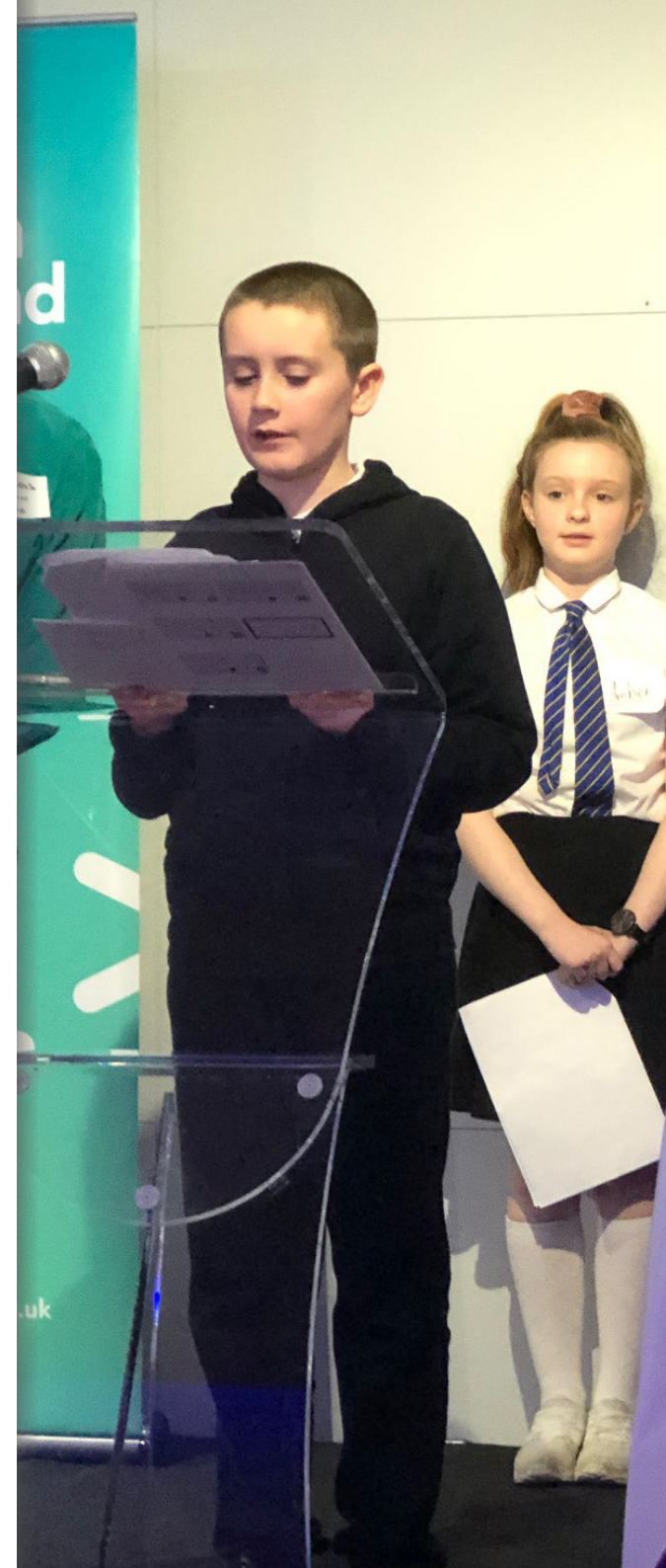
The researchers made a number of recommendations for decision-makers, including:

- More free and cheap activities for children and young people. Play spaces also need to be made safer.
- Deal with vandalism and regenerate abandoned spaces.
- There should be affordable, healthy restaurants in communities.

Amy Woodhouse, Children in Scotland's Head of Policy, Projects and Participation, said:

*"This research has brought a fresh perspective and some really simple solutions under their recommendations. We have an opportunity through the UNCRC being brought into Scots Law to make some of these recommendations a reality."*

➤ Dalmarnock Primary School children at the Tynecastle event launch  
Photo: Nancy Clunie



# Food, Families, Futures

Over the past four years, Children in Scotland's innovative and multi-award-winning project Food, Families, Futures (FFF) has been addressing a major social issue: food insecurity and its links with wellbeing and education.

It was launched in December 2015 and ran until March 2020.

Its main aims were to:

- Improve the health and wellbeing of children (and their families) living in and around the partnership areas, including increasing nourishment, reducing hunger and improving nutrition
- Improve the engagement and confidence of parents in their children's learning, resulting in improved early development, social inclusion, aspiration and attainment of children
- Increase support and commitment from the wider local community offering their time, energy and expertise to ensure the programme continues in years four, five and into the future, making it sustainable.

Through FFF we have supported before/after school and holiday provision projects across Scotland, including Glasgow, East Ayrshire, West Dunbartonshire, Perth &

Kinross, East Lothian, Stirlingshire and Clackmannanshire.

Our policy team were also involved in evaluation of Fife's summer 2019 holiday provision, including consultation with children, young people, staff and parents.



▲ A child's feedback provided on an evaluation visit to a Glasgow school summer club



➤ Designing a poster for FFF



# Crown Estate

In 2019 Children in Scotland undertook a consultation exercise with children and young people to inform the Crown Estate Scotland's Draft Corporate Plan 2020-23. From November 2019 to January 2020, the views and experiences of 97 children and young people were gathered through three workshops held in Midlothian, North Ayrshire and Argyll and Bute (ages 7-14) and via an online survey (ages 10-25).

After gathering evidence from the engagement activities, our staff analysed the feedback to identify key findings. They produced a report which provides Crown Estate Scotland with key learning from the children and young people and recommendations for next steps.

This in-depth qualitative piece of work involved children and young people from 18 different local authority areas and the views expressed indicated that these findings offered useful evidence to inform the development of Crown Estate Scotland's 2020-23 Corporate Plan.

The environment was a key area of concern identified by the young people as part of this consultation.

## Young people told us:

*"A healthy environment underpins our very existence."*

*"If we don't look after the environment, especially in rural/coastal areas, then there is nothing for local communities to base their economies on."*

*"Collaboration is also important as you are working with other people with their communities and lives which shouldn't be done without their input."*



▲ Children taking part in a Crown Estate workshop



- Discussing the coastal environment and how to protect it



# Open Kindergarten

Children in Scotland worked in partnership with Parenting across Scotland, Midlothian Sure Start, City of Edinburgh Council and the Centre for Child Wellbeing and Protection to deliver a trial of the Open Kindergarten parent support approach from April 2019 to April 2020.

Open Kindergartens are a long-standing concept in parent support in the Nordic countries. Groups of parents, carers and their young children meet regularly in family centres and are supported by highly qualified early years staff who work alongside specialists to develop parents' skills, confidence and knowledge.

We trialled an adapted model of the Open Kindergarten approach at Mayfield Family Learning Centre and Granton Early Years Centre. This involved free twice-weekly drop-in sessions and community outreach work to help parents overcome barriers to participation. The key objectives of the project were:

- to reduce social isolation among parents of very young children (0-3 years)
- to support effective parenting
- to promote child wellbeing in health, learning and development.

The University of Stirling undertook an evaluation of the pilot project to determine the effectiveness of the Open Kindergarten approach. By providing a safe and appealing social situation, facilitating peer support and through the practitioners' welcoming non-judgmental approach, Open Kindergarten was found to provide a source of relief for parents experiencing isolation, childcare pressures and other stressors. Open Kindergarten also filled a service gap for many parents who identified that it was either the only or one of few programmes available to them. The report will be published later in 2020.

Based on learning from the project, partners are developing a training module for practitioners who work with parents in early years settings. Children in Scotland and partners are creating an illustrated project summary and will be delivering a webinar in Autumn 2020 to share key learning from the project.

The project was funded by the Scottish Government's Social Innovation Fund.



**EUROPE & SCOTLAND**  
European Social Fund  
Investing in a Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Future

➤ A child attending one of the Open Kindergarten sessions trialled in Edinburgh  
Image courtesy of Midlothian Sure Start



## National Third Sector – Getting It Right for Every Child Project

The National Third Sector GIRFEC Project became part of Children in Scotland in 2018. The project continues to support third sector organisations to become equal and valued partners in the children's services planning process which leads to improved children's outcomes at national and local level. The project consists of three key strands:

- We support third sector organisations to further increase capacity and capability to contribute effectively to their local children's services plan.
- We influence children's services planning and delivery using evidence gathered and shared by the third sector.
- We promote good practice of engagement of children, young people and families in the design, planning and delivery of children's services.

Highlights in 2019-20 included:

- Facilitation of Scotland's unique Third Sector Interface (TSI) Children's Services Network which meets quarterly to amplify the voices of the local third sector.
- Support for third sector organisations and statutory partners in developing

guidance and resources in key national policy areas including GIRFEC; Strategic Children's Services Planning and Commissioning; Attainment Challenge; Mental Health for Children and Young People; Children's Rights and UNCRC.

- Delivery of 11 thematic training events which benefited 194 members of the workforce.
- Collaboration with five locality partnerships to develop local networks to support third sector's strategic participation.
- Partnering the Children & Young People Improvement Collaborative to deliver a training programme about enhancing engagement with children and young people at strategic level.

*"We will use this training as a framework for engaging CYP in developing our Wellness Model. Once this has been implemented, we will move forward with roll-out."*

CYPIC Participant

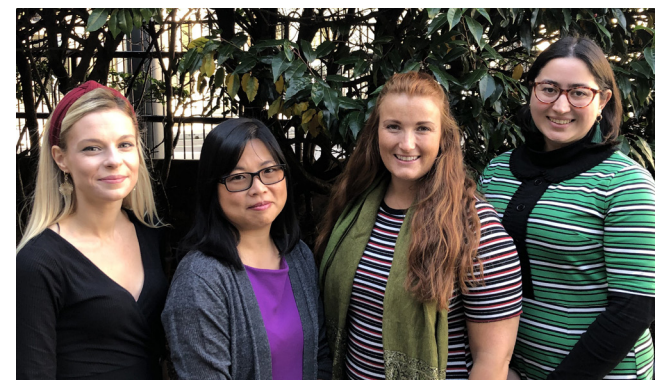
- Contributing to the National Collective Leadership Programme by leading on focus group evaluation with children and young people and workshops in regional seminars.
- Creating three case studies to demonstrate how local partnerships

use Community Engagement Standards to involve children and young people in services planning.

- Reaching out via our e-newsletter twice a month (253 subscribers) and social media (1781 followers).

To reinforce embedding children and young people's voices in decisions and services planning, the project launched the **Children and Young People Evidence Bank** in May 2019, an online portal for accessing children and young people's views on the subjects that matter to them. So far, 1280 people have used the site with 15,748 pages viewed. The number of reports continues to grow.

In June 2020, building on the success of NTSG, Children in Scotland launched its successor, the Supporting the Third Sector (STTS) Project.



▲ NTSG: Jane Miller, Vicky Wan, Laura Watt and Megan Burt



# Inclusion Ambassadors

The delivery of the Inclusion Ambassadors programme was handed over to Children in Scotland from Education Scotland in September 2019. The group is made up of secondary school-aged pupils with additional support needs who attend mainstream schools across Scotland. The purpose of the network is to share experiences of being a pupil with additional support needs in school in Scotland, including what works and what would make things better.

As part of new phase of the project 15 new members were selected to join the group. The group is currently made up of 20 inclusion ambassadors from 13 local authority areas covering a range of ages, experiences and additional support needs.

The young ambassadors presented at the Scottish Learning Festival in 2019, attended our 2019 annual conference and were at the launch of the sensory hearings facilities as part of the Glasgow Tribunals Centre.

The young people spent some time thinking about the key issues for children and young people with an additional support need. They were encouraged to consider issues and hot topics in the context of friends and family, teachers and other key decision-makers.

Based on the identified key issues, the group produced a range of recommendations which were shared with Angela Morgan, chair of the Additional Support for Learning Review, to inform her final report.

Some of the key issues identified by the group can be categorised under these key themes:

- Lack of understanding from peers (being treated differently)
- Bullying and friendship
- Feeling safe at school
- Feeling anxious about contributing in class
- More staff needed to support CYP with ASN
- Support for parents around ASN
- Confidence in class.



## Enquire

Enquire responded to 1,533 enquiries from parents, carers and professionals in 2019-20.

- 97% of parent and carer who responded to our evaluation surveys said that our service was 'excellent'.

In February, following consultation with families, Enquire relaunched its *Parents' and Carers' Guide to Additional Support for Learning* and 27 new factsheets. Across the whole year, nearly 11,000 copies of the guide were distributed to families and professionals, and factsheets from the website were downloaded more than 2,700 times.

Quote from parent about the guide:

*"I highlighted the bits I wanted to talk [to the school] about and it made them take me seriously because I knew what I was talking about. I didn't read it all through but picked at the useful bits for us."*

Feedback on the Enquire helpline:

*"Thank you! The helpline was like a light in the dark for us and our family. We've been dealing with a challenging situation for 22 months. To speak to someone who could listen, then explain legal expectations and the process of how to resolve it was so incredibly valuable. I wish I knew of you sooner. Well done and thanks."*

In February 2020, Enquire held a free national event aimed at supporting parents and carers. The event was in partnership with the National Parent Forum Scotland, My Rights, My Say and Stirling Council and was attended by 120 delegates.

Enquire increased access to its online advice for parents, carers, children and young people by installing the **Recite Me** accessibility tool bar on both the Enquire and Reach websites. This tool, also available on the My Rights, My Say website, enables information and publications to be translated into 102 languages.

Enquire continued to promote the views and experiences of children with additional support needs through the Reach website and social media activity including the #BiteSizeAdvice and #ASLdebunked campaigns.

## Additional support for learning: a guide for parents and carers





# My Rights, My Say

My Rights, My Say helps children in Scotland aged 12-15 with additional support needs to exercise their rights to be involved in decisions about their education

In 2019, the My Rights, My Say Children's Views service worked with the Enquire team and staff and pupils at Carrongrange School in Falkirk and Bell Baxter High School in Fife. One of the outputs of this was the development of a rights illustration and resource for staff. The resource (illustrated left) shows scenes within a school to stimulate discussion of children's rights.

My Rights, My Say sponsored a learning event for parents and carers led by Enquire which took place in Stirling on 29 February, promoting the difference elements of the service.

A new website for the My Rights, My Say service was launched containing detailed information on children's rights and the support My Rights, My Say offers.

The My Rights, My Say and Enquire teams widely promoted the support service at a range of events including the Scottish Young Carers Festival.



▲ Scenes from the children's rights illustration and resource for staff  
Illustration: Gus Braid

## CHANGE

Following the completion of our third year, Childcare and Nurture Glasgow East (CHANGE) received uplift funding from the National Lottery Community Fund to deliver on four aspects of project work. These include increasing Childminding in the project area, developing a new Out of School Care (OSC) service in the Parkhead community, scoping and exploring options for family support and emergency childcare, and developing a food growing, nutrition and cooking club with local families, making information more accessible.

The CHANGE team has continued to facilitate the CHANGE Hub, bringing together local partners from across the project area and was set up to deliver the project's community engagement process. The Hub's primary focus is to help to support and guide the direction of change needed to create positive outcomes for families. During the COVID-19 outbreak and lockdown, the Hub has been responsive and acted as a mechanism to keep partners connected.

A stakeholder told us:

*"It comes across that CHANGE want to make a long-lasting difference, also that they recognise that they'll not be there forever, so opening doors for other organisations that are there longer term. They are not trying to duplicate or step on toes; they are trying to facilitate effective partnerships."*



## Resolve

Resolve Mediation service delivered 50 cases across their education authority contracted partners and continues to be the largest provider of Additional Support Needs (ASN) mediation in Scotland.

Client quotes:

*"I knew the meeting would be difficult. The mediators listened and summarised points well while assisting us to find a resolution and a plan of how to work together better in the future."*

*"All at our local authority working with Resolve are unanimous in their appreciation and acknowledgement of the skills provided by this service."*

*"Will continue to use this excellent mediation service, due to confidence in the mediator's skills with excellent communication and professionalism at all times."*

*"The patience and impartiality of the mediator, despite the protracted timescale required to work with other party worked so well."*

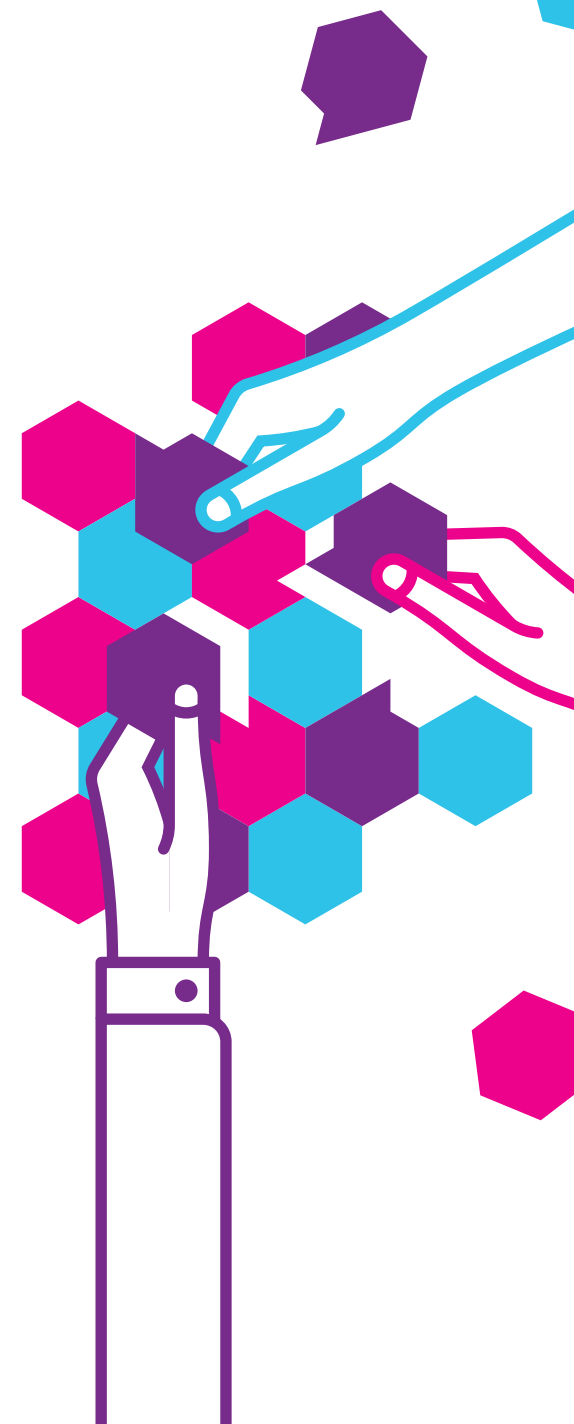
*"A professional service with a mediator who put everyone at ease which undoubtedly helped in achieving a successful outcome."*

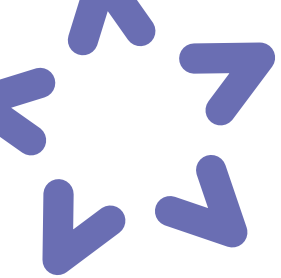
*"The mediation was expertly handled and the outcome was the best we could have ever hoped for."*

Resolve also delivered:

- Additional Support for Learning (ASL) and communication information to Parent Groups
- ASL Update and Challenging Conversations training sessions to local authority teams
- Accidental Counsellor training to education staff
- Consultation and supervision sessions for mediators and frontline ASL staff in local authorities.
- An independent service evaluation report.

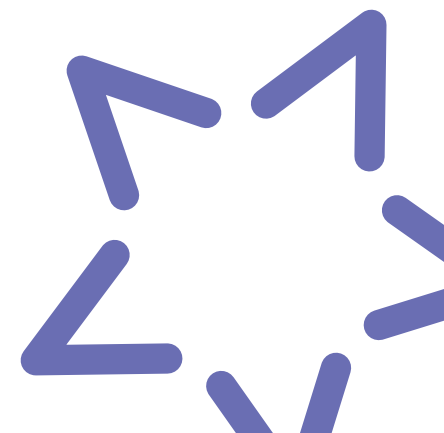
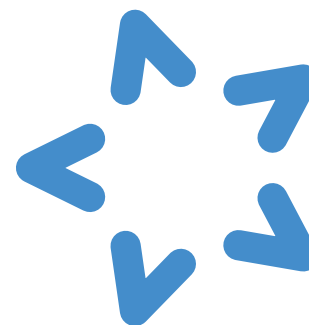
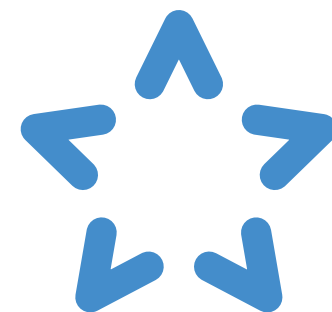
# RESOLVE: ASL





# 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 2019-20 we contributed to 20 consultations held by the Scottish Government, the Scottish Parliament and wider civil society to ensure that the rights and wellbeing of children and young people were being upheld. Topics included the Incorporation of the UNCRC; Children (Scotland) Bill;

Children's Services Planning: Provision of Statutory Guidance; and the Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill. We also gave oral evidence to the Scottish Parliament Education and Skills Committee on Stage 1 of the Disclosure (Scotland) Bill.

## Parliamentary liaison

Children in Scotland continued to build on our good relationships with parliamentarians to develop ideas and influence policy-making.

We had a stall over three days in April 2019 at the Scottish Parliament, where we spoke to 38 MSPs about our 25 Calls campaign and our work developing a manifesto for the 2021 Scottish Parliament election.

We continued our role as the co-secretariat for the Cross-Party Group (CPG) on Children and Young People at the Scottish Parliament and hosted four meetings across the year with more than 230 attendees. The CPG continues to have meaningful engagement with Scottish Government Ministers and other key decision-makers.

We have been developing our Manifesto

for the 2021 Scottish Parliament election in partnership with our membership and network. Thirty delegates attended a Voices Forum to inform the development of the manifesto, and 80 contributed to a members' survey to inform our thinking. We have also engaged with our Children and Young People's Advisory Group, Changing our World, to develop the manifesto. The manifesto will be published in late 2020 and aims to be a platform for influencing work of the children's sector from 2021-2026.

In December 2019 we published a Manifesto for the new UK Government. It was endorsed by 19 national organisations across the UK, including Children in Wales and Children in Northern Ireland. The manifesto called for action on Poverty and Social Security, Rights, Europe and the Environment.



▲ A call to action! Our 2019 Manifesto was published ahead of the UK general election  
Illustration: Angus Doyle

## Campaigns and working groups

Children in Scotland staff are active members of a range of Scottish, UK and European campaign and working groups that affect real change to policy of relevance to children and young people. For 2019-20, these included:

- Eurochild's National Partner Network
- The End Child Poverty Coalition and the Give Me 5 Campaign
- Campaign for Equal Protection for Assault (Scotland) Bill
- Brexit & Rights Civil Society Working Group
- Scottish Government working group on Supporting Transgender Pupils in Schools Guidance
- The Scottish Alliance for People and Places
- The Independent Care Review.

## Supporting our members

Across the year we have continued to develop opportunities for our members to contribute to strengthening the children's sector in Scotland.

Our Children's Sector Strategic and Policy Forum has continued to present opportunities for our members to engage directly with key Scottish Government officials. The Director of Children and Families attends forum meetings and we have links with the Child Poverty and Rights and Participation teams. This year forum leads on Child Poverty were involved in Scottish Government cross-directorate meetings. Members of the forum have also been involved in a new

Scottish Government working group looking at outcomes budgeting.

We hosted a range of Voices Forum events across the year on the Incorporation of the UNCRC; Children in Scotland's Manifesto; and the Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare. Our Voices Forums support our members to influence our policy positions and allow us to take their views forward in discussions with government. They have also provided members opportunities to engage with Scottish Government officials.



## Our partners

### Parenting across Scotland

Over the last year as well as continuing to provide information to parents and practitioners through its website, social media and e-newsletter, Parenting across Scotland (PaS) has advocated for parents and carers in relation to Early Learning and Childcare, family support and poverty.

PaS has been active in the development of Early Learning and Childcare through the Early Learning and Childcare Strategic Forum and associated groups around quality and Continuing Professional Development modules for practitioners.

On behalf of Scottish Government and in partnership with Children in Scotland and One Parent Families Scotland, PaS held a roundtable to develop thinking around family support for early years settings. It continues to work with its partners to develop thinking on providing best practice examples of family support.

PaS highlights the difficulties faced by families living in poverty, including a blog series from PaS partner organisations for Challenge Poverty Week.

The Scottish Government's commitment to incorporating the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) into Scottish law remains an essential

part of supporting families. PaS held a conference on Parenting and the UNCRC, hosted a seminar for practitioners on supporting families and the UNCRC, and sits on the Scottish Government's UNCRC Incorporation Working Group.

[www.parentingacrossscotland.org](http://www.parentingacrossscotland.org)

### National Parent Forum of Scotland

The National Parent Forum of Scotland (NPFS) 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. The overall aim of the organisation is to help every child to maximise their potential through their school life.

2019 saw the 10th anniversary of the NPFS. Our celebrations began with a Scottish Parliamentary reception where the Deputy First Minister, John Swinney, was the main speaker. Local authority representatives past and present, along with representatives of many partner groups, attended. This was followed by events around Scotland, including a Q&A with Mr Swinney for parents in Perth, and the publication of a new series of Curriculum for Excellence nutshells, available from our website.

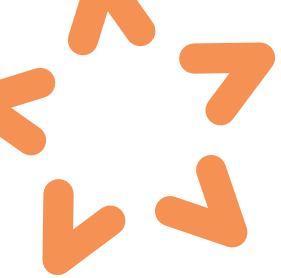
Throughout 2019-20, the NPFS has continued to work closely with Scottish Government, Education Scotland and CoSLA to develop the Empowered Schools Reforms and Guidance. We also participated in the Scottish Education Council, Children and Young Person's Mental Health Programme Board, Early Years Strategic Forum and around 50 other national groups, ensuring an authentic parent voice is heard throughout.

Since the COVID-19 lockdown, many parents have risen to the challenge of distance learning while supporting their children's learning at home. As a member of the Education Recovery Group, the NPFS has helped to keep parents concerns, worries and views surrounding COVID-19 at the top level of government.

[www.npfs.org.uk](http://www.npfs.org.uk)

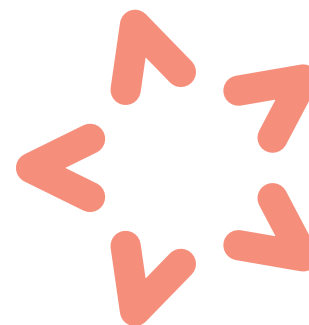






# Participation and engagement with children and young people

Providing opportunities for children and young people to communicate about the issues in their lives and offering creative ways of amplifying their views



This year we have enjoyed seeing children and young people's participation embedded across our work and have shared our experiences and expertise across the sector and beyond.

Across our projects, groups and activities, we engaged with 721 children and young people ranging in age from three to 26, in 32 local authorities across Scotland.

## Changing our World

Our children and young people's advisory group, Changing our World (CoW), has grown from strength to strength over the last year and enjoyed significant input into our strategic direction.

- The recruitment for new members in spring 2019 saw eight new children and young people join the group
- In May 2019, three CoW members travelled to Bucharest for the first ever EU Children's Summit, where the Bucharest EU Children's Declaration on participation was launched. The conference was attended by 60 children from 16 different countries and European child rights experts. The three CoW members gave an emotive presentation on participation and the Scottish child rights context
- CoW took a lead role in our Networking Event in September, with members co-

chairing, presenting and leading panel discussions.

- CoW developed and delivered a very popular workshop at our annual conference in November, sharing their experience of setting up a children and young people's advisory group.
- They also recorded a podcast at the conference about being members of CoW and discussed votes and international politics.
- The podcast and CoW member Ellie's reflections on the Bucharest trip are both available on the Children in Scotland YouTube channel.



▲ CoW members at the EU Youth Conference in Romania, March 2019

♥ Promotional artwork for Changing our World



## Young People on the Children in Scotland Board

We are delighted to have been able to recruit two young members to our Board of Trustees, from August 2019. This was identified as a priority within our strategic plan for 2019-20, to ensure that the voices and experiences of children and young people are represented at all levels of our organisation.

## Cross-Party Group and young people-led events

As part of our Year of Young People legacy, we recruited four young people in summer 2019 to act as co-convenors for the Cross-Party Group on Children and Young People. The convenors liaise with MSP convenors, agree the programme and co-chair the events.

Our September Networking Event marked the UNCRC's 30th anniversary and celebrated children's participation, with young people from our projects, including members of our advisory group CoW, leading the event. Young people also co-chaired our annual conference.

## Principles and Guidelines

We were very pleased to launch our refreshed participation and engagement Principles and Guidelines at our Networking Event in September. Originally published in 2017, the resource provides a framework for anyone working directly with children and young people, or seeking input from children and young people for their work.

The updated guidelines cover key themes at every stage of work, from planning and co-ordination to feedback and evaluation.

Inclusion, safeguarding and child protection are overarching principles woven throughout. The guidelines can be downloaded from our website.





## Events and Training

Members of the Children in Scotland Participation & Engagement Team have been active again in sharing their advice and learning about participative practice. This has included taking part in:

- Eurochild General Assembly in Brussels
- Participation Network Steering Group

- The Care Review, where we shared our Principles and Guidelines with the workforce group
- Members' events in Edinburgh and Aberdeen
- A webinar broadcast live on Human Rights Day, 10 December.

## Scottish Government's Strategic Participation Framework

We have been active participants in the Scottish Government's Strategic Participation Framework working groups, sharing participation examples and resources for the research group's

new web page. One aspect has been supporting children and young people to take on leadership roles within traditionally adult spaces.

## Funders' Roundtable

In September 2019, we delivered a free half-day seminar for funders on supporting children and young people to get involved in funding decisions and grant-making processes. Building on learning from our work with CORRA on the Listening Fund, we shared experiences of how children and young people could get involved and influence funder decisions, processes and priorities.

Through doing this in our own organisation, and in external opportunities, we hope to model good practice that our members can support, learn from and build on.



▲ Eurochild General Assembly, Brussels, April 2019

▼ Scotland's Independent Care Review was launched at an event in the Scottish Parliament in February 2020, attended by people with care experience, some of whom gave evidence to the inquiry  
Photo: Independent Care Review



## Young Media Voices

Our Young Media Voices project worked with 20 children and young people from across Scotland to support them to develop their skills and experience in digital storytelling.

With project funding from Young Start and Children in Need, Children in Scotland supported the 'Young Creators' to develop their skills in many different ways over 2019-20. These included:

- Social reporting from events such as the Festival of Politics, FANS Youth Film Festival and First Minister's Question Time: Next Generation
- Visiting the BBC studios in Glasgow, participating in a BBC Young Reporter Journalism workshop and being part of several BBC Radio Scotland programmes
- Designing their own website, [www.youngmediavoices.scot](http://www.youngmediavoices.scot) and producing film and written content for the site
- Interviewing high profile Scottish figures including the First Minister, and Makar, Jackie Kay
- Writing articles for the Children in Scotland magazine.

*"YMV has been one of the best experiences of my life. It's been an engaging and hands-on project that has been so enjoyable from the get-go. It's given me a chance to get my voice heard and to spend time thinking about the stories that are taking place around me."*

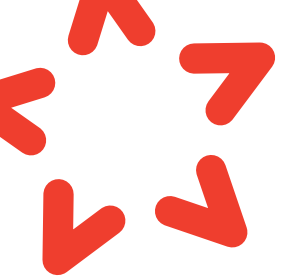
Young Creator

*"Adults will never truly know what kids want to say. Content made by young people for young people needs a bigger presence in the media."*

Young Creator

➤ Sheryl from Young Media Voices





# Strengthening the children's sector

Events, campaigns, communications and growing our membership





## Events

Over the course of the year the Learning and Events team led a diverse programme of 200+ learning opportunities, attended by more than 5,000 people. Our programme included training courses, networking events, conferences, residentials and international study trips.

We started the year with the second First Minister's Question Time: Next Generation event, where 100 children and young people grilled Nicola Sturgeon on the issues which mattered most to them.

This was one of a number of large-scale partnership events held throughout the year. Others included the Scottish launch of the Children's Future Food Inquiry, the CHANGE Knowledge Exchange and two further conferences in partnership with Enquire, NPFS and My Rights, My Say.

Partnership was also a cornerstone of our annual conference. Attended by 600 people, the conference featured 42 sessions by 90 contributors, 30% of whom were young people.

Feedback from the 2019 Annual Conference:

*"Inspirational speakers, great networking."*

*"I learned loads from young people (thanks)."*

*"A fantastic event. Extremely well organised with great, diverse and informative sessions delivered with thoughtfulness and creativity."*

The range of topics covered throughout the learning programme included additional support needs, relationships, behaviours, child protection, early years, trauma, and many more.

There was also an international flavour to the year: we welcomed a Russian study delegation, and world-renowned Dr Peter Vermeulen travelled from Belgium to lead a seminar on autism and wellbeing. The team led trips to Finland in October and the Netherlands in March, and created an internal learning programme for the social care sector in Northern Ireland.

A key highlight of the year was gaining recognition at the Scottish E Awards where we were proud winners of 'In-house Team of the Year' and 'Association Event of the Year' for the 2018 annual conference, while team member Svenja Schulz was awarded the 'Rising Star' accolade.

As the year came to a close, we rapidly adapted our plans for March and developed a comprehensive webinar programme to offset the learning gap resulting from COVID-19 restrictions.



▲ The Events Team picked up three gongs at the Scottish E Awards.



♥ Study trip to Finland, October 2019





# Campaigns

## Partnerships for change

The Children (Equal Protection from Assault) (Scotland) Act finally passed in October – a clear sign of how the influencing and campaigning work of the children's sector has gathered force. As part of the Give Me 5 Campaign and the wider End Child Poverty coalition, we were also at the forefront of calling for increased financial support for families, welcoming the government's introduction of the Scottish Child Payment.

Other campaign work over the year included supporting the youth climate strike; championing the call of Scotland's Young Food Ambassadors to end the stigma of food insecurity; pushing for full incorporation of the UNCRC alongside other child rights organisations; and being signatory to a British Institute of Human Rights-led letter urging all political parties to commit to safeguarding human rights through the UK's Human Rights Act and European laws.

## 25 Calls

We've taken forward our 25 Calls campaign, working with more than 200 partner organisations and individuals to propose how rights and equality could be strengthened for children.

We published 52 responses to the campaign from a diverse field of partners including the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health Scotland, Cyrenians, the Human Rights Consortium Scotland, Carnegie UK Trust, Soil Association, Children 1st, SCVO, Changing Faces, the NUS, NSPCC, the Fostering Network, Friends of the Earth, Fast Forward, Place2Be, Staf, and Canongate Youth.

Contributions ranged across the campaign themes, with the need to end gaps in mental health provision; reduce air pollution to improve child health; shift from crisis to prevention in protecting young people from harm; and guarantee access to arts experiences from the earliest age emerging as top concerns.

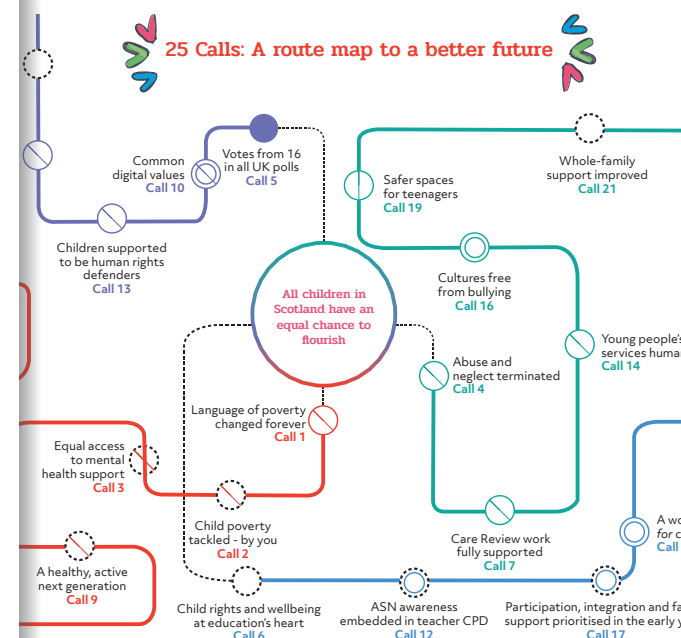
In April 2019 cross-party MSPs signed a motion at Holyrood recognising 25 Calls and noting that the '*recommendations of the campaign... should be given serious consideration by all parties across the chamber, Scottish Government and relevant organisations*'.

In 2020-21 some of the original call-makers will update on their proposals in the context of COVID-19 and its effect on children and families.



▲ Supporting the youth climate strike in Edinburgh

♥ Detail from the 25 Calls route map to a better future  
Illustration: Lisa Clark



## Children in Scotland Magazine

Featuring news, comment, analysis and features in every edition, our bi-monthly *Children in Scotland Magazine* continues to be a must-read for our members and the wider children's sector.

Topics covered over the past year have ranged from responsible citizenship and empowering young people to mental health, inclusive play, children's rights, period poverty, inequality and safeguarding.

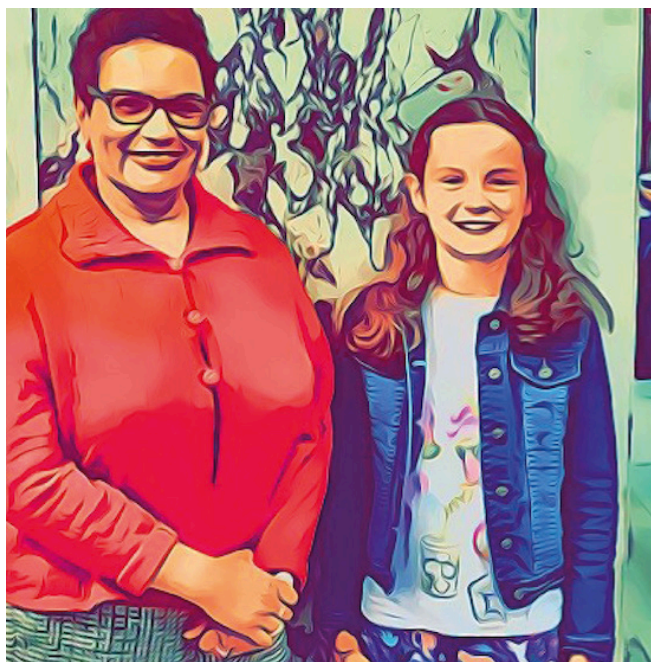
The magazine had a readership of approximately 5,000 per issue, including practitioners, policymakers and leaders across the children's sector.

### Special editions

Our August creative arts special developed themes from our 25 Calls campaign, exploring the centrality of art in our lives. We spoke to Scotland's Makar, Jackie Kay, and heard from young people as well as those already established in the creative industries about the benefits of seeing yourself reflected in literature, taking into account gender, sexuality and race.

In October we published a special UNCRC-themed edition marking the 30th anniversary of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child,

acting as a celebration of the strides made over three decades and a call for full incorporation. We discussed progress with Dr Nigel Cantwell, one of the key contributors to the drafting of the original treaty and an international expert on children's rights, and heard from other leading figures including UNICEF and the Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland.



▲ Portrait of Jackie Kay and Ruby Hepburn  
Credit: Jemma Tracy and Lauren Carter Allen



► Hope In Hard Times and UNCRC covers  
Design: Alan Tait



## Communications

The Communications team has had another busy and successful year, supporting colleagues across the organisation and producing a diverse range of work, from press releases and blogs, to project launches and event promotion.

The addition of a part-time designer to our team has allowed us to further develop our brand and messaging, and achieve a distinct and recognisable look across all of our communications and marketing activity, including our social media channels. These have benefitted from a more cohesive look and have continued to see increased engagement.

As well as continuing to progress our campaigning work with 25 Calls, and branding for events and projects, the team has also explored new methods of communication to grow our audience.

We launched a new podcast series, sharing expertise, stories and voices from across the sector to stimulate dialogue and offer more diverse perspectives. We've also increased engagement by producing more video content and graphics to communicate our project work.

Our focus throughout has been on producing accessible communications, whether through the use of alt text on social media or combining clear content with the Recite Me accessibility toolbar on our website, and we will continue to make accessibility a priority across our internal and external communications.



## Growing our membership

Our membership reached 575 by the end of March 2020, covering all parts of the children's sector in Scotland – local authorities and other statutory organisations, schools, nurseries, residential care, charities, corporate, business and social enterprises. All have signed up to our values of a network dedicated to improving the lives of children in Scotland.



If you would like to join us in membership, please visit our website:

[childreninScotland.org.uk](https://childreninScotland.org.uk)

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

*"Membership of Children in Scotland provides effective engagement with a diverse range of networks. From exhibiting at the annual conference to having pieces published in the magazine, colleagues and I been able to share important road safety messaging more widely with organisations and individuals alike."*

*Mairi Blair, Road Safety Scotland*

*"Scotland's bairns are at the heart of everything Children in Scotland do. We are privileged to call them friends."*

*Nancy Clunie, Head Teacher,  
Dalmarnock Primary School, Glasgow*

*"Early Years Scotland is delighted to be a member of such a progressive and highly respected organisation as Children in Scotland."*

*Our membership not only enables us to take advantage of the many great benefits it provides, but it also stands as a statement that we work in partnership and share the same aspiration for Scotland's children."*

*Jane Brumpton,  
Chief Executive, Early Years Scotland*

*"Membership of Children in Scotland helps ensure we're up to date with key policy developments from the children's sector, enables our staff and the artists we work with to access relevant training, and provides valuable opportunities for networking and cross-sectoral collaboration."*

*Rhona Matheson,  
Chief Executive, Starcatchers*

*"Our membership is valuable to our people as it opens up opportunities for engagement in learning and development with people from across the children's sector. Strategically we find it really beneficial to work collaboratively with Children in Scotland and its membership to bring issues that matter to children and families to the fore."*

*SallyAnn Kelly, Chief Executive, Aberlour*





Our work in 2019-20

