

Progress on the promise

Independent Strategic Advisor on the promise, Fiona Duncan, on breaking down barriers and the importance of listening

An education against the odds

How a group of Afghan medical students were supported to study in Scotland

Breaking the habit

Social media use among young people and the need for urgent action



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Welcome

What we hear clearly from the voices that ring through the pages of this issue is that the path to progress is rarely linear. This is evident in the inspiring story of the Afghan medical students who left their loved ones behind to take a second chance at an education in Scotland. While in our lead interview, Fiona Duncan, Independent Strategic Advisor on the promise, discusses the need to walk on new ground to ensure that the transformational change promised to care experienced children, young people and adults is made.

What the people, policy and projects featured in this issue also demonstrate is that with bravery, dedication and shared commitment, even the most challenging of roads can be navigated and positive progress can be made for children and young people.



Sophie Ward
Editor



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Bulletin

Discover the latest news, milestones and innovative research from our members

The Right Start conference Starcatchers

Starcatchers held their national conference in Stirling on Thursday 6 March, produced in partnership with Children in Scotland and Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights), with the theme 'Babies, their Rights, Voice and the Arts'.

To learn more, visit:
starcatchers.org.uk

Caring Scotland National Theatre of Scotland and Who Cares? Scotland

The National Theatre of Scotland has announced a joint listening project, called 'Caring Scotland', produced in partnership with Who Cares? Scotland and the National Library of Scotland, and has called upon those with care experience to participate.

To learn more, visit:
nationaltheatrescotland.com



Clowndoctors Hearts & Minds

Hearts & Minds have partnered with Sight Scotland to deliver a new Clowndoctors pilot project with the aim of offering therapeutic clowning to children and young people with visual impairments. Sessions are currently held in Edinburgh and Glasgow, with hopes to expand.

To learn more, visit:
heartsminds.org.uk

Little Noise Sistema Scotland

Sistema Scotland's music education and social change programme 'Big Noise' has expanded to provide free weekly music sessions for preschool children, which intend to encourage music engagement and help babies and toddlers with their motor skills and cognitive development.

To learn more, visit:
makeabignoise.org.uk



Annual Conference 2025 Children in Scotland

Children in Scotland's Annual Conference is returning to Glasgow in 2025. Taking place at DoubleTree by Hilton in the city centre on 28-29 May, this year's conference has the theme 'Making Space for Voices' and will focus on topics such as Scotland's progress on keeping the promise, and the implementation of The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) into Scottish law.

Also playing an integral role will be the members of Changing our World (CoW), the children and young people's advisory group for Children in Scotland, with CoW members acting as co-chairs.

To purchase tickets, visit: childreninscotland.org.uk/ac25

If you have a project, event, campaign, service or staff update that you would like featured in the next edition of *Insight*, we would love to hear from you! Please send information about your work to Sophie Ward:

sward@childreninscotland.org.uk

Numbers

We've got your number.

A new addition to *Insight*, this section spotlights statistics from recent reports on issues impacting children, young people, and families in Scotland and beyond.

With a wealth of vital research being carried out by the sector and partners in academia, it's easy to miss some fundamental findings and inspiring insights. This regular feature aims to fuel you with facts, propel you with particulars, and leave you determined by data to continue working together for positive change.

£260k

The cost of raising a child to age 18 for a couple, while for a lone parent it is **£290,000**. An out-of-work couple with two children has **less than half the income required (48 per cent)**, even after the Scottish Child Payment.

'The Cost of a Child in Scotland in 2024', Child Poverty Action Group (December 2024)

Just 25%

of Scottish local authorities report having enough childcare for disabled children "in all areas". **More than half (54%)** report "data not held or cannot tell".

'Childcare Survey 2024', Coram (March 2024)

78%

of the UK public would opt for child safety checks on new generative AI products.

Savanta interviews (2024). Cited in *'Viewing Generative AI and children's safety in the round'*, NSPCC (January 2025)

8 times

as many children around the world are projected to be exposed to extreme heatwaves by 2050 if "business as usual" continues. **1.3 times more** would be exposed to extreme droughts.

'The State of the World's Children 2024: The Future of Childhood in a Changing World', Unicef (November 2024)

3 in 5

parents polled in Scotland believe the government should have a "high involvement" in paying a minimum allowance to separated parents with the main care of children if the other parent can't afford to pay child maintenance.

'The role of the existing child maintenance system in children's financial security', Transforming Child Maintenance – a partnership between Fife Gingerbread, IPPR Scotland and One Parent Families Scotland (September 2024)

2 years+

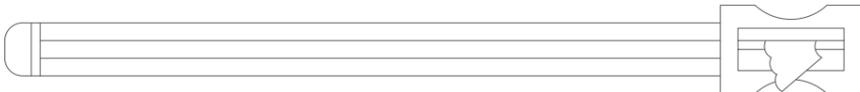
is the average length of time taken to find a permanent home for Scotland's looked after children, while **more than one in 10** were in temporary placements a decade after becoming looked after.

'Permanently Progressing? Phase 2 Report', University of Stirling, Association for Fostering, Kinship and Adoption Scotland, and Lancaster University (September 2024)

Drawing inspiration

For this issue, we have been delighted to continue our partnership with the Edinburgh College of Art and to work with some of their talented illustration students. An exciting part of the design process is seeing how the artists bring their unique perspectives to the topics they are depicting and how their illustrations bring the words on the page to life.

From the touching portrayal of the Afghan medical students arriving in Scotland on the front cover, and the vibrant portraits of the Inclusion Ambassadors in our Personal Reflection, to the thought-provoking depiction of social media use among young people in our Commentary section, we hope you enjoy exploring these thoughtful illustrations as much as we have. Our thanks to Juliana, Ellie, Yuwen and all the wonderful students who contributed to this issue.



Juliana Isaza-Correa (Cover):



"For this illustration, I used the faces of the young women as my reference because making them the central feature to emphasise their importance was crucial to me. The sun shining over them symbolises optimism and hope, while the hearts, stars and plasters on their chests are elements of healing and resilience. I wanted the illustration to radiate warmth and positivity, so I chose colours that evoke these feelings, bringing out a sense of connection and renewal."

[@julisaza.co](https://www.instagram.com/julisaza) [julisaza.com](http://www.julisaza.com)

Ellie Swartzentruber (Personal reflection, page 7):



"For the portraits of the Inclusion Ambassadors, Meg and Milo, I started by sketching from photographs to make sure I captured their likenesses. I also wanted to make reference to their personalities, so I chose to surround them with objects relevant to their hobbies and interests. After finding a composition I was happy with, I finalised the line drawing and shading. The last step was adding colour, texture and highlights to complete the portraits."

[@beany.illustrates](https://www.instagram.com/beany.illustrates)

Yuwen Wang (Social media use among young people, pages 22-23):



"While researching this topic, I realised that parents and other adults are crucial in helping teens reduce screen time. Besides setting a good example, they should also engage with them in real-life activities."

"I used to spend a lot of time on my phone, but I regretted missing out on so many beautiful moments when I started living more fully. This image encourages everyone, regardless of age, to invite those around them to break free from screens and explore the real world!"

[@yuwensdrawing](https://www.instagram.com/yuwensdrawing)

Meg and Milo, Inclusion Ambassadors

Read more about the Inclusion Ambassadors on page 28



Meg, Alva Academy

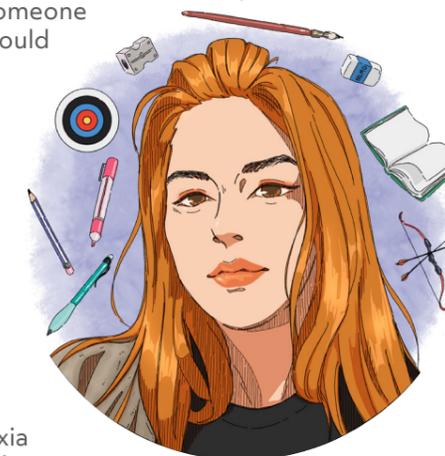
I first heard about the Inclusion Ambassadors after my school applied for the Success Looks Different Awards. We ended up winning and after the Inclusion Ambassadors visited our school to present us with the award, they asked if someone from Alva Academy would like to join the group – and I was keen to put myself forward!

Before this though, I had spoken out in my school about my experience of having dyslexia and how this has impacted my time at school. A teacher at my school asked a group of us with dyslexia if we wanted to help plan an assembly to mark Dyslexia Awareness Week. Well, this ended up with me – only in S1 – speaking to the whole school about my experiences.

My school has been great in supporting me, but I know lots of people don't currently get the support that they need to succeed. Being a member of the Inclusion Ambassadors gives me an opportunity to help change this and help make sure that other pupils across Scotland can get the support that I've been able to get.

My favourite thing about being in the Inclusion Ambassadors is hearing about the experiences of other members from schools across Scotland. There are many things that are so similar between all of our experiences, but other things that make me think, 'wow I can't believe that's been allowed to happen'.

Being a part of the Inclusion Ambassadors group has given me even more desire to help others – especially pupils like me who need additional support in school. Seeing what the Inclusion Ambassadors have achieved has taught me to dream big! •



Milo, Duncanrig Secondary School

Being an Inclusion Ambassador is something that I became interested in during my third year, so I decided to apply and luckily I got the role!

The first time I went to a meeting I was a bit nervous, but everyone was so friendly and welcoming. I enjoy them.

We do activities like getting to know one another, finding ways to help promote more inclusion in school and to help people who struggle a bit more than others. We also do fun things when we meet up. We do creative things and have intellectual discussions on topics like what teachers can do to help students.

I enjoy helping to promote inclusion in schools. We had a call with people at the Scottish Parliament and gave our insights into what school is like for people who can struggle to keep up with work. We explained how we try to help by coming up with strategies and methods for students who have autism, dyslexia, ADHD and dyspraxia, helping them to get the qualifications for leaving school. We serve a role by supporting those who need a bit more help.



My hope for the future is to see an increase in additional support for learning as there are so many people who would benefit. We need to make people aware of the teaching methods that can help, while keeping it fun and entertaining! I am lucky to be part of a base with access to the mainstream. Every school should have this.

It is important for young people like me to be involved, to share our views and experiences. It's difficult for people like teachers to understand if they've found learning much easier. As neurodiversity wasn't as known about years ago, older people might not be as aware. •

Illustrations:
Ellie Swartzentruber

“I made the promise too. It’s mine to keep in the same way as it’s everyone else’s to keep”

Since 2020 **Fiona Duncan**, Independent Strategic Advisor on the promise, has been focused on keeping the promise that was made to the thousands of care experienced children, young people and adults who shared their views during the Independent Care Review. With 2025 marking the midpoint of the promise, Fiona discusses tackling barriers, making progress and how she is continuing to listen and act upon the voices of the care experienced community

Interview by **Sophie Ward**

Sophie Ward: From the outset of the Independent Care Review, the care experienced community was to sit at the very heart of all work to keep the promise. How do you continue to prioritise their views as you progress towards 2030?

Fiona Duncan: Children, young people, adults, and families – in and on the edge of the care system – were at the heart of the entirety of the Independent Care Review, all its processes and all its outputs. The conclusions were accepted in full in Parliament, across all parties, on the same day, at the same time, presenting no political impediment to implementation – it really was a phenomenal moment.

The reports reflect what the care community said, what they need and what matters most to them – this prioritises everything I do. There continues to be a strong thread between what was said during the care review and all actions being delivered today. There were some significant external,

unforeseen circumstances that happened not that long after the conclusion of the care review. We had the pandemic, the cost-of-living crisis – these things didn’t impact all members of society equally. I’m staying true to the conclusions of the care review, while also recognising that the world has changed since it was published.

A huge amount of change is happening so people’s priorities are shifting with that. It’s important to keep pace so I continue to listen, and the care experienced community remain at the heart of change.

SW: Plan 24-30, launched last June, discusses how we must ‘shift how change is made’, can you explain the new approach that you have had to take to make progress on keeping the promise?

FD: No child, family or care experienced adult lives in a silo. No child or family or care experienced adult only engages with one system. Perhaps a child gets a bus to school – there’s two systems already. They might be a member of a local club, they might go swimming – now there are multiple systems around that child. Any plan that focuses on any single system entirely misses the point of how people live their lives.

Some folk are uncomfortable with how unorthodox Plan 24-30 is – they prefer a printed document. A lot of people were uncomfortable with how radical the Independent Care Review was too. But previous reviews and plans haven’t delivered the change needed, so there is a need to do something different. What has been designed is the best chance we’ve got.

SW: Why was it so important to build a dynamic plan that could evolve as change happens?

FD: Plan 24-30 has a static destination – the promise must be kept by 2030 – but reflects the need for iterative delivery. A static plan expects the world to stop at the moment it’s published, then restart again once the time for delivery has expired. That didn’t feel like a sensible approach to achieve cross-sector, multi-agency, long-term, systemic change – service change and cultural change – including how money flows, how scrutiny works etc. It just wouldn’t have been effective. Instead it would have been hundreds of disparate plans that aren’t at all aligned.

“Previous reviews and plans haven’t worked, so we’re having to do something different. What we’ve designed is our best shot”



SW: The first four years of keeping the promise have presented barriers to creating whole system change, how do you plan to tackle these going forward?

FD: To inform the development of Plan 24-30, The Promise Scotland wrote to over 100 organisations with statutory duties to ask them how they were getting on and what was getting in the way. Over 160 documents were received with significant issues repeated – whether that was policy, data, scrutiny, risk, or money. Everything identified as a barrier was also presented as an opportunity to accelerate change.

For example, funding can feel like an old fashioned scramble that happened outside a church on a wedding day. Yet, if instead of dedicating resources to chasing, picking up then spending lots of individual pennies, you will receive the same amount of money in a single sum so you can get on with doing – there would be efficiencies everywhere.

We also analysed how all these are linked. There's a section in Plan 24-30 called 'meeting in the middle'

“For those children who do come into the care of the state, they will get the most loving and nurturing childhood possible”

that makes clear how they are both systemic barriers and opportunities, identifying how they impact on change. Through collaboration we will seek solutions – Plan 24-30 is not a case of one person waving a magic wand, it will take all of us.

SW: A new framework was launched in December 2024 to track the progress of the promise. Why is it so important that this data is collected and analysed, and how will it facilitate progress?

FD: The Promise Progress Framework is one part of a puzzle that will bridge a gap. Scotland's National Performance Framework has an outcome that all children 'will grow up loved, safe and respected' but doesn't have data to capture this. By pulling together multiple data sources from health, inspection, social work, poverty, education, and justice, Scotland will be able to chart progress and see the overlay of all those 'systems' on people's lives. Instead of in fragments, at different times of the year, we will have a fuller picture of whole lives. This will help identify priorities and what changes need to be made.

SW: What do you think is the single most important action or activity to create the required change that has been identified?

FD: My priority is – and always has been – very much children and young people, families and care experienced adults. What would make the biggest difference to their lives is listening. If you and I are listening to one another with respect, intent to understand and then we act as a result, then things will change. So by listening to children, families, care experienced adults and acting in their best interests, somebody will be working for them and not for the system, resulting in better lives. For that to happen, trusting relationships need to be developed, with love and respect.

This should be simple but it is not, in part because there's not enough resources to dedicate the time needed to develop meaningful relationships and to build that trust. So the workforce feel that they're not always equipped to make decisions and that they carry a lot of the risk in making the wrong decision.

Listening is at the heart of the promise and it is a great point to start and to stop change – but none of the work is quite as straightforward as that.

SW: You began working on the Independent Care Review in 2017, and the plan will run through until 2030. When working on a long-term plan, what helps you to stay focused on the vision first set out in the Independent Care Review?

FD: This is the most important thing I have ever been asked to do in my life. It comes with the greatest level of responsibility, and I take that seriously.

I am absolutely determined. This is not 'just a job'. When Scotland keeps the promise, there will be generations of children and families who never come anywhere near the care system because Scotland's approach to whole-family support is so good and so non-stigmatising that families get it when they need it and it helps them thrive. And for children who do need the care of the state – and there will always be children who will need to be looked after outside their family – they will get the most loving and nurturing childhood possible, they will stay with their brothers and sisters wherever safe to do so, and continue their relationships with their family if possible. They will grow up loved, safe

Opening page: Fiona Duncan speaking at the Stories of Change Conference in 2024

Opposite: Conference attendees reflect on the impact on care experienced people of moving from child to adult services

Photos © Callum Bennetts, Maverick Photo Agency

and respected and go on to be happy, healthy adults, who can rely on the state to be a good parent to them for all their days.

That is worth focusing on. Through the Independent Care Review, Scotland's children, young people, families, and care experienced adults shared their stories to help make sure that Scotland could make the promise. And I made the promise too. So it is mine to keep in the same way as it's everyone else's to keep.

SW: Finally, you have highlighted the great responsibility that your job entails. What helps you to relax or reset?

FD: Years ago I was interviewed and asked a similar question, and my answer is the same – I really love the *Shipping Forecast*. I've got a *Shipping Forecast* map on my wall, a cushion and a mug. I find it so soothing. It's stuck with me over the years and sort of guided me through. ●

To find out more about the promise, visit plan2430.scot



Fiona Duncan will co-chair day two of Children in Scotland's Annual Conference, taking place on 28-29 May 2025.

She says:



“It is important for folk to come together, learn from one another and share with a generous heart. To re-energise us and allow us to unite around our common purpose again and understand what it is that we each have to do”

For more information, visit: childreninscotland.org.uk/conferences/ac25

Changing lives with transformational spaces

A new Learning Hub, built in the 35-acre campus at Harmeny Education Trust, is providing an inspiring space for young people to develop skills for the future. Chief Executive **Gavin Calder** discusses the transformational change he's witnessed since the Hub first opened

Interview by **Alice Hinds**



Providing therapeutic residential care and education for children, as well as day schooling for primary and early secondary year pupils, Harmeny Education Trust has long been a sector leader when it comes to building a safe haven for young people who have experienced trauma and significant family disruption.

Set within 35 acres of lush greenery, surrounded by trees, nature and wildlife, Harmeny's estate boasts a welcoming school – complete with art and music rooms, gym and library – homey cottages for those living on-site, a community garden filled with fruit and vegetables, a dedicated family centre, and even a bushcraft area where children can learn outdoor skills.

And in October 2023, after successfully fundraising more than £3.2m, the unique campus welcomed a new addition – a purpose-built Learning Hub that provides learning, enterprise and work-readiness skills for young people up to the age of 18. While children previously had to leave Harmeny at 14, thereby disrupting their routine at a vital moment in the learning journey, the new hub means young people can stay with the school for longer, something which Chief Executive Gavin Calder says has been transformational.

"The young people love that they now have what feels like a secondary classroom," he



explained. "We can now provide them with the stability, skills and opportunities that they would expect to experience if they were equipped to cope with a mainstream school environment"

"When young people transition to the Learning Hub, it may only be about 30 metres from the primary-age classrooms, but they feel as if they have 'moved up' in the world. They've moved into their own space, which feels great."

Designed with teenagers in mind, each learning space within the Hub provides easy access to the estate's beautiful outdoor setting, and the relaxed and inviting atmosphere ensures that learners can thrive in a way that works for them.

Gavin continued: "The facilities have been purpose built, so we were able to create a 'welcome area' that they can come into, hang about, and have a small breakfast before they start their day. We've found that this more relaxed start makes for better learning.

"Many of the children at Harmeny have been disengaged from education, so the free flow of the building really helps. Just the fact that there's two doors on either side of the classroom means that if a child needs some time to themselves, they can leave without having to walk through the whole room. It has been totally revolutionary for us."

In addition to the new Learning Hub, another way Harmeny aims to support young people as they transition into adulthood is through the Here4U project, which provides ongoing opportunities for former pupils to keep in touch with adults and peers from their time living and learning on the estate. Developed over two years by project officer Paul Henderson, Here4U forms a vital part of the stability and continuous care that's at the heart of Harmeny's vision and values.

"Up until recently, children were only able to be here until the end of their broad general education," explained Gavin, who joined Harmeny in April 2024 after 16 years as a headteacher. "We know of 134 young people who have been at Harmeny at some point under the age of 26, but have moved on from here, and so far, we have managed to engage with 74 of them. That's quite an achievement, really, considering that some of them left us aged 10.

"We're finding that the organisations they went on to after us haven't kept the same links that we are – that's not to be critical of them, everybody's got their own way of working, but we think it's really important to ground the children here so that they have that feeling of being part of Harmeny, and they are welcome back anytime."

He added: "However, as much as we are a loving bubble, we're not

going to do the young people any favours as they go out into the new world if we keep the metaphorical arms around them. They've already had a hard start in the real world, and we're now looking at the best model for helping them move out of the Harmeny bubble, but still be scaffolded.

"We want them to still be very much part of the Harmeny family, but just with a piece of elastic. For a six-year-old living with us, the elastic is pretty tight – but by the time they get to 17, we want it to be almost ready to snap. If needs be, we can just pull back in to make sure that young person is cared for, but we're giving them independent skills that have built them up over many years to have them ready to enter the world of work."

By building a welcoming and supportive environment that celebrates difference, Gavin says Harmeny's approach can help young people enjoy the love, encouragement and nourishment they need to grow and reach their potential.

He said: "We have a tried and trusted therapeutic model, with really experienced staff. Our therapies team is exceptional, really second to none, and when I think back to what I've seen in mainstream in the past, it's nothing like what we have here." •

Above, left: **Gavin at Harmeny's sports day**

Opposite, above: **Harmeny's Learning Hub**

Opposite, below: **The Welcome Room in the Learning Hub**

Photos © Jim Stephenson

For more information, visit harmeny.org.uk

An education against the odds

In September 2024, media outlets around the world documented the momentous moment when a group of young Afghan women arrived at Edinburgh Airport to finish their medical studies on Scottish soil. Here, **John Norgrove**, from Lewis-based charity, the Linda Norgrove Foundation, recounts the challenging journey that offered a second chance at an education

Interview by **Sophie Ward**

Before the Taliban returned to power in 2021, the Linda Norgrove Foundation was supporting women and children living across Afghanistan by running projects that improved their access to education and income. This included facilitating scholarships for 160 women, 71 of whom were studying to become doctors, heralding a critical step forward in ensuring effective medical treatment for women in the country.

The foundation was set up in memory of Linda Norgrove, an aid worker who devoted her life to helping people living in Afghanistan until she was killed in 2010. Set up by her parents, John and Lorna, the foundation's small team have worked assiduously to continue Linda's legacy and change lives in Afghanistan.

Speaking from his home on the Isle of Lewis, John Norgrove described how drastically the situation changed when the Taliban regained control.

"We were running a programme sponsoring young Afghan women from financially challenging backgrounds to go to private universities in Afghanistan," he explained. "We were paying for their fees initially. As things went on, we started giving them living allowances too."

"They were all at different points in their studies, some were in first year and some had already graduated and become doctors."



"They've never seen a train. They've never been on a plane. They've never seen the sea. They haven't been able to go out and walk around over the last few years"



that they are five years away from seeing their loved ones back home, how are they settling into life in Scotland?

"They're settling in pretty well," answered John. "Some have found it more of a struggle than others. Language has been extremely challenging."

"Some of the women are young, the youngest is 19. Most of them have spent their entire life living within the family compound, not allowed to go out," John explained. "They've never seen a train. They've never been on a plane. They've never seen the sea. They haven't been able to go out and walk around in recent years."

"We had been supporting the women for about five years when the Taliban took over and mayhem ensued. The young women told us they wanted to get out. There wasn't very much we could do at that point; it was chaos at Kabul airport."

The foundation continued to support the scholarship students amid an ever-changing landscape, but with women's rights deteriorating rapidly and education becoming increasingly difficult to access, it searched for ways to help the young women leave the country.

What commenced was an almost three-year-long fight to bring the students to Scotland to continue their medical studies at Scottish universities. The foundation's team found themselves in uncharted territory as they communicated with the Scottish and UK Governments to explore different routes, many of which led to dead ends.

"October 2022, we were getting nowhere," John reflected. "We had tried everything we could. We didn't think the Afghan Citizen Resettlement Scheme was going to work and we were almost giving up."

"If they came as international students they would have lots of fees to pay so we checked the regulations to see if they could be considered as Scottish students."

At the beginning of 2024, the Scottish Government confirmed that they would change the regulations, and that was it. Once they'd decided to do that, it was all clear."

With the decision made, there was no time to waste in planning the difficult journey to bring the students from Afghanistan to Scotland. "We had to jump through lots of hoops," John said. "We had to get TB tests and English tests. We had to get Pakistan visas, which were very difficult to obtain. We had to arrange for the students to be collected in Afghanistan and transported to the border."

"It was all very, very last minute. It was nail biting; we didn't know if they were going to get the visas until a couple of weeks before."

When the long-awaited moment arrived and the team finally welcomed the students through the arrivals gate at Edinburgh Airport, the young women had only one week to catch their breaths before they embarked on their studies in the places they would call home for the next six years: Aberdeen, St Andrews, Dundee and Glasgow.

That was September. Now, just over six months later, the women are nearing the end of their first academic year. Following their difficult journey to get to Scotland, and with the knowledge

Alongside its work with the students in Scotland, the foundation continues to help people living in Afghanistan in whatever way it can. Current projects are focused on supporting children into primary education, which is still legal in the country, and John hopes that in time they will be able to support women to study from home. With all the setbacks and challenges of recent years, John explains how the team remain resilient and focused on their goal.

"An elderly woman came to collect a food parcel from us," John said. "She couldn't walk, and she came in a wheelbarrow. Our team member, Sophie, immediately rang up and asked how much it would cost to buy a wheelchair. Sophie was then able to get the woman the wheelchair. This is what motivates us, the fact that you can see people and change their lives." •

Opposite: St Andrews-based students visit the beach

Above: Students at the V&A, Dundee

To find out more about the work of the foundation, visit: lindanorgrovefoundation.org



Arts

The power of music in trying times

Nearly 30 years ago, Fischy Music was set up to help children and parents find emotional release. Here, Executive Director **Stephen Fischbacher** reflects on how the charity's songs have found a place in the hearts of hundreds of thousands

At Fischy Music, we are known for “assembly bangers” and for creating songs that nurture children’s personal and social development. So how did this “wee Scottish charity” establish its unique identity as a record label, arts organisation, and educational resource provider? Let’s dive in.

I have worked with young people since 1983 and a constant in my work has been singing. Over the years I have sung with children and young people in classrooms, assembly halls, campfires, zoos, beaches, boats, stadiums and barns. My main reflection is that something good was going on as we sang together. Connections were made, emotions were expressed, and there was a sense of being transported into a hopeful and joyful space.

When my own children came along, I started to write songs for them that they seemed to enjoy. In 1994 my wife developed cancer and two and a half years later after much treatment, she died. Writing and singing songs was a major emotional resource for me during this time and I found that they were able to contain any emotion safely. The songs I wrote on some of the more “uncomfortable” topics like anger and family issues resonated with other children and parents – offering a sense of not being alone and providing some emotional release. With the support of the church I worked for, Fischy Music was set up in 1998.

In 1999, a survey among teachers and children’s workers highlighted self-esteem and bullying as major emotional challenges for children. There was quite a lot of written educational material available, but songs addressing these issues were scarce. I started to write a collection exploring these themes, which was released in 2002. The songs Build Up and As We Go Now are still firm favourites in schools.

Our research and impact

Extensive research has shown that singing and taking part in music can support mental health, emotional wellbeing, and social development. A survey from our 20th year of operations in 2018, completed by 945 people aged 16 upwards, revealed the long-term mental health effects of singing Fischy songs:

Fun and inclusion

Young people often used phrases such as “it made me happy”. Teachers and other professionals echoed this, recounting instances when Fischy songs had reinforced the school’s values and ethos, particularly inclusion.

The power of communal song

Enjoying communal singing is at the heart of Fischy Music’s approach. Despite initial reluctance to participate in activities that could be seen as embarrassing, many young people admitted to enjoying taking part. Teachers observed that this experience fostered mutual respect among students.

Understanding and expressing emotions

Fischy Music’s hallmark is its ability to authentically address both “everyday” emotional problems, such as negotiating the web of peer relationships, and more challenging situations, like loss and grief.

Resilience in difficult times

Numerous examples highlighted how difficult or challenging situations had been faced with the help of a Fischy Music song. The songs often complement existing programmes run by organisations such as Place2Be and Seasons for Growth, who provide emotional support for children and young people who have experienced a variety of traumas or disruption in their lives.



“*It would always make me feel better about myself. As a child I was often bullied ... I would then listen to ‘You Are a Star’ and it would make me feel better”*

A young adult who sang Fischy songs at primary school

Looking ahead

The current eight-strong staff team at Fischy Music has adapted to many changes: from the early days of cassette tapes and CDs to the current dominance of video-based media.

Our Fischy Music Online platform lets teachers access our whole catalogue, with sing-along videos that include signing, actions and lyrics to increase children’s engagement and understanding. It also allows new songs to be launched quickly in response to emerging themes. Plans for 2025 include launching a “Scottish children’s anthem” to celebrate diversity and inclusion across Scotland – encouraging children to be proud of their country, as one that welcomes everybody. •

Opposite, above: The Fischy Band

Above: Fischy Music being used in a primary classroom

For more information visit: [fischy.com](https://www.fischy.com)



Quality improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sectors

We are delighted to announce that the new Quality improvement framework is now available on the Education Scotland website: bit.ly/QualityImprovementFrameworkForELC.

The most frequently asked questions (FAQs) about the framework have been collated and are available on the Care Inspectorate website: bit.ly/QualityImprovementFrameworkELC. We hope that you find these helpful.

We will continue to listen to feedback and may make further adjustments to the framework and to the FAQs ahead of its full implementation from September 2025.

We will continue to **use our existing frameworks and approaches** for inspection while the new approaches are developed, ahead of **implementation in September 2025**. The 18-month gap between Education Scotland and Care Inspectorate inspections will also remain in place.

We have been delighted to engage with so many practitioners on the new shared framework in recent months.

Please look out for further updates on our social media accounts and in the Care Inspectorate's Provider Update emails.

Scan the QR code opposite to take you to the new framework on the Education Scotland website.



SCAN ME

“If we tackle poverty, we’ll go a huge way to keeping the promise”

Natalie Don-Innes MSP, Minister for Children, Young People and The Promise, discusses the importance of diverse lived experiences in government, tackling child poverty, and progress on keeping the promise



You’ve spoken about growing up in poverty. How has this influenced your role?

I’ve been open about my experiences because I want people to know that, although I could never understand all the issues children face, I have some understanding. I think it’s important for them to know I’m prioritising that when making policy, and when I’m speaking to them. And to show that experiences in childhood don’t define you – dreams are possible.

How important is it to have diversity at all levels of decision-making?

It’s hugely important to have representation from across society. How can you make effective policy unless you have that breadth of experience, of knowledge? Having a whole range of people – younger people, people of different ethnicities, disabled people – who can feed in different views, that’s really important.

How do children and young people’s voices shape your work?

One of the best things about this role is meeting different people – children and young people, third sector organisations, local authorities – who have experience to guide my thinking. It’s important to keep people with lived experience at the heart. They’re the ones that will be honest and tell you if they’re seeing change, and I value their opinion.

What do you believe are the most pressing issues impacting Scotland’s children and young people in 2025?

Poverty is one of the biggest issues, entwined with the promise. If we tackle poverty, we’ll go a huge way to keeping the promise. Equally, when we keep the promise that will have a real impact on poverty. There are challenges in the way but the First Minister has prioritised tackling poverty.

One thing I think will make the biggest impact is whole-family support – getting into families earlier to prevent crisis points. If we can build a society where people have the right support, and a society free from poverty, that will impact so many of the issues we’re fighting on a daily basis.

It’s five years since the Scottish Government made “the promise”. Is Scotland on track to keep it?

There has been a lot of good work: removing 16- and 17-year-olds from prison; implementing Bairns’ Hoose, ensuring access to trauma-informed support; a Scottish Recommended Allowance for foster and kinship carers; a 15 per cent reduction in looked after children.

I also intend to introduce a promise bill. We’ve been consulting on aftercare, the children’s hearings system – various aspects we’re intending to move on. Transformational change doesn’t happen overnight, but I think we can get there with the work we’re doing. •

Natalie Don-Innes was born in Paisley and grew up in Bridge of Weir, Renfrewshire. She studied history at the University of Glasgow.

Political career

- 2017** Elected local councillor for the Bishopton, Bridge of Weir and Langbank ward
- 2021** Became MSP for Renfrewshire North and West
- 2023** Appointed Minister for Children, Young People and Keeping the Promise

• **Natalie Don-Innes MSP** will be a keynote speaker at Children in Scotland’s Annual Conference on 28-29 May 2025. For more information, visit: childreninscotland.org.uk/ac25

Scotland's 'promise'

For Scotland to keep the promise to care experienced children, young people and adults by 2030, it relies on a shared responsibility and the commitment and dedication of many individuals and organisations working across the children's sector. With the promise reaching its midway mark, we asked our members to reflect on the impact and importance of their own work to #KeepThePromise



Gary Dewar,
CEO of Dean & Cauvin Young People's Trust

The promise helped Dean & Cauvin acknowledge what we did well and challenged us to do better. We've embedded lived experience – meaningfully – within our workforce, celebrated being local and our deep community roots, put reflective supports in place for staff and asked funders to allow us freedom to help in every part of a young person's life, at times that matter too. A 'relationship-first' approach has flourished.

We've aimed big – our transformational 'Parent-Infant-Partnership' with NHS and City of Edinburgh Council has placed our unique 'house for mums and babies' within a pathway of support that has the voice of the infant at its heart.

'Pathway' is an important word – young people in or leaving care often need those around to them to stick with them along the path they are walking. A local charity's strength is its ability to do this, but we also need the investment and resource to do this.



Beth-Anne McDowall,
Senior Development Officer at includem, activist and campaigner
Beth-Anne is proudly care-experienced

For includem, we are working hard to #KeepThePromise. You can find it within our values and our relationship-based support provided to children, young people and families. Families tell us the support we provide has the potential to transform their view of the world and through this, transform their lives.

We are five years into a ten-year change programme. Have we seen improvement across the system? Absolutely! Have we seen the pace and level of transformation needed to #KeepThePromise for all children? Unfortunately not.

That doesn't mean we become despondent. Instead, it should ignite a fire within our soul to ensure that Scotland's care community is supported, nurtured, cherished and loved. We will continue to exercise bold leadership, to campaign and influence to ensure we all #KeepThePromise by 2030.



Elliot Jackson,
National Convener of the Children's Panel and Chief Executive of Children's Hearings Scotland

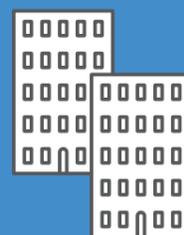
The aspiration of Children's Hearings Scotland is to reduce the need for children to attend hearings, but when they do, we want the experience to cause no harm or distress, and to be child and family friendly. We ensure children feel heard, included, and respected, even if they disagree with decisions. We prioritise supporting our Panel Members with the right skills, knowledge, and a trauma-informed approach, enabling them to understand situations from the perspective of everyone who is involved.

We're also driving systemic change working collaboratively with The Children and Young People's Centre for Justice (CYCJ) to ensure readiness to make the best decisions for young people which we will see as a result of the Children's Care and Justice Act, and to implement non-legislative reforms that improve the experience of children and their families.

We are creating an Experts by Experience group, consisting of nine incredible and insightful young people aged 14–24. They will help guide our organisation in its work ensuring that our actions reflect what truly matters to children and families.



"We are five years into a ten-year change programme. Have we seen improvement across the system? Absolutely! Have we seen the pace and level of transformation needed to #KeepThePromise for all children? Unfortunately not"



Lynne O'Brien,
Chief Officer Children and Families at Aberlour

Five years on Aberlour is committed to delivering the promise, ensuring that children are safe, loved, and have the chance to thrive. We offer loving, caring residential and foster care, transforming young lives and putting children's rights at the heart of everything we do. We continue to be brave and bold, listening and learning from children and families to create the best care and influence change.

Our two dedicated recovery houses support mums in recovery, helping families to stay together. We also work tirelessly to change systems and culture, helping to create more opportunities for women to access specialist support. Aberlour's intensive family support services help families when they need it most. We know that early help can prevent crises and improve outcomes for both families and partners.

Aberlour remains committed to campaigning and influencing change to fulfil the promise, continuously challenging and being part of the solution.



Breaking the habit: social media use among young people

The World Health Organisation released a survey last year which revealed an increase in problematic social media use among adolescents in Scotland, further raising alarm bells about young people's online habits, safety and the impact social media has on their wellbeing. Experienced voices share perspectives on this important issue, as well as what urgent action they think is needed



Nuzhat Uthmani,
Primary Teacher and Lecturer
in Primary Education at the
University of Stirling

Research is now appearing that highlights the need for educators and caregivers to adopt strategies that mitigate the negative effects of excessive screen time while promoting healthy habits.

While in schools, digital literacy and safe internet use forms part of the curriculum in Scotland, there needs to be a balance adopted that takes into consideration the overall time children and adolescents are spending on screens. At a time where the average British 12-year-old is spending 29 hours a week on their smart phones, research is also telling us that limiting screen time has been shown to improve psychological wellbeing and enhance positive social behaviours. A study published in JAMA Network Open found that reducing screen exposure can alleviate symptoms of anxiety and depression, reinforcing the importance of setting boundaries around device usage.

The UK Parliament's Education Committee reported a 52% increase in children's screen time between 2020 and 2022, with nearly 25% of young people showing signs of screen addiction. This rise correlates with adverse mental health outcomes, including increased anxiety and depression.

The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH) advises that while direct evidence of screen harm is inconclusive as yet, excessive use should not displace essential activities such as sleep, physical activity, and social interactions. They recommend that screen time limits be appropriate for the child's developmental stage.

Social media particularly impacts teenagers, increasing levels of anxiety, lowering self-esteem, and fostering loneliness. Research from the University of Oxford confirms that heavy social media use is linked to poor mental health outcomes among adolescents, emphasising the importance of parental oversight and digital boundaries.

I fear teaching about internet safety is no longer sufficient. Instead, we must also focus on the harms of social media use and addiction to online devices and spaces as a means to safeguard our children and adolescents and allow them to recognise the signs of addiction so they can better manage their own wellbeing. •



Jordan Daly,
Co-Founder and Director of Time
for Inclusive Education (TIE)

Children and young people are increasingly exposed to hate, extremism, and disinformation on social media platforms. Data from Ofcom shows that a quarter of children aged five to seven and

80% of 16- and 17-year-olds have active TikTok accounts. In 2022, Statista reported that children aged four to 18 in Britain spend an average of 114 minutes daily on the app.

The Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD) conducted a study of TikTok, analysing 1,030 videos from 491 accounts. They found 312 videos promoting white supremacy, 90 promoting anti-LGBT content, 58 promoting misogyny, and 273 glorifying extremist ideologies. This was being amplified by algorithms designed to boost sensationalist or emotive content to increase engagement. The effects of this are evident in Scottish schools, where teachers have expressed concerns about the role of online platforms in spreading hate. In 2024, we led focus groups with over 200 pupils between S3 and S6 across Scotland. They shared their experiences with the extreme hate they encountered online, particularly misogyny, homophobia, and racism.

Pupils were worried about the "normalisation" and "minimisation" of online hate, where harmful content is reduced to jokes or trolling. This not only desensitises young people to prejudice but also contributes to an increase in prejudice-based bullying in schools. The young people also struggled to discern what was true online and discussed encountering harmful conspiracy narratives.

This is an urgent issue. With social media platforms removing fact-checking services, schools and teachers need the right tools to help pupils navigate online spaces safely, free from information manipulation and division.

To address this, we've partnered with ISD to combine our expertise in anti-prejudice education and counter-extremism strategies. Together, we have launched the 'Digital Discourse Initiative' in Scotland. This includes a free online professional learning module to help teachers and school staff

counter online hate, identify disinformation, and support the development of critical thinking and digital media literacy.

The course, developed with experts, covers social media, disinformation, and online hate. It provides evidence-based strategies for schools to address these issues and includes a case analysis on radical misogyny and the 'Manosphere' created by Zero Tolerance.

Online hate and disinformation are growing, increasingly targeted at marginalised communities with dehumanising narratives and dangerous rhetoric that can lead to violence, bullying, and discrimination offline.

As a user of social media platforms, I can see that they feel more divided, more extreme, and more toxic than they did just a few years ago. I can also see the real-world consequences of this. If you feel that way too, remember that children and young people are using the same platforms that we are.

Experts are warning that disinformation and polarisation threaten democracy. Education is an essential defence. •



Teachers and school staff can access the Digital Discourse Initiative professional learning for free via digitaldiscourse.scot

For further information on Time for Inclusive Education's work and to access school services, visit tie.scot

Illustration: Yuwen Wang

Correcting the curriculum

Professor Louise Hayward, Emeritus Professor, Educational Assessment and Innovation, University of Glasgow; and Lead of the *Independent Review of Qualifications and Assessment (IRQA)*, argues the need for education reform in Scotland based on its findings



All education reform should begin with three questions. First, is change needed? Second, if yes, what changes will improve education for children and young people? Third, how can ideas become practice across the board?

Is change needed?

It was clear from evidence gathered from across society that students' qualifications experiences were problematic. Young people taking National Qualifications told us that rather than learning deeply about subjects, they spent much time rehearsing for examinations, memorising text, being taught formulaic answers, completing past papers, and studying for prelims. Some liked examinations, while stress meant others could not demonstrate what they knew or what they could do.

Young people taking other qualifications commonly felt their achievements were valued less. Schools were judged mainly by their performance in National Qualifications. It was felt that in Scotland, a country committed to the UN Convention on Rights of the Child, some students mattered more than others.

In addition, the Independent Review of Qualifications and Assessment (IRQA) recognised that the world is changing fast. Current and future students need different kinds of knowledge, skills, and competences, and qualifications should offer evidence of a wider range of achievements.

What changes will improve education for children and young people?

IRQA proposed a new qualification, the Scottish Diploma of Achievement, which will implement IRQA recommended improvements to current curriculum and examinations, including: project learning, where students apply knowledge and skills from their subjects/courses to tackle a problem important to them; and personal learning, where learners reflect on experiences in and beyond classrooms and how these – and the contributions they make to their schools, colleges, families or communities – influence what they choose to do next.

The Scottish Diploma of Achievement may be new to Scotland, but many other countries have qualifications that are similar. The Diploma also has much in common with the International Baccalaureate. These approaches to qualifications share a common aim, to allow all students to show more of their achievements and to provide a more rounded picture of each individual.

How can good ideas become practice in every school and college in Scotland?

The IRQA involved all those whose support would be needed if changes to qualifications were to be successful: young people and their parents or carers; educationalists, from teachers and leaders in schools and colleges to those working in local authorities and national organisations; and those who

use qualifications: colleges, universities, and employers. All of these communities debated how qualifications could be better and all agreed to the recommendations in the *It's Our Future* report.

Where are we now?

Changes to Scottish Education are underway but there remains much to be done. There is a tension between moving so quickly that the education system cannot cope and moving too slowly. Young people currently in our schools and colleges need changes to qualifications. Colleges, universities, and employers are also calling for reform to qualifications to ensure students find the transition into the next stage of their lives to be smoother.

I hope that soon there will be a commitment to the idea of a broader qualification and assessment system and a plan to realise it. Scotland needs qualifications that recognise the achievements of all students; one that will improve their learning experiences, build their enthusiasm for learning, and encourage them to become lifelong learners. •



Part of the One Touch Health Group

Transforming Children's Social Care: The tri.x Digital Approach

For over 18 years, tri.x has been at the forefront of delivering web-enabled guidance for social care professionals across England. Now, we're expanding our expertise to Scotland, ensuring practitioners have the tools they need to provide the best care possible.

A Consistent Approach with the National Practice Model

Supporting children and young people requires a structured yet flexible approach. The National Practice Model offers a framework that helps practitioners assess a child's development holistically—considering their rights, family environment, strengths, and vulnerabilities.

The tri.x Online Manual: A Game-Changer for Social Care

Our innovative digital manual empowers practitioners with a child-centred, strength-based, and consistent approach to care. Built around key guidance such as *Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC)* and *The Promise*, it serves as an essential resource for professionals.



To learn more about our offering please call or email the tri.x team:



+44 2476 678 053



admin@trixonline.co.uk



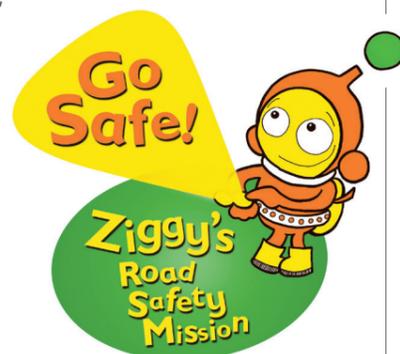
Road Safety Learning for Life

Road safety is an integral part of our lives. Most of us use the road network on a regular, if not daily basis. Whether it be walking our children to and from school, cycling to the shops, taking the bus to visit family and friends, or going for a drive in the car. It is vitally important to ensure we all have the necessary skills to use our roads safely to minimise the risk of injury.

The Scottish Government's Road Safety Framework to 2030 sets out a vision for Scotland to have the best road safety performance in the world by 2030 and an ambitious long-term goal where no-one is seriously-injured or killed on our roads by 2050. The key to achieving this vision is collaboration. Road Safety Scotland (RSS) has a responsibility for road safety learning and works with many partners across Scotland to ensure road safety is seen as a lifelong skill.

RSS has produced a suite of high-quality, free, online road safety learning resources for all ages and stages of a child's learning for ages 3-18 years. All are linked to Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) and provide a diverse range of learning opportunities which have been designed, in collaboration with education specialists, to be both interdisciplinary and immersive, helping young people prepare to make safer choices to protect themselves and others in the road environment.

'Go Safe with Ziggy' is RSS's early years resource for 3-6 year-olds exposing children to road safety skills in the classroom and at home, and is designed to help form positive attitudes and good habits from a young age. The main primary school resource is 'Roadstars' aimed at children aged 3-11, designed to get the youngest road users thinking about road safety in an active and immersive way. The animated superhero characters grow and evolve as children travel through primary school years, tasking children with appropriate missions to develop their road safety skills as they grow and learn.



A new secondary school resource for S1-S6 pupils is currently in development and should be available by Spring 2025. Work is also ongoing to create a resource for children and young people with complex additional support needs. RSS sought input from Children in Scotland's Policy, Projects and Participation Team, who gathered the voices and opinions of children and young people to ensure new resource material will engage learners in a way that is appropriate, relevant and challenging.

To give children and young people the skills they need to cope with our modern road network and contribute towards the Scottish Government's vision where no-one is killed on our roads, road safety learning needs to go beyond the early years settings and school. Road safety is everyone's responsibility, so we all – as professionals, teachers, practitioners, parents or carers – need to be good role models and lead by example. It is worth remembering that children, especially young children, will copy what they see and hear, and repeat those behaviours. So, it is vitally important the significant people in children and young people's lives lead by example as the example we set as the road users of today will greatly influence the type of road users our young people will become in the future.

If we all play our part individually, collectively we can proactively shape better road safety outcomes for future generations and make Scotland's roads safer for all. •



Road Safety Scotland's learning resources can be accessed on their website at roadsafety.scot

We must not delay making alcohol-free childhoods a reality

Amy Smith, Senior Coordinator (Policy) at Alcohol Focus Scotland, discusses the impact of alcohol marketing on children and young people's lives



Alcohol brands are highly visible in our everyday lives and billions of pounds are spent every year on marketing these products. Young people are particularly susceptible to alcohol marketing, and research shows that it is a cause of youth drinking, leading children and young people to start drinking earlier, to drink more, and to drink at problematic levels.

Alcohol Focus Scotland has joined forces with British Medical Association (BMA) Scotland, Children in Scotland, Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol and Drugs (SFAD), and Scottish Health Action on Alcohol Problems (SHAAP) in a mission to end the harmful impacts of alcohol marketing on children and young people in Scotland, through our Alcohol-Free Childhood campaign.

The campaign pledges that: "alcohol marketing has no place in childhood. All children should play, learn and socialise in places that are healthy and safe, protected from exposure to alcohol marketing."

We're delighted to have more than 50 organisations from across civic society already signed up, in addition to 80 MSPs across all parties, including First Minister John Swinney MSP.

The campaign has been instrumental in progressing this policy area in Scotland. Following an initial consultation in 2023, Public Health Scotland have now been commissioned to conduct an evidence review that will support progress on specific proposals.

Marketing restrictions have been identified by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as one of the most

“Working with children and young people and amplifying their voices is paramount to our campaign”

effective ways to reduce alcohol harm, noting that they protect children and young people and help to address the normalisation of alcohol consumption across the general population.

Importantly, alcohol marketing restrictions would help Scotland meet its human rights obligations and comply with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child warned specifically that the marketing of alcohol to children can have a long-term impact on their health, affecting their rights to life, survival and development. Working with children and young people and amplifying their voices, which often go unheard in discussions about the impact of alcohol, is paramount to our campaign.

Youth engagement projects, such as that conducted by Children in Scotland, have highlighted how children and young people want alcohol to be less visible in their daily lives and support restrictions on alcohol marketing. This adds to views from the Young Scot Health Panel of children and young people aged 14-25 years in 2020 and members of Scotland's Children's Parliament (aged 9-11) in 2019. At Alcohol Focus Scotland, we have worked with more than 200 children and young people, creating an animation to represent their views.

International public health experts, civic society, policy makers and children and young people themselves are aligned in this call to protect younger generations from the harms of alcohol marketing.

It's time that we saw this support translate into tangible action and change. For this, we need your help. •

Sign up to Alcohol Focus Scotland's campaign today by visiting alcohol-focus-scotland.org.uk or by contacting Amy directly at: amy.smith@alcohol-focus-scotland.org.uk



Success Looks Different – and that’s worth celebrating

In praise of the Inclusion Ambassadors for recognising achievement beyond exam results and a review of this year’s Success Looks Different Awards

Words: **Robert Doyle**

What does success really look like? For some children, it’s getting top exam results and winning competitions. But for many young people, success is something else, like making it into school more regularly, participating in activities, speaking up in class for the first time, finding the confidence to make new friends, or overcoming challenges most people never see.

That’s exactly why the Inclusion Ambassadors created the Success Looks Different Awards. They were set up to recognise how education settings across Scotland are celebrating the achievements of all their pupils. It’s about acknowledging the things that don’t always fit traditional definitions of success but are every bit as important.

The Inclusion Ambassadors are a group of secondary school-aged pupils from across Scotland who have a range of additional support needs. They meet regularly and are encouraged to speak freely and openly. Members often share their experiences of being a pupil with additional support needs in Scotland, including what works well at school and what could change to make things better.

Success Looks Different 2024-25

The awards have four categories: Early Years, Primary School, Secondary School and Special School. This year, the Inclusion Ambassadors decided to shake the application process up. They wanted to make sure that children and young people have a stronger voice in applications. As one Inclusion Ambassador put it, an important reason for this is that *“We want to make sure that applicants walk the walk and don’t just talk the talk”*.

Now in their third year, the awards continue to send a powerful message: *success is different for everyone*. This sentiment is expressed in the Inclusion Ambassadors’ vision statement, which sets out how they think schools can help pupils feel more included and supported.



An engagement pack was developed to encourage more co-production with children and young people.

When it came to judging, the Inclusion Ambassadors took the lead in selecting the winners. They used their own carefully-designed criteria to judge each application and ensure every decision reflected their values and vision. This includes how well applicants celebrate the individuality of pupils, how they demonstrate creativity and how well they share successes with the wider community.

Spotlight on this year’s winners

Early Years – ELU Hamilton

The Inclusion Ambassadors were especially inspired by ELU Hamilton’s Achievement Tree, a brilliant way to showcase daily successes and celebrate children’s milestones – whether at nursery or at home. They also loved the idea of the Edible Yard, where children can grow their own produce, enjoy it, and share it with the community, turning learning into a hands-on, rewarding experience.

Primary school – Buchanhaven Primary School

Buchanhaven stood out as the winner of the primary school category, thanks to the uplifting language and inspiring quotes in their application. Ambassadors were impressed by the wide variety of achievements the school celebrates, their deep connections with the local community, and the Thrive Hive – a vibrant space where children can explore new experiences and discover their potential.

Secondary school – Duncanrig Secondary School

The Inclusion Ambassadors were truly inspired by how powerfully the voices of pupils shone through in Duncanrig Communication Support Base’s application. They were equally impressed by the vibrant and detailed school wall displays, which beautifully showcase students’ achievements, personal stories, creative works, and testimonials – giving a real sense of pride and accomplishment.

Special school – Parkhill Secondary School

Parkhill School was crowned the winner of the special school category, with the Inclusion Ambassadors especially drawn to the clear, straightforward approach of their application. The team was impressed by how they mapped out the activities throughout the building, giving a real sense of what’s happening across the whole school. The group also loved how Parkhill shared what makes their school special and how a lot of what they do is about making pupils “feel good”.

Reflections on 2024-25: Rethinking how we recognise and celebrate success

In Scotland, as in many places, young people are under increasing pressure to meet narrow definitions of success. But what about those whose achievements can’t be measured on a spreadsheet? The pupils who keep trying, despite setbacks? The children and young people who support others, even when they’re struggling themselves?

By establishing the Success Looks Different Awards, the Inclusion Ambassadors hope to shift the conversation, towards a broader, more inclusive understanding of achievement. An understanding that values the diverse strengths, experiences and pathways of our children and young people – that not only recognises but celebrates all their successes. •

You can find out more about the Success Looks Different Awards and this year’s winners by visiting:

childreninscotland.org.uk/inclusion-ambassadors-success-looks-different



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Preserving the Cairngorms National Park for generations to come

Since 2009, the Cairngorms National Park Junior Ranger project has given almost 1,000 young people the chance to experience nature and advocate for their environment while developing new skills. Countryside rangers *Will George* and *Pete Short*, discuss the project's impact alongside some of the junior rangers

Planting willows, building bird boxes, carrying out moth surveys and setting off on a three-day expedition are just some of the Cairngorms National Park Junior Rangers' recent adventures.

The project brings together young people who live in the Cairngorms and empowers them to act as advocates for the natural environment while developing skills, making new friends and, of course, embracing the great outdoors. With junior rangers aged between 11 and 18, there's a real family feel – and their feedback shapes the work we do with them.

More than 300 young people have taken part in the programme over the past three years, with many going on to further study or jobs in conservation – based professions. Others have spoken at conferences or international camps as ambassadors of the project and the Cairngorms National Park.

We work closely with more than 40 partner organisations – including the family of ranger services throughout the Cairngorms National Park – to deliver a variety of fun, practical activities with groups from all over the area. Junior rangers meet at monthly sessions, while the project also works with local schools. We wouldn't be able to deliver such a comprehensive programme – for free – without the support of our partners.



The project tends to attract young people with an interest in nature and the outdoors, and those who like giving back to their community in a fun way. Their dedication and passion for looking after Scotland's wildlife has attracted national recognition.

Isla Paton, 17, says being part of the programme "lends a different perspective to our daily scenery".

"I've been a junior ranger for two years," she says. "In that time, I've had the opportunity to engage in a wide range of experiences and hands-on activities – often while being eaten by midges!"

"I've loved learning more about the place we live in: gaining insights into the history of the landscape, visiting sites off the beaten track, and helping preserve and restore the Cairngorms for generations to come."

Isla says her experiences have inspired an ambition to study ecology.

"I've been able to grow my confidence talking to new people and, over the course of many sessions and an incredible expedition, have made good new friends," she adds. "Meeting like-minded young people is a key part of junior rangers and makes even the worst weather more enjoyable."

Ariel Robertson, 16, says she felt a strong camaraderie as soon as she joined the Cairngorms National Park Junior Rangers school programme.

"What I particularly love about the programme is the variety," she says. "One month we might do hands-on tasks like footpath maintenance, which is rewarding as you can see the hard work you've put in as a t, whilst knowing it will benefit the public as well as protect the National Park."

"Another month might focus on learning more about the Park through tasks such as bumblebee or moth surveys, with session leaders who are always keen to share their knowledge and experiences."

A highlight for Ariel has been taking part in the Scottish Countryside Rangers' Association (SCRA) Junior Ranger Award, which helped her develop useful skills like map reading and first aid.

"A memorable experience was in June, when we walked 21km through Dorenell

“Meeting like-minded young people is a key part of junior rangers and makes even the worst weather more enjoyable”

Wind Farm and Glenlivet Estate, exploring some beautiful areas of the Cairngorms," she says.

"Being part of junior rangers has given me valuable skills which I have been able to take forward into my own experiences volunteering with the National Trust for Scotland North East Ranger team. It has inspired me to continue my journey in studying environmental science and work in conservation in the future."

For Vicky Stables, her experiences led her to landing her dream job as a senior ranger at Rothiemurchus near Aviemore.

She reflects: "I loved how varied the Cairngorms National Park Junior Rangers programme was, working with different ranger organisations within the valley and experiencing their diverse roles. We learned about wading birds and their habitat, met volunteer rangers on a local estate where we built shelters and learned about local fauna and fungi."

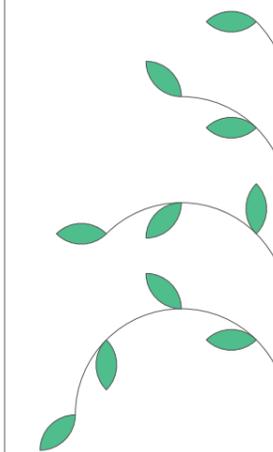
"When the opportunity of working as a countryside ranger at Rothiemurchus came up, I jumped at the chance. My working day is very varied, also changing with the seasons, which I love."

"It's good that the Cairngorms National Park Junior Ranger Project is still going strong, and I would encourage anyone who enjoys the great outdoors to get involved. You never know where this will lead you and to me there is no greater job in the world."

We are incredibly proud of what our junior rangers achieve individually and as a group – winning the Youth Action Award at The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) Scotland's Nature of Scotland Awards was testament to the dedication of these young people, who are so passionate about the environment and safeguarding it for the future. •

Opposite, above: Rangers Pete Short and Will George planting willow with Junior Rangers and Cairngorms Connect Monitoring Officer, Ellie Dimambro-Denson, at Loch Avon

Opposite, below: Junior Rangers celebrating winning RSPB Scotland's Youth Action Award



To learn more, email rangers@cairngorms.co.uk or visit cairngorms.co.uk

Exploring UNCRC through a queer lens

Since the incorporation of the UNCRC into Scots law, LGBT Youth Scotland has been supporting LGBTQ+ young people to understand their rights. Digital Youth Worker, *Alan Massie*, discusses how a group of young people used their own experiences to explore their rights and advocate for greater awareness and support

UNCRC

UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

What is the UNCRC?

An international agreement setting out the rights of every child, regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and many more.



Why is it important?

Every child should be recognised, respected and protected and is entitled to their rights.

What Articles of the UNCRC have we covered?

Article 2 - Non-discrimination

Article 12 - Respect for the views of the child

Article 19 - Protection from violence, abuse and neglect

Article 28 - Right to education



The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child says that all young people have rights, regardless of where they are from or how they identify.

LGBT Youth Scotland is Scotland's national charity for LGBTQ+ young people aged 13-25. We deliver life-changing youth work and enable young people to use their voice to create change. Our aim is to make Scotland a place where LGBTQ+ young people can flourish and thrive.

When the UNCRC was enshrined in Scots law, it inspired me as a youth worker, and I started thinking about how I could support young people to better understand their rights.

I started a new project with a group of young people who are passionate about fairness. The group understood that all rights were universal and equal, however, they wanted to highlight the rights of LGBTQ+ people and look at each article through a queer lens.

They selected the rights that felt most relevant to their experience as LGBTQ+ young people in Scotland, and made posters that illustrated them.

Article 2: The right to non-discrimination

Shockingly, every member of the group had experienced discrimination based on someone's perception of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. They want to change that, letting young people know that everyone around them is responsible for keeping them safe.

Article 12: The right to be listened to

LGBTQ+ young people know how to use their voice, but they often don't feel listened to – this is especially true for the trans and non-binary community. The group felt it was important that they conveyed all young people have the right not just to be heard, but also to be taken seriously.

Article 19: The right to protection from violence, abuse and neglect

Young LGBTQ+ people often face abuse, harassment and violence for simply being true to themselves and existing. This has a real impact on mental health, and one young person in our Life in Scotland for LGBT young people research said: "I endured misgendering, verbal abuse and physical assaults from classmates. I felt incredibly alone, to the point where I began to self-harm for being this way." The young people wanted to highlight that nobody should experience violence, abuse and/or neglect.

Article 28: The right to education

The young people were all aged 14-16 and they recognised that school didn't always feel safe and inclusive. Despite all the improvement of recent years, the young people described their friends leaving school because of bullying and not feeling supported.

This experience is reflected across Scotland, and our Life in Scotland for LGBT Young People research found that only 10% of participants thought that their experience of school was "good". We have to do better for our young people.

Working alongside the young people who participated was a joy! Hearing them talk about their rights as young LGBTQ+ people, and the passion they felt about making sure other LGBTQ+ people were aware of their rights, made it clear that this project was greatly needed.

Everyone can get involved in protecting LGBTQ+ young people, whether that is by challenging homophobia, biphobia or transphobia or advocating for a policy change in your workplace. •

ARTICLE 28

EVERY CHILD HAS THE RIGHT TO AN EDUCATION

No young person should be prevented from getting an education because of their sexuality, sex, gender reassignment, race, disability, pregnancy and maternity, poverty and faith, etc.

All young people should be able to enjoy their education without fear of harassment for being who they are.



LGBTQ+ youth often face bullying at school for being openly out about their gender identity and/or sexual orientation.



Above and opposite: Members of LGBT Youth Scotland's Edinburgh-based youth group, SmashUp, were involved in the design and illustration of UNCRC posters, focusing on articles 2, 12, 19 and 28

Find out more about rights and view the posters on LGBT Youth Scotland's website:

lgbtyouth.org.uk/uncrc-know-your-rights

If you want to find out more about how to make your organisation, school or workplace accessible to LGBTQ+ young people, find out more about the LGBT Charter scheme:

lgbtyouth.org.uk/lgbt-charter-home

Systems change with families at the heart

The Transforming Child Maintenance project set out to identify policy solutions to improve the system, and to help families navigate it. Two years into their partnership, **Caitlin Logan** speaks with our members One Parent Families Scotland and Fife Gingerbread



Caitlin Logan: This is a partnership project between One Parent Families Scotland (OPFS), Fife Gingerbread, and the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) Scotland. Can you tell us how that approach has worked?

Philippa Kemp (OPFS): The beauty of the partnership is that it's enabled us each to bring something different to the table. OPFS has brought the experiences of resident parents, IPPR had focus groups with non-resident parents and brought in statistical analysis, and Fife Gingerbread are operating on the ground with resident parents and using the Child Maintenance Service (CMS), so they can see the barriers firsthand.

CL: Can you share some of the project's key findings?

PK: Since 2017 the move was for the state to step back and assume parents can come to an arrangement, but this has backfired. The rate of payment has decreased, with increased arrears, and it's led to more conflict between parents. It has

also led to the CMS being used as a tool to further economic abuse.

Kerry Jones (Fife Gingerbread): I provide child maintenance advice to parents, and 41% are affected by domestic abuse. There's no safeguarding for victims through the CMS — there was an inquiry in 2021 into domestic abuse and the CMS, and its recommendations haven't been carried out yet. I'm also delivering training to practitioners supporting families throughout Scotland to increase confidence discussing child maintenance. We've discovered there's a higher tier training level required for complex cases, so we've been working with Scottish Child Law Centre to create that.

60% of referrals I get are for simple advice like how to apply, how to report something — that shouldn't be needed for a system that works for everybody. So we've now established a working group with the CMS, other key organisations, and resident and non-resident parents to develop a primary information toolkit for families.

CL: Underpinning the project has been a focus on children's right to financial support from both parents. Why is that important?

KJ: Our training includes a section on child rights and child maintenance — the practitioners find it gives them more confidence to approach the subject with parents. It's an emotive subject — it's very "he said, she said". As soon as you focus on the child and reframe it, people think about the system differently. Every organisation I've been in touch with, child maintenance is not asked about on registration, so one of the training asks is that organisations incorporate that, and frame the question as, "is your child receiving child maintenance?"

PK: The system is set up for it to be viewed as an issue between parents, because the state is not taking a central role in helping parents come to a resolution. One of IPPR's key findings is that child maintenance can cut the poverty rate from 40% to 30% among children in single parent households. So, we've asked the UK Child Poverty Task Force to ensure child maintenance is a priority.

CL: The final report will be published soon. Can you give us a sneak peek at its other recommendations?

PK: We're looking at the state intervening to pay where child maintenance isn't paid and clawing that back from the non-resident parent. Child maintenance is also low on the priority debt list, and the priority deduction list for Universal Credit, so our recommendation is to bump it up. It's also about pushing local authorities to integrate the family support model Fife Gingerbread has worked on, and trying to get the Scottish Government involved in mitigation. •

Opposite: Members of the Transforming Child Maintenance project team, including parent participants, at the launch of their interim report at the Scottish Parliament (September 2024)

Kerry Jones is the Child Maintenance Project Coordinator at Fife Gingerbread and **Philippa Kemp** is the Communications, Policy and Public Affairs Manager at One Parent Families Scotland.

Learn more about the project, funded by The Roberston Trust, at:

[opfs.org.uk/
TransformingChildMaintenance](https://opfs.org.uk/TransformingChildMaintenance)

Find out how to access Fife Gingerbread's child maintenance training at:

fifegingerbread.org.uk/transforming-child-maintenance

Single Parent Experts

One Parent Families Scotland has supported a group of single parents to help shape the findings and recommendations. Here, **Marissa Costello**, Single Parent Participation Officer at OPFS, shares some learning on implementing a participative approach

“When lived experience is truly valued and made use of, it creates something powerful. We have the ability to bring about change that doesn't just affect us individually, but ripples out to create a more compassionate, inclusive world”

Charlotte, young single parent

The power of lived experience

I presented at the Corra Foundation conference on parent participation, and the best part of that workshop was Charlotte, a Fife Gingerbread parent. She was the star — it brought everything alive, the way she could speak about it, unscripted and with passion.

Flexibility

We have parents in different locations, some in paid work and some not. We asked when and where would suit them, so we could create options to suit the majority. Originally we had groups in Dundee, Glasgow, Fife, and online. Then we brought that together as one online evening group and one face-to-face group in Edinburgh during the day, so people could get their kids to and from school. This is the first project where we've had online evening meetings, and people were thankful they could participate with their kids at home.

Removing cost barriers

Something else that's important is that if participants are travelling, they're not out of pocket in advance — we arrange bus or train tickets for them to download. All participants are also given vouchers for each meeting.

Relationships

We had a lot of interest in the project from parents across Scotland, many of whom heard about it from Fife Gingerbread, Poverty Alliance, other partners, and through social media. It was great to include parents who hadn't previously connected with OPFS. Most of those who remained involved over the two years had links with OPFS or other organisations, which helped them stay engaged. We find that building that relationship with participants and providing ongoing support is important.

Keeping the promise: Building supportive schools for care experienced children and young people

Delivered by Children in Scotland, the #KeepThePromise Learning Programme is creating accessible learning opportunities for pupil support staff. Hear how the programme is strengthening support for care experienced learners across Scotland

Words: **Lizz Toomey**

The promise tells us about the importance of supportive schools for care experienced pupils, and we know that pupil support staff don't always get consistent professional development opportunities. Thanks to The Promise Partnership's Keep The Promise Fund, in March 2023 we were able to start development of the #KeepThePromise Pupil Support Staff Learning Programme, exploring how support for care experienced learners in Scottish schools can be strengthened.

Since the project began, we've worked with care experienced children and young people themselves, going into schools to collect their views on what good support looks like. We've also worked closely with a group of pupil support staff who have advised us on which areas of professional development they feel are most important for them, and how this learning should be delivered.

In November 2024 we began delivering these learning opportunities, both in-person and online. Ensuring that the training is accessible has been an important consideration, which is why we've produced a

wide-range of different training options for pupil support staff to select from: three eLearning modules which include real people's voices and views, online practice sharing sessions taking place after school and on in-service days, and four in-person training days on in-service days in Dundee, Inverness, Edinburgh and Glasgow.

We recognise the challenges care experienced children, young people and the support staff that work with them are facing currently. We're also heartened to hear people's learnings from the programme, for example:

"Fresh ideas to implement from speaking to other colleagues in attendance"
(Delegate, Dundee)

"To remind myself (in situations) to have hope for children. To always try and have a love mindset"
(Delegate, Inverness)

"I've new ways of understanding and helping to support the behaviour presented by young people who have experienced trauma or are care experienced"
(Delegate, Online Practice Sharing Session)

We have plenty more learning lined up including:

- In-person training days on 6 May in Edinburgh and 22 May in Glasgow
- Online practice sharing sessions focusing on care experienced learner's rights
- Three, free-to-access eLearning modules which will be published on the Children in Scotland eLearning hub from March onwards.

It has been a real privilege hearing from so many pupil support staff from across the country as part of this project. Our plan is to collate a summary report, bringing together what pupil support staff have told us at the training events. This resource will highlight the key themes that are emerging and include a list of recommendations that we can share more widely across the children's sector. •



Upcoming in-person training days:

Glasgow | 6 May, 9.30am - 3.30pm
Edinburgh | 22 May, 9.30am - 3.30pm

Visit childreninscotland.org.uk/learning



Defining moments

After 10 years at the helm of the national body for neurodiversity The Donaldson Trust, Chief Executive **Laura Watkins** will be retiring this year. Here, she reflects on progress, pivotal moments and how one encounter changed the course of her career



What have been key achievements during your time as Chief Executive of The Donaldson Trust?

In 2019 a new strategy for the Trust was agreed, building on our skills, experience and resources to support a growing area of societal need – neurodivergence. This honoured our history of championing people with communication differences and enabled us to move forward and increase our reach.

Since then, we've opened several new services for children, young people and adults. It was important to us that children and young people weren't left behind when they transitioned to the next stage of their lives and our adult services help to bridge that gap.

Everything we do is informed by the experiences of neurodivergent people. Setting up our Advisory Board helps to inform our practice as members' input comes from their experiences navigating the world as a neurodivergent person. And more recently our policy and influencing work is helping to amplify neurodivergent voices.

In which areas would you like to see progress prioritised for neurodivergent children and young people in the coming years?

Improving the wellbeing and mental health of neurodivergent children in schools is crucial. This includes addressing sensory differences, classroom design and values.

Knowledge sessions for teachers and staff should focus on topics such as pastoral care for neurodivergent students, understanding neurodiversity, and creating inclusive and supportive environments.

Helping children and young people to better understand their neurodivergence and supporting them to recognise and communicate when they feel stressed or anxious and teach them self-care techniques.

Creating more opportunities for neurodivergent children to share their stories and experiences and acting on their input to implement support based on their needs and experiences will be transformative.

What have you found to be the most inspiring part of your role at The Donaldson Trust?

Seeing change happen in front of you is the most inspiring. Observing children and young people arrive mentally battered and bruised because of a lack of understanding and appropriate support, then witnessing the change that comes from tender, nurturing support for their wellbeing is incredible.

Parents are often amazed by the positive changes and tell us they'd never imagine their child being able to do the things they now do. It must be difficult when you've been told what you are and what you do is wrong or deficient. Being able to overcome that and to be comfortable with who you are and celebrate your differences and not be ashamed – that's inspiring.

If you could give a young person starting their career one piece of advice, what would it be?

Do what makes you feel good about yourself and know that careers can and often do change. So be eclectic. And find the right balance for you between your skills and your pleasures to avoid burnout. You can't be the best version of yourself if you don't feel great.

Have you had any unexpected turns in your career?

I studied sculpture and fine art and afterwards began lecturing. Working on an outreach project supporting a group of adults with learning disabilities turned out to be a pivotal moment for me in my career.

It was there I met a young autistic man called Andrew and I was fascinated by his experiences. I quickly realised that this was the direction I wanted to head in.

Around the same time my son was diagnosed as autistic. If I hadn't met Andrew, I may only have had the experience of autism and neurodiversity from a parental focus rather than in a professional capacity.

Any favourite mottos from your career?

The motto I constantly refer to is 'Do No Harm.' It sounds easy but can be spectacularly difficult. It is linked to my belief that safeguarding frameworks aren't optional, they're mandatory and everything you do should be through that lens. •

Let us introduce you to...



Bruce Crawford

Joined EVOC (Edinburgh Voluntary Organisations' Council) as Chief Executive Officer in December 2024

Bruce brings a breadth of strategic leadership experience to the role, as a CEO, Trustee and volunteer. As Director of Grange Associates, he has supported charities and social enterprises to develop and succeed, offering advice in a range of areas including governance, strategy, policy, change management, diversity, risk management, business planning and sustainability. As Chief Executive for Scottish Curling, Bruce led successful negotiations that secured £2m funding for Covid recovery from the Scottish Government and played a key role in developing strategies and campaigns to ensure that the Olympic profile and success were capitalised to maximum effect. He is also a member of the Sustainability Committee for World Curling and is the chair of the James Gillespie's Trust.

Katrina Reid

Joined Public Health Scotland as Organisational Lead (Children and Young People) in April 2024

Improving health and tackling health inequalities has been a passion for Katrina throughout her career. Over the last two decades, Katrina has worked in various roles within local and national NHS Boards and the third sector, where she has gained a breadth of experience in working with policy makers, practitioners and communities. Katrina believes that prevention is a core principle of public health and there is no better place to bring a focus on prevention than for children and young people.



Steven Sweeney

Joined Forces Children Scotland as Chief Executive in December 2024

Steven was a teacher before combining hobby and career, working at two football clubs, setting up and running their partner charities. Most recently in the north east, leading Aberdeen FC Community Trust to being named by UEFA as the Best Professional Club in the Community in Europe. Steven was previously CEO at a Third Sector Interface, enabling volunteers, community organisations and social enterprises to deliver transformational change. Steven is also the Convenor of the Board of Directors at Children in Scotland, and is a Board Member at sportscotland.



To join us in membership and for more information visit: childreninScotland.org.uk/membership



Carly Elliott

Joined Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights) as Assistant Director (Programmes and Participation) in November 2024

Throughout her career, Carly has worked with children and young people whose rights are most at risk by supporting them to participate in decision making, individually and systemically. This has included providing intensive support to young women and girls in conflict with the law, leading influencing work alongside forces children and supporting care experienced people to influence policy and practice change – an example of which includes managing '1000 Voices', the participation project supporting the Independent Care Review. Carly is also a proud Trustee of The Young Women's Movement and Up 2 Us – two extraordinary organisations driving change for children and young people. Alongside her studies in human rights law, this work has inspired a keen interest in implementation of children's rights and child-friendly access to justice. Carly is excited to bring this passion and knowledge to the already-incredible work of Together Scotland.

The warmest of welcomes to all our new members

We would like to say a warm welcome to all the new members that have joined our community over the past six months. In this issue, we are getting to know one of our new members a bit better.

Let's meet Talk About Trust:

"We work across Scotland with schools and youth organisations focusing on building knowledge and confidence around effective substance education including drugs, alcohol and vaping for trusted adults who work with young people.

"Our training and free highly evaluated and evidence-based resources ensure practitioners are well informed and able to support young people to be knowledgeable, resilient and able to navigate choices around alcohol, nicotine, cannabis and other substances.

"In 2025, we aim to deliver our training and resources to as many organisations as possible to support the national priority for every young person in Scotland to have the right to an alcohol-free childhood."

To learn more about the charity and explore their free resources, visit talkabouttrust.org



Keeping Children Safe

The Care Inspectorate has developed support and guidance for early learning and childcare settings (including childminders and school-aged childcare) to keep children safe. Let's raise awareness and act responsibly to safeguard, protect and support children's wellbeing.

Download, share and display our posters, graphics and view practice notes at The Hub

bit.ly/ciSIMOA



SCAN ME

S

Safety

Be alert to all potential risks in your setting.

I

Inspect

Look around and inspect the environment to make sure a child can't leave an area without staff or their parent/carer.

M

Monitor

Regularly check that all children are accounted for, particularly when they are outside, on outings or using transport.

O

Observe

Observe children and think about their feelings and emotional security - use these observations to support children to feel loved and secure.

A

Act

Assess and take action to keep children safe.