

UNCRC Programme Update

Improving Outcomes
for Children and
Young People in Scotland

Welcome

Welcome to the first Children’s Rights Unit update of 2023. In this update we share progress of the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill, celebrate the Scottish Government’s progress towards promoting and fulfilling children’s rights and recap on all the World Children’s Day activity. Also, we have provided a reminder on children’s right’s reporting duties for the 2020-2023 cycle (reports due as soon as practicable after 31 March 2023). Finally, we have included information and links to two new resources on children’s right’s, one for parents and one for Elected Members.

If you have any questions about the newsletter content, themes you would like covered in future issues or content you would like to contribute to highlight how your organisation is preparing for the duties in the UNCRC Bill, please drop us an email at UNCRCIncorporation@gov.scot

Update on the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill (“the UNCRC Bill” or “the Bill”)

The Scottish Government remains absolutely committed to incorporating the UNCRC into Scots law, as far as that is possible within devolved competence, and to doing that as soon as practicable.

Preparations for Reconsideration Stage are well underway. This includes engagement with UK Government (UKG) officials on proposed amendments to bring the Bill within legislative competence.

Discussions with UKG officials currently focuses on what the Supreme Court judgement means for the application of the UNCRC compatibility duty when a public authority is acting under powers conferred by UK Acts in devolved areas. We are exploring options and Parliament will be updated on what this means for the provisions in the Bill after these have been carefully considered.

Update on Children's Rights Reporting for Listed Authorities

Reporting for the period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2020

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 ("the 2014 Act") Part 1, Section 2 places a reporting duty on [listed](#) Public Authorities (including all local authorities and health boards) in relation to the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child. Listed authorities are required to report every three years on the steps they have taken in that period to secure better or further effect within their areas of responsibility of the UNCRC requirements.

The first report under this legislation was due as soon as practicable after 31 March 2020. However, Part 3 of schedule 6 of the Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020 allowed listed authorities to delay the fulfilment of this reporting duty when this would impede upon work done to prevent the transmission of coronavirus. Listed authorities who had made use of these provisions should be aware these have now expired. Outstanding reports for the period 1 April 2017 – 31st March 2020 continue to be due as soon as is practicable.

Thank you to the listed public authorities that have published their report for the 2017-2020 period. There is no requirement to share these reports with the Scottish Government. However, we welcome links to published reports from those who would like to share them for learning purposes.



Update on Children's Rights Reporting for Listed Authorities

Reporting for the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2023

The reporting requirements under the 2014 Act will remain and listed public authorities should continue to prepare to publish a Report covering the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2023, as soon as practicable from the end of the reporting period in accordance with the 2014 Act.

Listed authorities can satisfy the duty to publish a report in such a manner as they consider appropriate – for example, through the preparation of a specific report, or by including relevant information in another report. Two or more listed authorities, to which this duty applies, can also satisfy this duty through the preparation and publication of a joined report. This provision was included in the legislation to facilitate maximisation of resources and avoid duplication of effort and could include a range of arrangements.

Below we have listed all the Scottish Government resources that support children's rights reporting under the 2014 legislation to help you prepare your reports:

1. [Guidance on Part 1, Section 2 \(Duties of Public Authorities in relation to the UNCRC\) of the Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#)
2. [UNCRC Introductory guidance](#)
3. [Introduction to children's rights: training tool](#)
4. [Participation - Decision making: children and young people's participation](#)

We are also organising an online event to support the next reporting cycle and share learning and good practice from 2017-2020. If you are interested in attending this event, please use the following [sign-up link](#). If you would like to support with preparing an outstanding 2017-2020 report, please email us at the UNCRC mailbox address UNCRCIncorporation@gov.scot



Parents, Carers, and Family Members UNCRC booklet

World Children's Day saw the launch of a new and much anticipated booklet for parents, carers, and family members. The booklet was developed in partnership with the Scottish Government's UNCRC Parents' Network. The key messages were identified following engagement with stakeholders and consideration of findings from the Scottish Parents' Survey. Further research was conducted to gauge what parents already knew and identify gaps in their knowledge and understanding. Families were also consulted on how they wanted to receive information and the style and tone of booklet content. Designed to introduce and explain the UNCRC and convey broad universal messages, the booklet adopts a warm and reassuring tone and can be accessed on the [Parent Club website](#).

Support for Elected Members

The [Improvement Service](#) UNCRC Implementation Project supports local authorities to meet the requirements of the UNCRC Bill. As part of this work, the Improvement Service worked with Together Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights, the Children's Parliament and Education Scotland to develop a [web-based resource](#) for Elected Members to support them to understand and progress children's rights.

The guide provides a range of information on the UNCRC and children's rights in Scotland as well as some specific guidance on what role Elected Members can play in safeguarding and advancing children's rights at the local level.

In October, the Improvement Service delivered an online seminar for Elected Members where they discussed key children's rights issues at a local level. For example, the right to play, safety issues around school playgrounds and how they can support further work on children's rights. The Improvement Service will offer similar webinars in the new year and continue to offer support on the UNCRC to local Elected Members across Scotland.

World Children's Day Activity

For further information on available support and resources, please, contact Rebecca Spillane (Rebecca.Spillane@improvementservice.org.uk), UNCRC Implementation Project Manager and Felicia Szloboda (Felicia.Szloboda@improvementservice.org.uk), Child Poverty and UNCRC Project Officer.

Round up of World Children's Day activity.

To celebrate World Children's Day on the 20th of November last year, the Children's Right's Unit published a [report](#) that sets out the many ways in which we are already delivering children's rights across a wide range of policy areas in Scotland.

In the week running up to World Children's Day we published a daily blog on the [Scottish Government's Participation Blog](#) site. Over the week we highlighted the diverse ways that the voices of young people are now shaping and influencing our work. The series culminated in a [letter to children and young people](#) from the Minister for Children and Young People, Clare Haughey MSP. The purpose of the letter was to emphasise the Scottish Government's continued commitment to children's rights. In addition, it tells children and young people about the progress the Scottish Government are making to deliver their rights. It also thanks children and young people for the role they play in making human rights real in Scotland.

We also created a space where young people themselves could ask some tricky questions about their rights and get a response from an expert. This work was led by young people from [Young Scot](#) and resulted in a weeklong social media campaign to raise awareness of the UNCRC. Campaign content went out on key social media platforms identified by young people including [TikTok](#), [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#). The project has achieved high reach with posts achieving over 36,000 followers and 779,000 likes. We would like to thank the young people involved and Young Scot for their creative vision and insight into how best we can communicate with young people.

