

Minister for Children, Young People and The Promise
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Convenor Equalities, Human Rights and Civil
Justice Committee
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10 October 2025

Dear Convenor,

I write to provide the Committee with an update on progress with preparation of the first Children's Rights Scheme (the Scheme). The Scheme is a statutory requirement under section 14 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024 (the UNCRC Act). Section 14 requires the Scottish Ministers to make a Scheme which sets out the arrangements that they have made, or propose to make, to ensure that they comply with the compatibility duty under section 6 of the Act and to secure better or further effect of the rights of children.

My official have now concluded an extensive period of statutory consultation on the draft Scheme which included engagement with the UNCRC Strategic Implementation Board and formal targeted consultation with: the Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland (CYPCS); the Scottish Human Rights Commission (SHRC); Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights); and Unicef (UK). On our behalf, Young Scot also undertook engagement with children and young people aged 9 to 18 on the Scheme via an open survey and workshops.

The draft Scheme will be published on the Scottish Government website on Monday 13 October at 09:00 labelled as 'Draft- Not yet laid before the Scottish Parliament'. The link should be available [here](#).

The draft Scheme already reflects feedback from the statutory consultation and no further feedback is being requested at this stage. The publication of the Scheme as draft is simply to meet our statutory duties under section 15 of the UNCRC Act, which states that: the Scottish Ministers may not make the Scheme until the proposal (i.e. the draft Scheme) has been laid before the Scottish Parliament; and that the proposal may not be laid before the Scottish Parliament any sooner than 28 days after they have published the proposal and consulted with children, the CYPCS, the SHRC, and such other persons as the Scottish Ministers consider appropriate. Although it has been well over 28 days since the consultation with the statutory consultees took place, the proposal for the Scheme was not published as part of

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that consultation. Instead, it was shared in full as part of the targeted consultation and summarised in the survey with children and young people. To meet our legal obligations in the UNCRC Act, there is therefore a requirement to publish the proposal and then wait at least 28 days before we lay the Scheme before Parliament.

I appreciate that normally when a document requires to be laid before Parliament, neither the document nor any reference to its contents should appear in the public domain before it is laid. However the wording of the UNCRC Act means that it will not be possible to adhere to this for the Scheme.

To respect the role of Parliament, the only proactive communications that will be issued by the Scottish Government about the publication on Monday will be this letter and a similar update to the UNCRC Strategic Implementation Board.

The Scheme will be laid before Parliament no sooner than 10 November, accompanied by more proactive communication about its contents and our ongoing commitment to children's rights. I will write to you again at this time to supply you with a final version of the Scheme.

Yours sincerely,

Natalie Don-Innes MSP
Minister for Children, Young People and The Promise

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