



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Incorporating the UNCRC into the work of the Scottish Parliament

A' leabachadh UNCRC ann an obair Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

July 2025



Contents

Message from the Presiding Officer	3
Facal bhon Oifigear Riaghlaidh	4
Introduction / Background	5
UNCRC Working Group	5
Children and young people's involvement over the last year	5
First Meeting of the UNCRC Working Group	6
Hopes and goals for children and young people's rights	6
Challenges for involving children and young people	7
What are Scottish Parliament teams doing to involve children and young people?	8
How does participation take place with children and young people at the Scottish Parliament?	8
Where does participation take place?	9
What has the Scottish Parliament done so far?	9
Next year's forward plan	16
What each Scottish Parliament team plans to do over the next year	17
Appendix A: The UNCRC Working Group	20
Appendix B: Partnerships	21
Appendix C: Scottish Parliament teams/offices: Opportunities to involve children and young people	22
Appendix D: Questions Scottish Parliament teams were asked by the UNCRC Working Group	24
Appendix E: Involvement of children and young people – 2024-2025	25
Appendix F: Lundy Model of Participation	28

Message from the Presiding Officer

The Scottish Parliament is here to represent everyone in Scotland, including children and young people.

Hearing from lots of different people is essential to the Scottish Parliament and we have involved children and young people in our work in many ways, from our committees hearing directly from children and young people on issues that affect them through to welcoming young people to the Parliament from all over Scotland through our schools programme. We've also met children and young people in their communities and online to help them find out more about what we do and how they can join in.

During my time as Presiding Officer, I have signed two important partnerships with the Scottish Youth Parliament and the Children's Parliament. These have helped us to champion the voices and rights of children and young people across Scotland.

This report sets out the Scottish Parliament's commitment to represent the voices of children and young people in all areas of our work. It shows what we will do next to make sure that the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is built into everything we do.

We thank everyone across Scotland who has supported us with this work so far and look forward to working with children and young people over the next year to help them play their part in our Parliament and our democracy.



Rt Hon Alison Johnstone MSP

Presiding Officer

Facal bhon Oifigear Riaghlaidh

Tha Pàrlamaid na h-Alba ann gus a h-uile duine ann an Alba a riochdachadh, a' gabhail a-steach clann is daoine òga.

Tha e deatamach do Phàrlamaid na h-Alba gun cluinn iad bho iomadh neach eadar-dhealaichte agus tha sinn air clann is daoine òga a thoirt a-steach don obair againn ann an iomadh dòigh, bho na Comataidhean againn a' cluinntinn gu dìreach bho chlann is daoine òga air cùisean a bheir buaidh orra gu bhith a' cur fàilte air daoine òga don Phàrlamaid bho air feadh na h-Alba tron phrògram sgoiltean againn. Tha sinn cuideachd air coinneachadh ri clann is daoine òga nan coimhearsnachdan fhèin agus air-loidhne gus an cuideachadh gus barrachd a thuigsinn mu na bhios sinn a' dèanamh agus mar as urrainn dhaibh a dhol an sàs ann.

Rè m' ùine mar Oifigear Riaghlaidh, tha mi air ainm a chur ri dà chom-pàirteachas cudromach le Pàrlamaid Òigridh na h-Alba agus Pàrlamaid na Cloinne. Tha iad sin air ar cuideachadh a' cur air adhart guthan agus còraichean cloinne is dhaoine òga air feadh na h-Alba.

Tha an aithisg seo a' mìneachadh dealas Pàrlamaid na h-Alba gus guthan cloinne is dhaoine òga a riochdachadh anns a h-uile raon den obair againn. Tha e a' sealltainn an ath rud a nì sinn gus dèanamh cinnteach gu bheil Cunradh nan Dùthchannan Aonaichte air Còraichean Cloinne (UNCRC) air fhighe a-steach do gach nì a bhios sinn a' dèanamh.

Tha sinn a' toirt taing do gach neach air feadh na h-Alba a chuidich sinn san obair seo agus tha sinn a' coimhead air adhart ri bhith ag obair còmhla ri clann is daoine òga thar na bliadhna a tha romhainn gus an cuideachadh a' gabhail pàirt nar Pàrlamaid agus nar deamocrasaidh.



Am Fìor Urr Alison Johnstone BPA

Oifigear Riaghlaidh

Introduction / Background

In 2024, the Scottish Parliament passed a law to make sure children's rights are protected – the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024. Starting on 16 July 2024, this Act made children's rights part of Scotland's laws. That means people *must* follow these rights. One part of the new Act requires the Scottish Parliament to publish a report every year explaining:

- **What the Scottish Parliament has done** to make sure children's rights are respected.
- **What the Scottish Parliament plans to do next** to keep improving children's rights.

The Act says that there must be a special version of the report written so children can understand it too. We decided to write one report for everyone, children and adults. As this is our first report, we know there is lots more we can learn and develop. We are looking forward to working with children and young people next year to review what we have done so far and work on next year's plan.

UNCRC Working Group

Over the last two years, the Scottish Parliament has been looking at how to build the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)¹ into all areas of our work, including the work Parliament committees do to help people give their views on laws and Scottish Government policy. The Parliament has been working with children and young people's organisations from across Scotland to support this ([Appendix A](#)). This group is called the **UNCRC Working Group**.

Children and young people's involvement over the last year

Since 2024, there are many examples of where the Scottish Parliament has been working with children and young people. There is still lots of work to do – in particular with children – and to help us, we have partnerships with the Scottish Youth Parliament (SYP), the Children's Parliament (CP) ([Appendix B](#)) and the UNCRC Working Group. So, we hope we will be able to make good progress in how we work, involving children and young people in how we build the UNCRC into our work across the whole of the Parliament.

¹ <https://digitalpublications.parliament.scot/ResearchBriefings/Report/2020/11/2/The-United-Nations-Convention-on-the-Rights-of-the-Child--Incorporation---Scotland--Bill>

First Meeting of the UNCRC Working Group

During the first meeting in March 2023, we explored the hopes and goals of the working group and discussed the opportunities to support children and young people's rights in the Scottish Parliament. We also looked at the possible challenges ahead.

Hopes and goals for children and young people's rights

The UNCRC Working Group identified their hopes and goals to embed children and young people's rights at the Scottish Parliament.

- Go into the world of children and young people and don't keep expecting them to come to ours.
- More children and young people visible in the Scottish Parliament and see it as their space.
- Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs) and Parliament staff have a better understanding, awareness and confidence about engaging with children and young people.
- Engagement with all Scottish Parliament committees on all issues, not just those seen as young people's issues.
- Engagement with disabled children and young people, ensuring inclusive communication for those with sensory loss.
- Positive and meaningful engagement experiences for the most marginalised children and young people.



Challenges for involving children and young people

We asked the UNCRC Working Group what the challenges would be for the Scottish Parliament to involve children and young people. This is some of the feedback they gave us:

- Engaging with groups who don't get listened to as much, for example children and young people with communication barriers or additional support needs (ASN).
- Staff having the time and skill to support children and young people before, during and after they take part.
- If asking children and young people to be involved in something, being committed to it – you mustn't cancel at the last minute.
- Making the building and the activities accessible – thinking about food, language, how to behave, room layout, etc. Make the setting inviting: for example, MSPs wearing more relaxed clothes, not suits and ties.
- Making sure their evidence is taken seriously. 'Informal' meetings in communities with children and young people are not always taken as seriously as 'formal' committee meetings in the Parliament. MSPs need to show they take children's and young people's evidence seriously.
- Recognise and reward children and young people for taking part.
- Feedback and follow up are crucial – and they need to be given to children in ways that are easy for them to understand.
- Think about the time of day/year: for example, children may be at school or taking exams.
- Scottish Parliament planning processes can be very difficult – children and young people need plenty of time for planning.
- Make sure children and young people feel in control of what happens and what they choose to say.
- Good participation needs time and relationship building takes months, not weeks.

We will think about all these challenges as we make our plans.

What are Scottish Parliament teams doing to involve children and young people?

The Participation and Communities Team (PACT) consulted with other Scottish Parliament teams to understand how they were currently involving children and young people.

There is an overview of all the teams involved in this report and what they do in [Appendix C](#). The UNCRC Working Group suggested questions to ask the Scottish Parliament teams to think about how they could involve children and young people in a more meaningful way ([Appendix D](#)).

How does participation take place with children and young people at the Scottish Parliament?

Participation takes place with children and young people in the following ways:

- Work experience
- Parliamentary awareness
- Guided tours
- Watching parliamentary business
- Education sessions
- Events
- Consultation workshops
- Committee meetings
- Social media
- Exhibitions.



Where does participation take place?

Children and young people get involved in different places:

- The Scottish Parliament building at Holyrood in Edinburgh
- In their communities
- Online, for example, Zoom meetings or social media
- In their schools, colleges or youth groups

What has the Scottish Parliament done so far?

Each Scottish Parliament team was asked what it was doing already to progress the UNCRC to make sure children's rights are respected. This is what they said was going well.

Senior Executive Team (SET)

- In June 2025, SET (the most senior managers in the Parliament) met with Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament (MSYPs) who delivered [The Right Way](#) training to all SET members. 'The Right Way' is a project run by the SYP and funded by the Scottish Government's Children's Rights Unit. It supports and challenges officials and decision makers to work to make sure young people's Article 12² "right to be heard" is respected.

Non-Government Bills Unit (NGBU)

- A Child Rights Wellbeing and Impact Assessment (CRWIA)³ is a tool that helps people understand how a law, policy or decision might affect children's human rights. Whenever an MSP who is not a Scottish Government Minister makes a proposal for a new law (a bill), the team who supports them – the NGBU – makes sure that an assessment is carried out to see how the proposal might affect children's rights. When the bill is published, it includes a statement from the MSP to say that it is compatible with (in line with) the UNCRC.

Committee Office

- Many committees have helped children and young people to give their views on proposed laws or Scottish Government policies. Usually, these sessions are organised in partnership with organisations that work with children and young people. That way we can make sure the children and young people feel safe and supported and their needs and rights are respected. [Appendix E](#) has lots of examples of committee work involving children and young people over the last year.

² <https://digitalpublications.parliament.scot/ResearchBriefings/Report/2020/11/2/The-United-Nations-Convention-on-the-Rights-of-the-Child--Incorporation---Scotland--Bill#The-United-Nations-Convention-on-the-Rights-of-the-Child--UNCRC->

³ <https://www.gov.scot/policies/human-rights/childrens-rights/>

Checklist for committees: helping children and young people have an impact

The researchers in the Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe) and the staff in the Committee Office have designed a checklist which they will use to help them think about how to help the voices of children and young people have an impact on the work of committees.

The checklist is:

- Draw on subject specialists in SPICe who may have knowledge of previous engagement work.
- Work with partnership organisations, and with children and young people, to co-produce informal evidence sessions with children and young people to ensure that the sessions are designed to suit their needs.
- Ensure that informal evidence with children and young people is included in any evidence summaries and that there is a note of the informal sessions on the committee webpage.
- Use notes of informal sessions in briefings and lines of questions.
- Reflect informal evidence from children and young people in reports, as appropriate.
- Include questions about children and young people's rights and views in committee themes papers, as appropriate.
- Involve children and young people in work where they can have an impact. Show the impact of previous work through case studies.
- Work together as a wider team (SPICe, committee clerks and PACT) at an early stage to plan engagement opportunities.
- Think about children and young people when suggesting what people and organisations to contact for their views.



Draw on subject specialists in SPICe who have knowledge of previous engagement work.



Work with partnership organisations, and with children and young people, to co-produce informal evidence sessions with children and young people to ensure that the sessions are designed to suit their needs.



Ensure that informal evidence with children and young people is included in any evidence summaries and that there is a note of the informal sessions on the committee webpage.



Use notes of informal sessions in briefings and lines of questions.



Reflect informal evidence from children and young people in reports, as appropriate.



Include questions about children and young people's rights and views in committee themes papers as appropriate.



Involve children and young people in work where there is likely to be an impact. Show the impact of previous work through case studies.



Work together as a wider team (SPICe, Committee Clerks and Participation and Communities Team) at an early stage to plan engagement opportunities.



Think about children and young people when suggesting witnesses and organisations to contact for written evidence.

Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe)

- The research teams in SPICe make sure that they think about the UNCRC when they are working on things that are important to children and young people. SPICe works with committees to make sure a wide range of views are heard in writing or by people speaking to committees. They make sure that the views people give help the committees to understand the subjects they are looking at. An example of this is the [Health and Wellbeing of Children and Young People Inquiry](#) which the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee ran in 2022.
- SPICe researchers encourage committees to look at the Scottish Government Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessments (CRWIAs). CRWIAs should be carried out for all new policies and laws. When they advise committee MSPs about questions they might ask, they use information from the CRWIAs to make sure that the Scottish Government is thinking about children's rights in its work: for example, in looking at the law about [Foxgrove](#), a secure unit for young people.
- When working on something that directly relates to children and young people, SPICe researchers help to find ways for children and young people to take part, for example, by suggesting places to visit and questions for MSPs to ask to find out if the rights of children and young people are being considered.

Participation and Communities Team (PACT)

- PACT staff support committees to make sure that children and young people taking part are kept safe and their rights are respected. As much as possible, they plan and deliver activities with partners whom children and young people already know and trust.
- When PACT ran a People's Panel on drug harms for a group of people from all over Scotland aged 16+, they included a young person on the advisory group and made sure the two panel members under the age of 18 could take part fully and safely alongside all the other panel members.
- In 2024-2025, we celebrated the Parliament's 25th anniversary by supporting the Presiding Officer (Alison Johnstone MSP) to visit every region of Scotland to meet communities. Children and young people were involved in lots of these visits, and you can read more in [Appendix E](#).

Parliament Communications Office (PCO)

- The PCO communicates with people across Scotland about the work of the Parliament and lets people know how they can get involved. That includes children and young people.
- The PCO has been working to make sure that children's and young people's voices are included on Parliament communication channels such as our website, through the media and also communicating to parents and carers on our social media channels.

- The Parliament features the voices of children and young people when they are involved in activities in the Parliament. For example, when the Presiding Officer signed the partnership with the Children's Parliament, it was important to show that this was led by children so we included them in the video we produced and in our news release.
- Most people who speak at committee meetings are adults. So, when young people give their views to MSPs on committees, we make sure other people can hear about this.
- The PCO has worked with organisations representing children and young people. For example, they worked with the Children's Parliament to create a child-led video to raise awareness of the UNCRC and what we can do as a Parliament to better hear children's voices in our work.
- The PCO also has a graphic designer who supports other teams in the Parliament to design material for children and young people. This is used in our schools programme and in activities for children and young people visiting our building.

Events and Exhibitions Team

- The Parliament holds a Festival of Politics every summer. In 2024, the Events Team worked with the Scottish Youth Film Foundation to support a group of young people from all sorts of backgrounds across Scotland and aged from late teenage years to early twenties. The young people learned filming skills and produced a series of live programmes that were broadcast every night during the Festival and based on interviews with speakers at the Festival. This will continue in 2025.
- The 2024 Festival of Politics also worked with the Scottish Youth Parliament and the Young Women's Movement to involve young women on Festival panels such as 'Sexism in the workplace', '25 years of the Scottish Parliament – where are the young women?', 'Consent', and 'Mental health and young people'. All of these were ideas that the young women came up with and they also went to the events in August 2024. Most of these panels inspired by young people took place on one day as part of the Festival and were also attended by over 60 high school pupils from schools in West and East Lothian.
- Fifty-six young people from across Scotland and 12 youth organisations took part in events for the Scottish Parliament's 25th anniversary. The 12 youth organisations involved were: the Scottish Youth Parliament; Haggeye; Enable; the John Smith Centre; the Young Women's Movement; LGBT Youth Scotland; Young Scot; Sistema Scotland; Girlguiding Scotland; the Girls Brigade in Scotland; the Boys Brigade in Scotland; and Scouts Scotland. Six of the young people were paired with the Officers of Arms and accompanied The King's Body Guard for Scotland, the Royal Company of Archers, the Lord Lyon King of Arms and the Duke of Hamilton and Brandon as part of the Escort for the Crown of Scotland at the event on 28 September 2024. For the first time, the Elizabeth Sword was also part of the procession, and the sword bearer was Beau Johnston, a Member of the Scottish Youth Parliament.

- The Presiding Officer hosted the final of VoiceBox 2025 on 5 June 2025 at the Scottish Parliament. VoiceBox is a national joke competition for primary school children run by the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists, designed to help people think about the importance and joy of communication. It emphasises the strong connection between being able to communicate well and things like learning, mental health, wellbeing and your opportunities in life. The competition ran in schools across Scotland and 32 children from across Scotland took part in the final.
- On 12 June 2025, Deputy Presiding Officer Liam McArthur MSP chaired the Donald Dewar Memorial Debate Final 2025. This year was the debate's 25th anniversary. The Law Society of Scotland, the organisers of the Donald Dewar Memorial Debate, hope through this competition to help young people understand the importance of debate, and communication, not just for lawyers but for democracy and the whole of society. Sixty-four secondary school teams across Scotland entered this year's tournament and came from 24 out of the 32 Scottish local authorities.

Public Engagement Services (PES)

Education Services Team

- The Education Services Team talks about and runs activities about the UNCRC and children's rights in all their presentations and sessions in schools across Scotland. They talk to about 650 schools each school year.
- The team ran an online UNCRC and children's rights session with three primary schools, as part of their [Rights Respecting Schools Award](#) work. They used teacher and pupil feedback to improve the session, such as the suggestion of including information about other organisations that can support children in accessing their rights.
- The team also delivered education sessions with British Sign Language (BSL), including with a deaf youth group and with a primary school studying BSL as one of their 1+2 languages.
- The Education Services Team and Magic Torch Comics worked with eight schools covering every region in Scotland to co-design eight 'Our Words' [comics](#). The students used their own words to help other children learn about the Scottish Parliament. These comics are used in schools, online and with visitors to the Scottish Parliament.
- Working with the Electoral Commission and SYP, the Education Services Team created 'new voter' online sessions to support young people's democratic wellbeing through their rights, voices and experiences.

Visitor Services

- Visitor Services have introduced regular [Crafternoon](#) activities to encourage people in Scotland to visit their Parliament. These sessions are particularly popular with children and young people, visiting with their parents or carers. Visitor Services have designed special surveys to find out what people think about Crafternoons – one survey for adults and one for children and young people.
- Visitor Services also regularly deliver tours for schools and other groups of children and young people. They recently developed a special tour to cover things that children and young people need to learn in school.

Public Information and Languages Team

- The Parliament's BSL Communities Officer has delivered deaf-led engagement sessions in schools and with youth groups to support children and young people to interact with and learn about their Parliament in a way that meets their needs.

Next year's forward plan

We will continue to work with organisations who are part of the UNCRC Working Group to plan how to involve children and young people in all areas of the Scottish Parliament, including making sure we do the things we have committed to in this year's plan and thinking about what goes into next year's forward plan.

Here are some things that we will do across the whole Parliament in the next twelve months. After that, we explain what each of the teams will do.

- We will continue to work with the **UNCRC Working Group** of external organisations to look at how we can involve children and young people more in the work and life of the Scottish Parliament, including the work of committees.
- We will continue to work in partnership with the [Scottish Youth Parliament](#) and [Children's Parliament](#) to champion the voices and rights of children and young people. We will work with organisations such as [Starcatchers](#) to become more informed about the rights of babies and children from birth to five years old.
- We will test out the **Lundy Model of Participation** ([Appendix F](#)) when involving children and young people and will make sure we use a rights-based and trauma-informed approach.
- We will develop training for MSPs and Scottish Parliament staff relating to the UNCRC, and we will explore how this could be led by children and young people. It will include training on how to design activities alongside children and young people as this is a good way of making sure there aren't barriers that stop children taking part.
- We will make sure that the communities' strategy that we are developing includes events in communities that are designed with and for children and young people.
- We will explore how we could run a People's Panel for young people so that young people can learn about an issue that is important to them, discuss it together and make suggestions to the Parliament about it.
- We will explore how to create more welcoming and friendly spaces for children and young people within the Scottish Parliament building.
- We will agree principles that the whole Parliament can use for keeping children and young people safe when they visit, take part or work in the Parliament.
- By summer 2026, we will identify and train UNCRC champions to lead this work in all the different Scottish Parliament teams. This will help us to produce a good plan for next year.

What each Scottish Parliament team plans to do over the next year

Here are the things that Scottish Parliament teams plan to do over the next year to keep building children and young people's rights into our work.

Senior Executive Team (SET)

- SET will be looking at the Parliament's plans for the next five years of Parliament after the 2026 election and will make sure they think about our legal duty to include the rights of children and young people. The training they have had this year from SYP will help them with this.
- SET will plan a children's and young people's 'takeover' meeting in 2026 with help from partner organisations. This would give children and young people the chance to bring some of the issues that are most important to them directly to the most senior staff in the Parliament. It would also help SET understand how children's rights can be taken into account in all the Parliament's activities and services.

Non-Government Bills Unit (NGBU)

- In the new Parliament session, after the Scottish Parliament elections in 2026, the NGBU will keep supporting Child Rights Impact and Wellbeing Assessments so that MSPs proposing bills think about children's rights. The NGBU will also make sure there are questions asked about children's rights whenever the public are being asked for their views on a bill that might have an impact on children's rights.

Committee Office

- Committees will continue to involve children and young people when they are gathering views.
- The Committee Office will work with one or two committees to test different ways of including the UNCRC in their work. This will involve helping MSPs to think about the UNCRC and children's rights at the start of a piece of work so that this is built into the plans made by the committees.
- Committee Office staff will make sure new committees in the next session have information about the UNCRC so that they understand participation involving children and young people and the barriers that exist.

Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe)

- SPICe researchers will continue to develop ways of helping committees to ask questions about the Scottish Government's CRWIAs to make sure the Scottish Government is taking children's rights into account.
- SPICe will think about how the views of children and young people are heard when we ask for views in writing. For example, SPICe can point out subjects where the voices of children and young people aren't being included and suggest how they could be encouraged to reply, for example, by using social media adverts.

Participation and Communities Team (PACT)

- PACT will review which children and young people are being heard in committees' work and whether there are gaps. For example, PACT staff will make sure youth and community groups, children who are not in education and children with communication challenges are included, as well as schools.
- PACT will update its plans for working with the Children's Parliament and the Scottish Youth Parliament. This will include a guide for new MSPs on how they can work with MSYPs and Members of the Children's Parliament.
- The team will continue to work with the UNCRC Working Group to review this plan and develop next year's plan.
- PACT will also plan a test project with a group of children or young people where PACT works with them over a longer period to learn how to better involve them in committee work.

Parliament Communications Office (PCO)

- The PCO will continue working with young people to create content in their own words about the Parliament or to co-design communications products with children and young people. For example, PCO staff are looking at how to involve children and young people to report on issues in Parliament from their own perspective.
- The PCO will keep working with children's and young people's organisations to find more work that could be done together to support the aims of both the Scottish Parliament and the children and young people that the organisations support.

Events and Exhibitions Team

- The Events and Exhibitions Team will build on its work with the youth organisations involved in the 25th anniversary event in 2024 when planning events to mark the start of Session 7.
- The team will work with the SYP and other children's and young people's organisations when designing the 2026 Festival of Politics programme.

Public Engagement Services (PES)

- The Education Services Team aims to work with more Rights Respecting Schools (RRS) and schools working towards an RRS Award, offering online UNCRC sessions for schools. It will continue to improve the sessions using feedback from schools and children's rights organisations.
- PES staff will learn more about feedback methods for getting insights from children and young people. They want to give children and young people different ways to share their ideas about our services. They are keen to do this for:
 - our education resources for pupils and how these can be shared with children and young people outside of schools
 - our services and welcome for visitors to the Parliament building, including how we develop Crafternoons
 - our Gaelic and BSL services, including how we engage with children and young people who use these languages, and the families and friends around them who may not
 - our complaints processes to develop ways of complaining that are easy for children and young people to use.

Appendix A: The UNCRC Working Group

Here is the list of organisations that are part of the Scottish Parliament's UNCRC Working Group.

- [Aberlour](#)
- [Barnardo's Scotland](#)
- [Carers Trust Scotland](#)
- [Children and Young People's Centre for Justice \(CYCJ\)](#)
- [Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland](#)
- [Children's Parliament](#)
- [Children in Scotland](#)
- [Intercultural Youth Scotland \(IYS\)](#)
- [LGBT Youth Scotland](#)
- [National Deaf Children's Society Scotland](#)
- [Passion4Fusion](#)
- [RNIB Haggeye](#)
- [Scottish Youth Parliament](#)
- [Starcatchers](#)
- [Together Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights](#)
- [Who Cares? Scotland](#)
- [YouthLink Scotland](#)

Appendix B: Partnerships

Scottish Youth Parliament (SYP) and Children's Parliament (CP)

The Scottish Parliament has partnership agreements with both the SYP and the CP to ensure the Scottish Parliament is looking at how we involve and work with children and young people. The working in partnership agreement with SYP has been in place since 2018 and children from the CP met with the Presiding Officer of the Scottish Parliament, Alison Johnstone MSP, in January 2024 to sign their working in partnership agreement.

Children's Parliament Partnership Agreement

<https://www.parliament.scot/about/news/news-listing/childrens-engagement-with-the-scottish-parliament-to-be-expanded>

Scottish Youth Parliament Partnership Agreement

<https://syp.org.uk/young-peoples-voices-to-play-key-role-in-the-scottish-parliament/>

Appendix C: Scottish Parliament teams/offices: Opportunities to involve children and young people

Here is a high-level overview of the areas in which different Scottish Parliament teams and offices have the opportunity to involve children and young people.

- **Education Services Team:** Providing education sessions at the Parliament about the Parliament and First Minister's Questions (FMQs); also education sessions outside the Parliament, digital sessions, special events, MSP Q&A (Question and Answer) sessions, and signposting to live business.
- **Events and Exhibitions Team:** Delivering events, panels, online and in-person engagement.
- **Non-Government Bills Unit (NGBU):** Supporting all MSPs who are not in the Scottish Government and who have an idea for a policy that they want to become law; also supporting committees that want to change the law through the committee bill process.
- **Parliament Communications Office (PCO):** Communicates the work of the Parliament to people in Scotland including how they can get involved. This includes managing the Parliament's social and digital channels, enhancing the Parliament's brand and graphic design.
- **Participation and Communities Team:** Supporting committees and participation sessions, Scottish Youth Parliament (SYP) and Children's Parliament partnerships, community sessions (online and in person), People's Panels, and developing parliamentary awareness, and building relationships with external organisations.
- **Public Information and Languages Team:** Providing Gaelic and BSL for education materials, BSL input with tours, and child friendly complaints principles.
- **Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe):** Supporting committee business and in-person engagement.
- **Senior Executive Team (SET):** Advising the Clerk/Chief Executive on how to achieve the Parliament's strategic objectives. SET members share their expertise and knowledge and contribute to running the Parliament.
- **Visitor Services:** Providing tickets to observe parliamentary business in person, (committees, Chamber, FMQs); also delivering guided tours and 10-minute talks, family days, and Crafternoons.

Scottish Parliament Teams/Offices:

Opportunities to involve Children and Young people.

Participation and Communities Team (PACT)

Supporting Committees with participation sessions, Scottish Youth Parliament (SYP) and Children's Parliament partnerships, Community Sessions, at Scottish Parliament online and in person, People's Panels, Parliamentary Awareness, building relationships with external organisations.

Public Information & Languages

Providing Gaelic and BSL for Education materials, BSL input with tours, Child friendly complaints principles.

Education

Education Sessions at Parliament about Parliament, about the Parliament, First Minister Questions (FMQ) Education Sessions outside the Parliament, Digital Sessions, Special Events, MSP Q&A (Question and Answer), Signposting to live business.

Parliament Communications Office (PCO)

Communicates the work of the Parliament to people in Scotland including how they can get involved. This includes managing the Parliament's social and digital channels, enhancing the Parliament's brand and graphic design.

Non-Government Bills Unit (NGBU)

NGBU supports all members who are not in the Government who have an idea for a policy that they want to become law. NGBU also supports committees that want to change the law through the committee bill process.

Senior Executive Team (SET)

SET is the Scottish Parliament's senior management group. It advises the Clerk/Chief Executive on how to achieve the Parliament's strategic objectives. SET members share their expertise and knowledge and contribute to running the Parliament.

Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe)

Supporting Committee Business and in-person engagement

Events and Exhibitions,

Events, panels, online and in-person engagement.

Visitor Services

Observing Parliamentary Business in person, (committees, chamber, FMQs, Guided Tours – 10 minute talks, Family Days, Crafternoons,

Appendix D: Questions Scottish Parliament teams were asked by the UNCRC Working Group

- What are Scottish Parliament teams doing to progress the UNCRC?
- What is the Scottish Parliament doing well when involving children and young people?
- What could be improved?
- Who is responsible for this work in your team and who needs to be involved?
- How does your team include all age groups of children and young people/diversity of voices/hidden voices?
- How could your team work with children and young people to co-design resources/materials?
- How can committees make sure the voices of children and young people have impact as evidence for Scottish Parliament committees and value the lived experience of children and young people?
- Would your team benefit from further training and support in this area?

Appendix E: Involvement of children and young people – 2024-2025

Committee work

2024

Education, Children and Young People Committee: Additional support for learning (ASL) inquiry with Inclusion Ambassadors.

- Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee: The People's Panel on climate change involved children and young people from SYP and the Children's Parliament.
- Finance and Public Administration Committee: Pre-budget scrutiny: engagement event looking at young people's priorities and what would make them decide to live and work in Scotland.
- Criminal Justice Committee, Health, Social Care and Sport Committee and Social Justice and Social Security Committee cross-committee work on the People's Panel on drug harms and drug deaths: Young people aged 16 and 17 were represented on the Panel.

2025

- Constitution, Europe, External Affairs and Culture Committee: Youth mobility was considered as part of the review of the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement Inquiry part 2. The Committee met with focus groups of young people identified by SAFE (Scottish Advisory Forum on Europe) and the Erasmus Student Network UK.
- Education, Children and Young People Committee: Widening access inquiry heard from students and young people not in further or higher education from the following organisations: Robertson Trust, Passion4 Fusion, Hubs for Success and widening access practitioners from Scotland's Community of Access and Participation Practitioners.
- Education, Children and Young People Committee: The Promise – Voice session heard from care experienced young people, supported by Who Cares? Scotland.
- Education, Children and Young People Committee: Met with Members of Scottish Youth Parliament (MSYPs) to take evidence on the work and priorities of SYP.
- Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee: At a public session on transport in Scotland 2025, an MSYP was part of the panel that met with the Committee.

2024-2025 25th anniversary regional programme

The Presiding Officer led a programme of visits to each of the eight Scottish Parliamentary regions to mark the 25th anniversary of the Scottish Parliament.

PACT developed a programme of community engagement in collaboration with communities. The approach was to involve communities in the development of activities and to hear from people in ways that suited them best.

Children and young people attended the events in Galashiels, Burnfoot, Lerwick, Alloa, Clydebank and Cumbernauld. They came with youth groups, schools (primary and secondary) and as MSYPs. . The format of the events naturally evolved through discussion with partners into a marketplace style where the local community and the Parliament hosted stalls.

The feedback was that this was inclusive, friendly and informal. In many of these events, local youth groups hosted their own stall with creative and other information activities. For example, in Cumbernauld Club at the Hub, an LGBTQ+ group hosted their own stall. In Alloa and Sauchie, Fife and Lomond Youth Led Local Action Group was one of four community partners and hosts for the day. Together with PACT, the group developed the plan for the day (the format and who to invite etc), made one of the opening speeches and hosted their own stall.

For the event in Clydebank, West Dunbartonshire Youth Council was the sole community partner, supported by West Dunbartonshire Council Youth Empowerment Team. The Youth Council worked with PACT on the design and delivery of the event, who to invite, when and where. Activities included a marketplace, a DJ, a disco and facepainting. The young people designed and held their own stalls and made opening and closing speeches. A stained-glass workshop led to the creation of a stained-glass window made of 100 individual panels each created by a young person in answer to the question 'What do you love about West Dunbartonshire?' The window will be permanently displayed in Clydebank Museum. One hundred and fifteen young people from groups across the area attended.

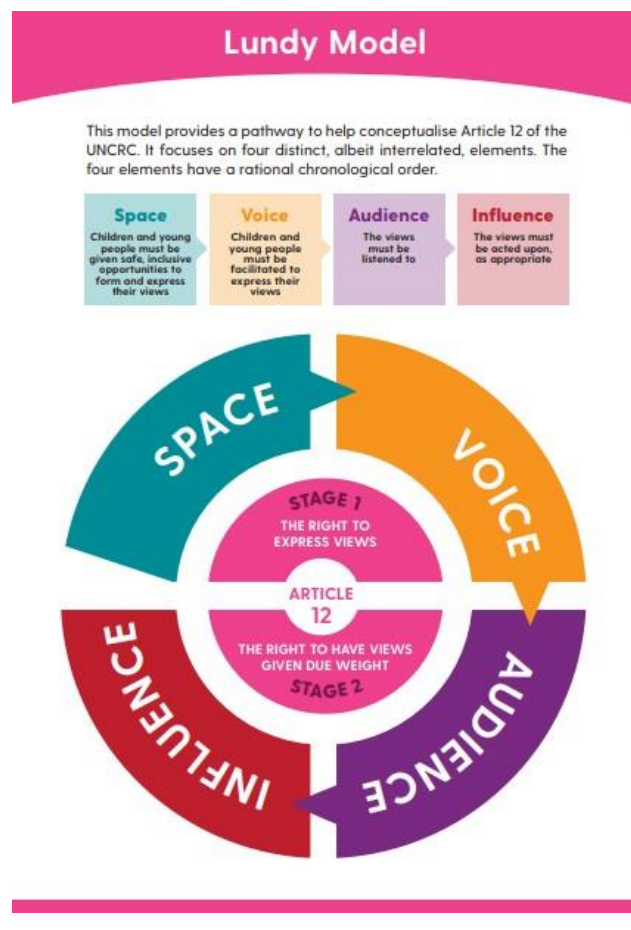
Other involvement with children and young people

- PACT worked with a group of children from the Children's Parliament to make a film about '***What would a joyful Parliament look like in the future?*** where children are welcome, have a say and are taken seriously. The children asked the Scottish Parliament to be respectful, friendly, kind, good listeners, welcoming and smiley and to listen to children's ideas and what they have to say. The video also highlights past work where we have involved children and young people and looks forward to how we will incorporate the UNCRC into the work of the Scottish Parliament.
- **Carers Trust Scotland – Young Carers Action Day, March 2024** – During a visit to the Scottish Parliament, PACT staff met with young people about their experiences when they approached the building from outside, going through security, reception in the Main Hall, committee rooms and the Debating Chamber.
- **Speak up event in Stirling** – PACT ran a stall at this event and used images of a committee room and the Scottish Parliament Debating Chamber to ask young people for their views.

Appendix F: Lundy Model of Participation

The Lundy Model provides guidance on how to ensure children and young people are being involved in decision making in a meaningful way⁴. The four areas are:

- Space
- Voice
- Audience
- Influence



⁴ Further information on the Lundy Model can be accessed at <https://hubnanog.ie/participation-framework/>. This was developed as a collaboration between the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Hub na nÓg and Professor Laura Lundy of Queens University, Belfast.

Public Information

For more information on the Scottish Parliament, its membership, business and procedures, please contact us.

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