



We have a voice!

CHAPTER 2 PARTICIPATION



STATE OF CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN SCOTLAND 2019



WHAT'S THIS CHAPTER ABOUT?

'Participation' means taking part in decisions. There are lots of examples, like helping your school choose what should be on the lunch menu or giving the local council ideas for a new park. Participation means having the chance to say what you think should happen and being listened to by adults.

WHAT DID THE COMMITTEE SAY?

The Committee said that all children have the right to have their views listened to and taken seriously when decisions are being made.



These decisions can be big or small. For example, governments make lots of decisions about schools, including which children get free school meals, whether there is money for computers and even how many maths lessons children need to have each week. If the government is making decisions like these, 'participation' means that it should talk with children to find out what they think and use this information to help make their decision.

WHAT HAS SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT DONE?

Scottish Government has done some things to help make sure children are involved in decisions, including:

- ★ Making it the law that that politicians and people in Scottish Government should think about children when they make decisions, and ask children their opinions.
- ★ Making it the law that local councils should ask children when they are planning things in the local area (like designing new playgrounds or parks).
- ★ Holding an annual meeting between the Cabinet (people in Scottish Government) and members of the Children's Parliament and Scottish Youth Parliament.
- ★ Supporting the wider work of the Children's Parliament, Scottish Youth Parliament, and other groups.

WHAT NEXT?

Scottish Government is creating a plan to help make sure children are involved in all decisions that affect them. As part of this, Scottish Government has said it will work with children aged 3-18 years old to help create it. It's really important that the plan makes sure all children can have their voice heard.

WHAT DO CHILDREN THINK?

Children say that when their views are listened to it makes them feel better about lots of things, in school, in hospital, in clubs and in their towns and villages.

Some children say lots of adults don't ask them what they think and even when they do, they often don't listen to the answer! This can make children feel that their views do not matter and makes them less likely to want to talk about things again in the future.

WHAT DOES TOGETHER THINK?

Children should always be included when decisions are being made that affect them. It's not just about asking children what they think, but also taking these views seriously and acting on them. Children should always be involved in decisions, not just now and again.



WHAT ELSE IS TALKED ABOUT IN THIS CHAPTER?

The Chapter also looks at:

- ★ The right to be supported to live and grow
- ★ The right that adults should do what's best for children
- ★ The right to be treated fairly
- ★ The right to vote

If you want to see the full chapter, you can find this [here](#).