

The Impact Assessment process at Children's Hearings Scotland

Children's Hearings Scotland is responsible for recruiting, training, and supporting volunteer Panel Members to make legal decisions with and for children and young people in Children's Hearings. To ensure a children's human rights approach is embedded in all aspects of the organisation, Children's Hearings Scotland has a process to identify which impact assessments should be completed for any new and significant work.

Creating the Child Rights Impact Assessment and training team members

The full Child Rights Impact Assessment is based on the Scottish Government guidance, and best practice. Participation is a key element, and relationships with children and young people with lived experience of attending a children's hearing is vital. A Child Rights Impact Assessment process training session was recorded, and team members can access this training through the Children's Hearings Scotland Learning Academy. Alongside mandatory training about the UNCRC, the introduction of the Child Rights Impact Assessment process means children's rights are at the heart of the organisation.

Integration with other Impact Assessments

The four areas in which impacts must be considered are: Children's Rights, Equality and Diversity, Data Protection, and Island Communities. Each of these areas has a robust, full impact assessment which can seem overwhelming initially. To support team members to identify when a full impact assessment for each area was required, a multi-step process was created. The first step uses a screening tool asking basic questions about the area of work. The form asks a yes/no question for each area which may require an impact assessment. In the context of children's rights, the question is: Will the work have an impact, either positive or negative, on the rights of a child or young person? The answers to the questions signpost to the impact assessment forms that will need to be filled in.

Child Rights Impact Assessment process

If children's rights might be impacted, the next step provides a form to identify which rights might be affected, and to what extent. The team member considers the relevant UNCRC articles, the potential positive impact, the potential negative impact and any mitigations that should be made, and any justification for continuing when there could be a negative impact. This allows the team member to consider the balance of risk to benefit at this stage by filling in the table with ideas for mitigations or beneficial reasons for proceeding.

This form is shared with the senior leadership team and included in any papers about the work so there are opportunities for oversight and discussion. At this point, the team can agree whether a full Child Rights Impact Assessment is required, or whether the work can progress with the need for a full Child Rights Impact Assessment being reviewed again at later stages.

Children's rights learning outcomes

In providing team members with a clear process for considering children's rights while creating any new and significant work, the process contributes towards supporting workers to undertake Child Rights Impact Assessments to assess the impact of decisions on children and young people.



This resource was developed as part of the Children's Rights Skills and Knowledge Framework project funded by Scottish Government.