



Children's Rights Skills and Knowledge Framework

For the public authority workforce in Scotland



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Foreword from members of the Children and Families Panel



Along with another 12 families in Scotland, we have been working very hard to help shape this Children's Rights Skills and Knowledge Framework. We shared our own stories and our thoughts when creating this work. I hope you can see the results of our voices throughout and understand why this is crucial to children across Scotland.

The UNCRC is a set of human rights specifically for children, to make sure we can be healthy, happy and safe. This is very important so we can all live our lives with dignity.

We are so excited that the UNCRC has become part of Scots law. It is a big commitment. This means every child in Scotland can have their rights fully respected all the time, no matter how old they are, where they live, what they look like, what they can or cannot do, or whether they are rich or poor. We will be loved and cared for. We will be listened to, and our ideas will be taken seriously. We will be supported to reach our goals and become confident adults.

I know that because you are reading this now you care about children's rights. We really want you to become our allies and children's rights champions! We hope this Framework will help you think about your everyday work, what you need to know and do to put children's rights at the heart of it. Don't worry, there are many resources and tools to guide you through.

Enjoy! And remember to have fun. We all learn better when we have fun! Niamh and Isla — Children and Families Panel

Ministerial Foreword



The Scottish Government is committed to making Scotland the best place in the world to grow up, by providing children with what they need, to grow up loved, safe and respected so that they realise their full potential. Our vision is a Scotland where children's rights are embedded in all aspects of society. A Scotland where policy, law and decision making take account of children's rights and where all children have a voice and are empowered to be human rights defenders. Protecting children's rights is a key priority for me, and I'm delighted to introduce the Children's Rights Skills and Knowledge Framework which aims to support public authority workforces to take a children's human rights approach.

Scotland has a strong track record in implementing the rights of children by taking steps to respect, protect, and fulfil children's rights within law, policy, and practice. The UNCRC is at the heart of Scotland's national approach for supporting children, Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC). Fulfilling children's rights is critical to ongoing work on [The Promise](#), to reduce child poverty, and the Scottish Government's commitment to ensuring that all children and young people have the best possible start in life. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024 (UNCRC Act) received Royal Assent on 16 January 2024 making Scotland the first UK Nation to incorporate the UNCRC into domestic law. The UNCRC Act will come into effect from 16 July 2024.

Ministerial Foreword

It is vital to the realisation of children's rights that everyone providing a public service considers the rights of children in their work. All decisions made about, and actions taken to deliver public services may impact on the rights and wellbeing of children and young people. The UNCRC Act requires public authorities not to act in a way that is incompatible with the UNCRC requirements defined in it when carrying out certain functions. The Act also enables children to seek legal redress through the courts, if they believe that public authorities have acted or intend to act incompatibly with the UNCRC requirements. Embedding a children's human rights approach will improve public services for children, and should support public authorities to meet their duties in the Act.

Public authority workforces play a vital role in delivering services across a wide range of sectors for children, young people and their communities. The Framework will support them to increase their understanding of children's rights, take a children's human rights approach to planning and service delivery, and enhance their confidence to implement the UNCRC in their everyday work.

The Framework provides a single point of access to new and existing resources and training on children's rights and taking a children's human rights approach. Existing skills and knowledge levels and the need for further support and training will vary across the public authority workforce.

Ministerial Foreword

The Framework has therefore been developed as a flexible resource that can be used to support public authority workers across a wide range of sectors to access the essential skills and knowledge they need to improve their children's rights practice.

A Training Plan accompanies the Framework, to support informed decisions about the most suitable training to meet individual and organisational needs. We hope learning and development staff and managers will find it useful in developing appropriate training.

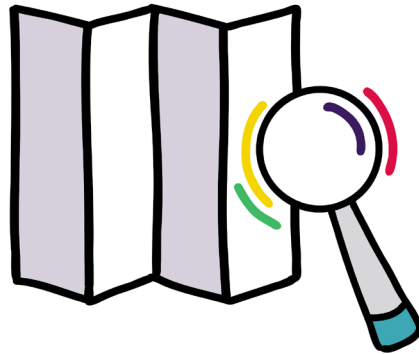
The Framework and Training Plan will support individuals and organisations to learn about children's rights at a level appropriate for different roles, organisations and sectors. They will support public authorities to use a children's human rights approach, contribute to other local and national strategic priorities and improve service design and delivery. They will help support Scottish Government's vision of a Scotland where children's rights are embedded in all aspects of society. A Scotland where policy, law and decision making take account of children's rights and where all children have a voice and are empowered to be human rights defenders.

We don't need everyone to be UNCRC experts, but we do need everyone to feel confident about taking a children's human rights approach. Children's rights are everybody's business.

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

About the Framework

2.1 Purpose of the Framework



The Scottish Government is giving children's rights the highest possible protection in Scotland by incorporating the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\) \(1\)](#) into Scots law through the [UNCRC \(Incorporation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2024 \(2\)](#).

Children's rights are already central to law and policy in Scotland and progressing them is a key part of the roles of many workers. Incorporation of the UNCRC means there is a legal duty on public authorities and those carrying out public functions not to act in ways that are incompatible with the UNCRC requirements. The adoption and implementation of a children's human rights approach will support workers in preparing for these new duties.

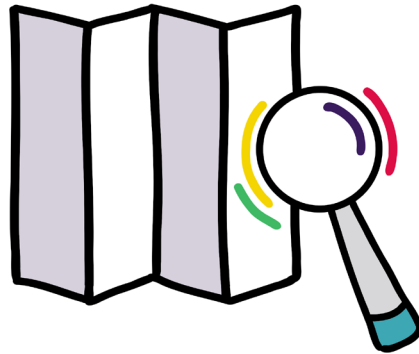
The framework has been designed to:

- Support individuals and organisations to adopt a children's human rights approach.
- Improve and consolidate the workforce's understanding of children's rights and increase their confidence to implement the UNCRC in their everyday work.
- Set out the skills and knowledge the workforce will need to grow their children's rights practice, and improve over time.
- Highlight useful resources for workers to engage with to further develop their skills and knowledge.
- Enable the necessary culture change to fully respect, protect and fulfil rights for children and young people in Scotland.

Implementing a children's human rights approach will build on existing best practice and support the realisation of other crucial policy objectives.

About the Framework

2.2 Why children's rights are important



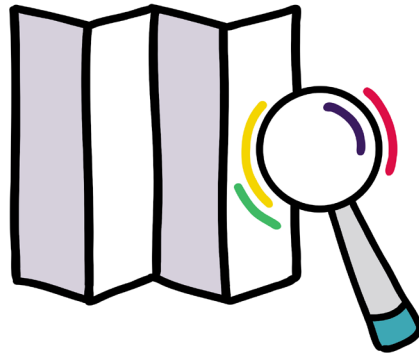
Human rights exist to ensure that people are treated fairly and with dignity, and are given the freedom to develop their full potential. Human rights are a list of things that everyone, including children and young people, need to live a healthy, happy and safe life.

Children and young people have the same human rights as adults, and have special rights that recognise their need for additional protections. The specific human rights for children and young people are set out in the UNCRC, which helps to safeguard the dignity and equal rights of all children and young people.

Children's rights are already a key part of law and policy in Scotland, for example, the [Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014 \(3\)](#), and the UNCRC is central to the roles of people working across public authorities and those carrying out public functions in Scotland. The UNCRC (Scotland) (Incorporation) Act 2024 builds on these existing protections. It is therefore important to reflect on the connections between children's rights and existing wider policies, frameworks and duties that impact on children's lives, spanning from transport to housing, environment to tackling poverty.

About the Framework

2.3 Language



The term ‘a children’s human rights approach’ is used to emphasise that children’s rights are human rights, and to highlight that children and young people have broader human rights as well as those specific to children.

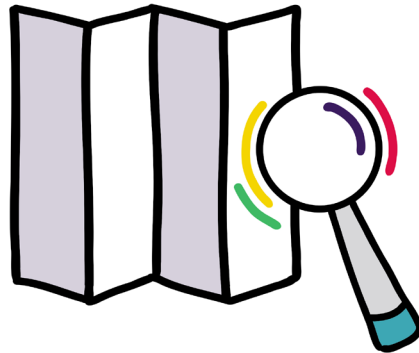
In this Framework, the term ‘children and young people’ is used to refer to all people under the age of 18. ‘Infants’ is used when there is a specific need to refer to children under three years old.

Throughout the Framework, people involved in public service delivery in Scotland are referred to as ‘the workforce’ or ‘workers’.

Further definitions including the definition of public authority contained in the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024 can be found in the [Glossary \(4\)](#).

About the Framework

2.4 Framework approach



The Framework is designed to be used by individual members of the Scottish public authority workforce, and by organisations planning learning and training activities. It aims to build the capacity of the workforce to use a children's human rights approach alongside the associated Training Plan. Public authorities and those carrying out public functions should use the Framework and Training Plan alongside the non-statutory [guidance on taking a children's human rights approach \(5\)](#).

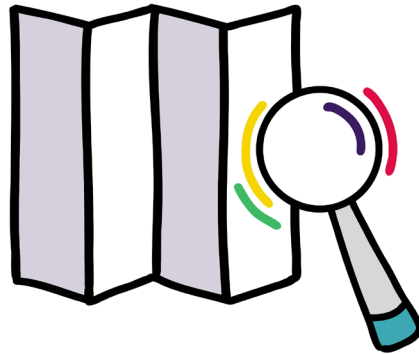
The Framework acknowledges that every learner is unique in how they like to learn. Workers all have different aims when they learn, and what they need to know will vary in each role or context. Everyone comes to the Framework with individual and varied experiences. The aim of the Framework is to help workers to grow and improve their practice over time. It is designed to be used at inductions and annual appraisals, to help with specific tasks, and to guide continuing professional learning and development plans.

It also acknowledges the need for a progressive and cumulative approach to using rights in our everyday work. Progressive realisation means rights are increasingly fulfilled over time. Learning about rights is a continuous journey rather than a one-off exercise.

Children's voices and experiences are at the heart of a children's human rights approach. The development of the Children's Rights Skills and Knowledge Framework embodied the children's human rights approach by involving children, young people and families at every stage.

About the Framework

2.5 How to use the Framework



The Framework's skills and knowledge requirements are presented at three levels: **Informed, Skilled, and Enhanced**. Those with no knowledge of the UNCRC should first work through the [introductory materials \(6\)](#).

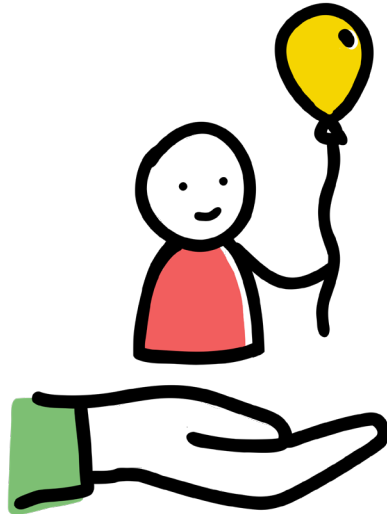
All workers should aim to reach at least the **Informed** level.

Workers who have a direct impact on children and young people's lives should aim to reach the **Skilled** level in areas relevant to their work.

Enhanced level is for workers who need to further develop their children's rights practice and for those who have both practical and strategic responsibility for embedding children's rights.

Some skills and knowledge elements have been tagged as **#Leadership**. The **#Leadership** tag will be relevant to workers who manage people, budgets, policy, planning or commissioning. Workers who do not have these responsibilities can still look to gain those skills or knowledge, but they are unlikely to need to apply them in their current role.

About the UNCRC



The [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\) \(7\)](#) sets out what children and young people need to grow up healthy, happy and safe and to ensure their views are taken into account in decisions that affect them.

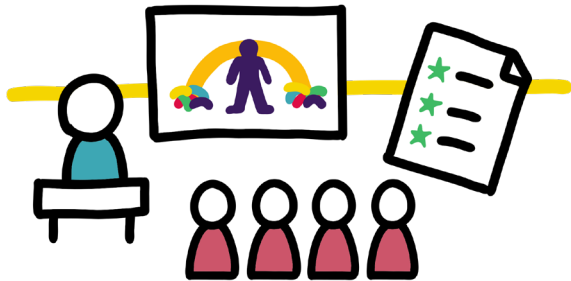
The UNCRC applies to everyone under the age of 18. Its aim is to ensure that children and young people grow up in a spirit of peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom, equality and solidarity.

The UNCRC was drafted in 1989 and is the most widely ratified human rights treaty in history. As of 2024, 196 countries have ratified it, including the United Kingdom on 16 December 1991. Every child and young person has 42 substantive rights under the UNCRC. These rights come from the articles, which are specific sections of the UNCRC.

Useful introductory resources to learn more about the UNCRC and a children's human rights approach:

- [Introductory resources about the UNCRC](#) for workers who are completely new to the topic.
- [Introduction to the UNCRC \(8\)](#), a five minute video by JustRight Scotland.
- A six minute Scottish Government video about [children's rights and the UNCRC in Scotland \(9\)](#).
- Children's Parliament's [resource investigating a children's human rights approach \(10\)](#).
- JustRight Scotland's resource on [how to make decisions using a children's human rights approach \(11\)](#).

About a children's human rights approach



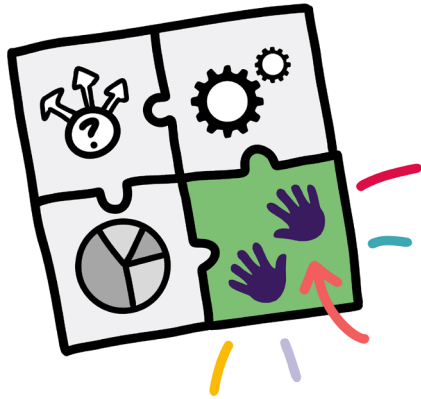
A children's human rights approach is about working holistically to implement children's rights as set out in the UNCRC.

This approach reinforces the concept of respect for human dignity, which is at the heart of every human rights instrument.

Specifically, a children's human rights approach:

- Builds the capacity of children and young people as rights-holders to claim their rights.
- Supports children and young people to defend their own rights and those of others.
- Builds the capacity of workers to fulfil their obligations to children and young people.
- Recognises that relationships based on human rights values are necessary for realising children's rights.
- Includes children and young people's knowledge of what it is like to be a child or young person, and their ideas and their opinions.
- Establishes the environment and support that enables children and young people to advocate effectively for themselves.
- Enables adults to benefit from the rich learning intrinsic to these approaches.

Principles of a children's human rights approach in Scotland



The Framework is structured around five principles of a children's human rights approach. These are embedding, equality and non-discrimination, empowerment, participation and accountability. This section sets out these five principles in more detail.

Embedding

Putting children's rights at the core of decision making, working practice, planning, reporting, and the delivery of services that affect children and young people.

To always make rights real for all children and young people, it is necessary to embed children's rights consistently in systems, policies and practice.



“If children's rights were embedded in society, adults would treat children the same as they treat other adults and children would be shown kindness by adults.”

Children and Families Panel member

Principles of a children's human rights approach in Scotland



Equality and non-discrimination

Ensuring that every child and young person has what they need so that they have equal opportunity to fulfil their potential.

No child or young person should be limited in what they can do or achieve because of their background, individual circumstances or their ability to live up to adult expectations that they are unable to meet. Children and young people have an innate sense of fairness and equality. It is important that workers listen to children and young people to gain their understanding of what is needed to help achieve equality.



“All children are equal.”

Children and Families Panel member

Principles of a children's human rights approach in Scotland



Empowerment

Building the agency and capacity of children and young people as rights-holders to claim their rights.

Children and young people need not only a sense of agency, but also real opportunities to exercise their agency. Giving children and young people information, helping them gain an understanding of what having human rights means, and creating opportunities for them to grow in confidence gives them the ability to know when they have concerns about their rights and feel able to speak up on their own, or another person's behalf.

Empowerment means enhancing children and young people's capabilities, individually and collectively, so that they are better able to engage with, influence and hold accountable those individuals and institutions that affect their lives.



“Children's human rights are about helping children grow into young, confident adults.”
Children and Families Panel member

Principles of a children's human rights approach in Scotland



Participation

Listening to children and young people and taking their views seriously, as covered by article 12 of the UNCRC.

Participation means actively listening to children and young people and taking their views into account in a meaningful way.

Participation work with children and young people is an activity led by skilled workers who are trained to work directly with them, have Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scotland disclosure checks, are trauma-informed, and have training in safeguarding procedures.

Children and young people are experts in their own lives. They love to share what works and what doesn't work, not just to improve things for themselves, but knowing that what they share will have a positive impact for children and young people in the future.



“Involve us in all decisions that affect us, we have good ideas.”

Children and Families Panel member

Principles of a children's human rights approach in Scotland



Accountability

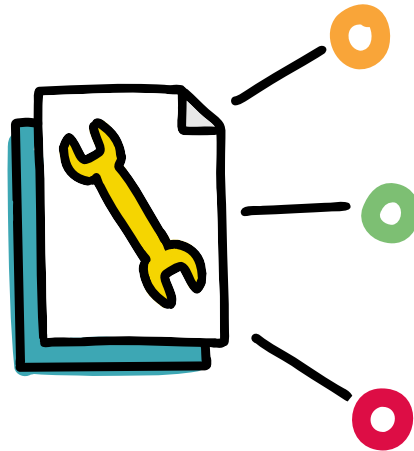
Delivering a proactive culture of everyday responsibility for children's rights across services, including in decision making. Taking steps to monitor children's rights standards and provide remedies where there is failure to meet these standards.

Accountability is at the core of human rights practice. It means the need for workers to be transparent about their decision making in a way that enables children and young people to influence, scrutinise and challenge decisions that affect them.



“I would feel a lot better if adults explained decisions to me. Reasons are important.”
Children and Families Panel member

Skills and Knowledge



The learning journey through the Skills and Knowledge Framework is meant to be progressive, continual, cumulative, and lifelong.

Workers can use the Framework to deepen knowledge and move from one level to the next as desired. Building skills and knowledge requires reflection and an acknowledgement that we all have a unique learning journey, experience, and ambition. The levels, and the Enhanced level in particular, are not static, and practice can always be improved and strengthened.

The Framework can be used not just as a tool for learning, but as a tool to support recruitment, supervision, performance management, and continual professional development.

The values of human dignity, kindness, empathy, trust, and love ground the Framework ([Appendix A](#)). The [multidisciplinary team \(12\)](#) explored, devised and committed to these values with children, families and workers when developing the Framework. These values are the foundations on which we build our knowledge and understanding, and should weave through our professional relationships and practices.




Skills and knowledge required to reach **Informed level**

Members of the Children and Families Panel were involved at every stage in developing the Framework and their views informed the learning statements. The quotes in the table are their exact words and are included to demonstrate the link between practice and lived experience.

Embedding



Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>understand how to embed a children's human rights approach in my work.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand...
	<p>what an effective children's human rights approach looks like, including what is effective about what I am already doing.</p> <p>“The staff at our library treat me with respect. They ask if they can help me with anything and allow me to visit without an adult. They don't make assumptions about me.” Children and Families Panel member</p>
Skills	I can...
	<p>talk about the impact of my work on children's rights.</p> <p>apply my children's rights knowledge for the benefit of children, young people and the workforce.</p>



Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>ensure that children's rights are built into everything we do and understand the links to other policies and frameworks.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand...
	<p>how to incorporate children's rights into my work.</p> <p>how a children's human rights approach helps deliver other policies and frameworks.</p>
Skills	I can...
	<p>embed children's rights into my work.</p> <p>look at the policies and frameworks of my sector and understand the links with children's rights.</p>

Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>understand how Child Rights Impact Assessments and Child Rights Impact Evaluations can provide a structured way of assessing the impact of decisions on children and young people.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand...
	<p>that Child Rights Impact Assessments and Child Rights Impact Evaluations can be used to support decision making, by assessing the impact of a decision on children and young people.</p>



Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>understand how regularly collecting and monitoring appropriate information on children and young people can help to support their rights, particularly for children and young people whose rights are at risk.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand...
	<p>that necessary data and information about children and young people should be collected and disseminated to support the design and implementation of policies, programmes, and budgets that will advance children's rights.</p> <p>that data collection and information sharing should respect the dignity of the children and young people involved.</p>
Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>understand how child rights budgeting can support children's rights, particularly for children and young people whose rights are at risk.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand...
	<p>that child rights budgeting assesses how different groups of children and young people are impacted by budget decisions and should lead to the best possible outcomes for the largest number of children and young people, paying special attention to those whose rights are at risk.</p> <p>that children and young people can be involved in budgetary decision making.</p>



Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>be aware of the most appropriate learning and training so I can develop my skills and knowledge to take a children's human rights approach.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Skills	I can...
	<p>reflect on my children's human rights approach and identify gaps in my skills and knowledge.</p> <p>“Children's rights should be an integral part of all professionals' training and standards.” Children and Families Panel member</p> <p>embed ongoing improvement and refinement of my children's human rights approach.</p> <p>discuss children's rights with colleagues.</p>
Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>know how to build relationships with services working with children and young people who might be able to provide support, contacts, and expertise for my work.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand...
	<p>the role that other workers have in the lives of children and young people.</p> <p>what services and support are available to help children and young people when they need it.</p>



Learning outcome	I want to...
	understand how best to promote the rights of children and young people. Resources to support this learning outcome.
Skills	I can...
	define and explain children's rights. "Children's rights keep us healthy, happy and safe." Children and Families Panel member




Equality and non-discrimination



Learning Outcome	I want to...
	<p>learn how to support children and young people to have equal access to their rights, with a focus on those children and young people whose rights are at risk.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand...
	<p>the impacts of discrimination on children and young people and their families.</p> <p>there needs to be equity in enjoyment of children's rights.</p> <p>that infants have the same children's rights, even though they may not have verbal skills.</p> <p>“Just because my son doesn't talk back or answer you, it doesn't mean he doesn't understand. They could have asked me if Alfie (my son) could communicate, and how he communicates.” Children and Families Panel member</p> <p>that children, young people and families may have different communication needs.</p> <p>“My dentist talked to my mum and explained things to her and totally ignored me. My mum said to him it's ok, you can talk to her directly, the dentist said I wouldn't understand. I felt small and not important.” Children and Families Panel member</p>



Skills	I can...
	<p>respect and value each child or young person for who they are.</p> <p>“I feel sad and disrespected when someone treats me differently because of age, race, gender, disability etc.” Children and Families Panel member</p> <p>access support to tackle discriminatory practice and support children, young people and their families who are affected by it.</p> <p>“When Alfie broke his leg, and I took him to the hospital, I told them that he had selective mutism, and possible autism. And from then, they spoke to me, and not to Alfie. This took me a bit by surprise, with it being a children’s hospital.” Children and Families Panel member</p>
Learning outcome	<p>I want to...</p> <p>recognise and challenge potential concerns about children’s rights, especially those of children and young people whose rights are at risk.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	<p>I understand...</p> <p>that discrimination leads to unfair and unequal outcomes and that this undermines the realisation of rights.</p> <p>“Everyone’s views should be heard, including Gaelic speakers, because everyone has different experiences.” Children and Families Panel member</p> <p>that some children and young people experience discrimination, harassment and violence due to their identity.</p> <p>“I was attacked in my class. My headteacher didn’t listen to my thoughts and feelings. I had to move school and get help with my mental health.” Children and Families Panel member</p>



Knowledge

I understand... (continued)



that some children and young people experience negative assumptions and discrimination because of their age, including how they are spoken to or treated.

“I was given a placement where I was unable to reach my potential because nobody tried to find out what I would like to do or what I was good at. That really affected my confidence. People just made assumptions about me.” Children and Families Panel member

the importance of preventing and responding effectively to bullying.

“There is still teasing and nasty comments, but any instances of this are taken seriously and dealt with. I feel my rights are now being properly respected. There are still improvements to be made, but I am hopeful for the future.” Children and Families Panel member

Skills

I can...

recognise concerns about children's rights due to discrimination and respond appropriately.

Learning outcome

I want to...

understand children and young people's lived experiences, including those whose rights are at risk.

[Resources](#) to support this learning outcome.

Knowledge

I understand...

that all children and young people are unique, and that their families are unique.

“People often think families are mum and dad and children. Families in Scotland are [...] diverse, and of different shapes and sizes.” Children and Families Panel member



Knowledge

I understand... (continued)



that children and young people's needs and strengths will be influenced by their environment, backgrounds and circumstances.

“I have autism. It is hard because not all disabilities are visible. And I don't always want to tell people.” Children and Families Panel member

that some children and young people will need extra support to ensure they experience their rights fully.

“My son enjoys playing football at this club. He has autism and the coaches understand him and know how to support him. Other clubs are not the same. It has limited his options because not many mainstream sports have support like this.” Children and Families Panel member

that increasing numbers of children and young people are experiencing mental ill health, often expressed through behaviour.

“I find it really hard to go back to (football) training after COVID. I feel very nervous and fear I'm not good enough.” Children and Families Panel member

that children and young people's behaviour stems from somewhere, is a form of communication, and I should not judge or take distressed behaviours personally.

“When I started primary school, I quickly realised I was different to other children my age. Teachers didn't know how to deal with me when I got upset. I was often put in a 'time out' even when I didn't see anything I'd done wrong.” Children and Families Panel member





Empowerment




Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>understand children and young people's evolving capacity.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand...
	<p>that supporting children and young people's evolving capacities is fundamentally about taking a positive and supportive role, which respects children and young people's dignity and never restricts children and young people's autonomy and self expression.</p> <p>“Children's rights are about helping children grow into young, confident adults.” Children and Families Panel member</p> <p>that when children and young people, including infants, are informed, supported and confident, they can advocate for and claim their rights.</p> <p>“Young children have valuable things to say and can come up with good ideas too, listen to us!” Children and Families Panel member</p> <p>that children and young people have the right to share their views and have them taken into account, even if they don't know everything about the issue.</p>
Skills	I can...
	<p>communicate with children and young people in ways that suit their age and capacities.</p>



Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>support children and young people of all ages and backgrounds to express their views and have the chance to talk about what is important to them.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand...
	<p>how play, fun, and creativity can encourage children and young people to express their views.</p> <p>“Be enthusiastic, positive and fun.” Children and Families Panel member that infants, children and young people can contribute ideas that can help improve their communities.</p> <p>“Involve us in all decisions that affect us, we have good ideas.” Children and Families Panel member that infants, children and young people should be able to share their views about what matters to them, and not just when adults ask them about a specific topic.</p>
Skills	I can...
	<p>willingly engage with children and young people to hear their views.</p> <p>“Give us your full attention and check you have fully understood what we want to tell you.” Children and Families Panel member</p> <p>actively listen and respond to children and young people’s thoughts and views with respect and dignity.</p> <p>“When adults don’t listen to me, I feel frustrated, or disappointed. I feel quite sad.” Children and Families Panel member</p>



Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>take children and young people's views into account in decisions that affect them.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand...
	<p>that children and young people should be active participants when decisions are made about them or that affect them.</p> <p>“Participating with adults makes you feel important and that you can do so much more in life.” Children and Families Panel member</p> <p>that a child or young person's views should be taken into account when considering what is in their best interest.</p>
Skills	I can...
	<p>speak directly to children and young people, not just to adults, to ensure children and young people's dignity is respected.</p>

Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>give children and young people information about things that affect them in a way they find easy to understand.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand...
	<p>that access to information is essential so that children and young people can make informed decisions.</p> <p>how to communicate about my role and what I do, and how it affects children, young people and their families, in an engaging and accessible way.</p>



Skills

I can...

use clear and easy to understand language in all interactions with children, young people and their families.
check that a child or young person has understood a question or piece of information.

Learning outcome

I want to...

support children and young people as human rights defenders, to stand up for their own rights and for the rights of other children and young people.

[Resources](#) to support this learning outcome.

Knowledge

I understand...

that children and young people can help me learn about children's rights.

Learning outcome

I want to...

ensure that children and young people are given spaces (in person and online) where they can freely associate and advocate for their rights.


[Resources](#) to support this learning outcome.

Knowledge

I understand...

that children and young people have a right to access and assemble in public spaces, both in person and online, and that their dignity should be respected in these spaces.



Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>build empowering relationships with children and young people.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand...
	<p>the importance of respecting children and young people as equals.</p> <p>“Treat us as equals and respect us” Children and Families Panel member</p> <p>the importance of promoting the dignity of children and young people as rights-holding individuals.</p> <p>“[Without children’s rights] I would feel quite disrespected, like my dignity was being taken away” Children and Families Panel member</p> <p>that children’s rights should be realised through the relationships they have with others.</p> <p>“Professionals should be more consistent with children. They should always get back to us and make time to really get to know us so that we can trust them.” Children and Families Panel member</p> <p>that building relationships and trust with a child or young person can take time.</p> <p>that children and young people need to trust the stability, security and consistency of workers’ approaches to their rights.</p> <p>the power and the impact of the language I use and my behaviour towards children and young people.</p> <p>that all children and young people’s behaviour is communication.</p> <p>“Instead of completely shutting down bad behaviour, adults should try to find out what is happening to cause the behaviour.” Children and Families Panel member</p>



Skills

I can...



foster a relationship with children and young people that is based on kindness, empathy and trust and a commitment to realising their human dignity.

communicate calmly and respectfully with children and young people, even when the situation is challenging.

“Adults shouting at children should consider how they would feel if they were shouted at.”

Children and Families Panel member

Learning outcome

I want to...

be sufficiently trauma-informed to ensure my work supports children and young people who have experienced or are experiencing trauma.

Resources to support this learning outcome.

Knowledge

I understand...

what being trauma-informed means and how I can access specific learning to support me in my role.

the potential for any interaction with children and young people, or material shared with children and young people, to bring back memories of traumatic events.



Participation



Learning outcome	I want to...
	ensure that children and young people are protected from harm and not put at risk through their participation Resources to support this learning outcome.
Knowledge	I understand...
	that before anyone is involved in participation work with infants, children and young people they should pass a Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scotland disclosure check, have child protection training, plan and allow time for appropriate support to participants and be aware of all safeguarding procedures.
Learning outcome	I want to...
	ensure children and young people are given full, accessible, age-appropriate information about their right to express their views, and how they will be taken into account. Resources to support this learning outcome.
Knowledge	I understand...
	that infants, children and young people can articulate their views and opinions and make decisions.



Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>ensure that children and young people's participation is voluntary.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand...
	<p>that the right to participate is a choice that must be respected for all infants, children, and young people.</p> <p>“We might not want to participate [...] as we find some things difficult to discuss.” Children and Families Panel member</p>



Accountability



Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>ensure that accountability is built into my children's human rights approach.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand...
	<p>that children and young people have specific rights and that public authorities have a legal obligation to respect, protect and fulfil children's rights.</p> <p>where I can find information about the UNCRC articles to better understand public authorities' obligations.</p> <p>that children and young people have a right to privacy and understand what information about and from children and young people can be shared, and when and with whom it is appropriate to share it.</p>
Skills	I can...
	<p>consider how children's rights are or will be affected by my decisions and actions.</p> <p>recognise and report to the appropriate person when I have concerns about children's rights.</p> <p>“If someone's parents were hurting them then the school could tell the police or a social worker so that the child would get help.” Children and Families Panel member</p>



Learning outcome	I want to...
	ensure that actions and decisions are effectively communicated as part of accountable practice. Resources to support this learning outcome.
Knowledge	I understand...
	my role in keeping children and young people and families up to date on matters affecting them. children's rights and the appropriate language to explain them in the context of my work.
Skills	I can...
	be transparent about my actions and decisions and communicate my reasoning in a way that is easy for children and young people to understand.

Learning outcome	I want to...
	ensure that children and young people can provide feedback and have access to independent complaints procedures if they have concerns about their rights. Resources to support this learning outcome.
Knowledge	I understand...
	the importance of recording and reporting concerns about children's rights, so the issue can be addressed. when to refer on or escalate feedback and complaints from children and young people. the importance of keeping children and young people informed of the outcomes of their feedback and complaints in a way that they can understand.



Skills

I can...

explain or provide children and young people with accessible information on mechanisms and the process for making complaints, and for holding an organisation to account.

Learning outcome

I want to...

ensure that children and young people have access to advice and advocacy.

Resources to support this learning outcome.

Knowledge

I understand...



that children and young people should be able to decide who they want to support and advocate for them.
that advocacy and legal advice should be available to children, young people and their families, particularly those whose rights are at risk.
who provides legal advice and resources to children and young people and how to support children and young people to access it.





Skills and knowledge required to reach **Skilled level**

Members of the Children and Families Panel were involved at every stage in developing the Framework and their views informed the learning statements. The quotes in the table are their exact words and are included to demonstrate the link between practice and lived experience.

Embedding




Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>understand how to embed a children's human rights approach in my work.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Skills	I can...
	<p>explain how children's rights have been respected in my decisions.</p> <p>identify effective children's rights practice.</p>
Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>ensure that children's rights are embedded in planning, strategies, and reporting.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand...
	<p>that the planning of all public services is linked to the realisation of children's rights.</p> <p>that policies should be implemented and monitored to ensure that resources are allocated to realise children's rights.</p> <p>where to find guidance and examples for reporting on how I am taking forward children's rights.</p>




Knowledge	I understand... (continued)
	that in a children's human rights approach, the process of realising children's rights is as important as the end result.
Skills	I can...
	<p>reflect on my practice and create an action plan for improving children's rights in my work.</p> <p>demonstrate commitment to children's rights principles in my planning, strategies and reporting.</p> <p>measure the impact and report on the progress of my work on delivering children's rights.</p> <p>require any workers I manage to regularly report on progress made towards children's rights. #Leadership</p> <p>use qualitative data to help report on children's rights work and include children and young people's voices.</p>
Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>ensure that children's rights are built into everything we do and understand the links to other policies and frameworks.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Skills	I can...
	contribute to policy development using my knowledge of children's rights in my role.




Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>ensure that children's rights are taken into account when commissioning services and developing partnerships with wider organisations and services.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Skills	I can...
	<p>consider how commissioned work will impact children's rights and if commissioned organisations consider children's rights in their approach.</p> <p>prioritise children and young people's participation, and accountability to children and young people, throughout the commissioning cycle.</p> <p>ensure that compliance with children's rights is monitored throughout a commissioned project or service and evaluated at its conclusion. #Leadership</p>



Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>undertake Child Rights Impact Assessments and Child Rights Impact Evaluations to assess the impact of decisions on children and young people.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand...
	<p>the importance of effective data collection for completing Child Rights Impact Assessments and Child Rights Impact Evaluations.</p> <p>how to adapt and apply Child Rights Impact Assessments and Child Rights Impact Evaluations to meet the needs of the decisions being made.</p>
Skills	I can...
	<p>undertake a Child Rights Impact Evaluation to consider the possible children's rights impacts of making a decision that will affect a specific child, an identified group of children and young people, or children and young people in general and mitigate against any negative impacts. Then evaluate implementation through a Child Rights Evaluation Assessment.</p> <p>“Most teachers understand my needs and I have been able to access help and support from school, such as being allowed to sit exams in a separate room, which helps me feel less stressed.” Children and Families Panel member</p> <p>include children and young people's views meaningfully in a Child Rights Impact Assessment or Child Rights Impact Evaluation, which will involve checking to see if and where their views have already been gathered, and may require direct participation activities.</p> <p>make completed Child Rights Impact Assessments and Child Rights Impact Evaluations available in a form accessible to children and young people.</p>



Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>understand how regularly collecting and monitoring appropriate information on children and young people can help to support their rights, particularly for children and young people whose rights are at risk.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand...
	<p>the importance of collecting longitudinal data on children and young people, including qualitative data. that data collected should be high quality, accurate, and transparent in its collection and distribution.</p>
Skills	I can...
	<p>ensure I secure informed consent for processing and storing children and young people's data.</p> <p>“I worry that my data might go to the wrong people, and they will do bad things with it or harm me.” Children and Families Panel member</p> <p>ensure children, young people, and their families, have easy access to their data to update inaccuracies or remove information that is either unlawfully retained or no longer necessary.</p> <p>collect sufficient and reliable disaggregated data to enable identification of outcomes for particular groups of children and young people.</p>



Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>understand how child rights budgeting can support children's rights, particularly for children and young people whose rights are at risk.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand...
	<p>how to consider children's rights when mobilising, allocating, and spending public resources to support the realisation of children's rights.</p> <p>that the core obligations imposed by children's rights should not be compromised, even in times of economic crisis.</p>
Skills	I can...
	<p>involve children and young people in decision making about budgets and spending, with particular focus on those whose rights are at risk, including providing accessible information to support this.</p> <p>“Not every family is the same. There are some children and families needing help more than others. All children should be supported to reach their potential no matter who they are and where they come from.” Children and Families Panel member</p> <p>ensure that children and young people involved in budget participation mechanisms are provided with feedback on the results of their views.</p> <p>monitor the impact of spending on an ongoing basis to ensure it is producing the desired outcome on children's rights.</p>



Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>be aware of the most appropriate learning and training so I can develop my skills and knowledge to take a children's human rights approach.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Skills	I can...
	<p>use the feedback from children and young people to identify professional development needs and strengthen practice through learning.</p> <p>give constructive feedback and support colleagues to learn and develop children's rights practice.</p>
Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>know how to build relationships with services working with children and young people who might be able to provide support, contacts, and expertise for my work.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand...
	<p>where to find support and services for children, young people and their families so that I can signpost or make referrals when needed.</p>
Skills	I can...
	<p>use partnership working as an opportunity to further realise children's rights.</p>



Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>understand the role and functions of the Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland and the Scottish Human Rights Commission.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand...
	<p>the role of the Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland and the Scottish Human Rights Commission.</p>
Skills	I can...
	<p>make appropriate referrals to the Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland and the Scottish Human Rights Commission.</p>



Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>understand how best to promote the rights of children and young people.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand...
	<p>that any awareness raising about the rights and dignity of children and young people is a process of interaction and dialogue.</p> <p>“My whole family now understands about rights because I was able to explain it to them.” Children and Families Panel member</p>
Skills	I can...
	<p>share accessible information about children's rights and how to uphold them.</p> <p>promote the use of language and behaviour that respects rights.</p> <p>“Adults should have a special training day at work every year and there should be a National Children's Rights Day to raise awareness.” Children and Families Panel member</p>



Skilled: Embedding

Equality and non-discrimination



Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>learn how to support children and young people to have equal access to their rights, with a focus on those children and young people whose rights are at risk.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand...
	<p>that children's rights practice is informed and underpinned by equalities legislation including the Human Rights Act 1998 and Equality Act 2010.</p> <p>that practice must include a clear commitment to promoting equality, dignity, and tackling direct and indirect discrimination against children and young people, or specific groups of children and young people.</p> <p>that balancing the human rights of different people, both individually and as groups, must be considered on a case by case basis.</p> <p>“I’m sure we’ve had our kids in classes where there’s maybe been children with additional support needs. It’s probably a challenge for those professionals to equally respect the rights across all kids (including mine).” Children and Families Panel member</p> <p>the communication needs of the children, young people and families I work with and how to meet those needs.</p> <p>“There are many Asian boys interested in football. They play on the streets and in parks but there is no information available for parents and for them to play in organised groups.” Children and Families Panel member</p>



Skills

I can...



reflect on practice and adapt when needed, to uphold a commitment to equality and non-discrimination, including identifying and addressing barriers.

“Caleb went to the dentist this week and the staff were understanding of his needs by asking if he wanted the lights dimmed, music playing, headphones on, and if he wanted to play with the reclining chair first.” Children and Families Panel member

pay special attention to children and young people whose rights are at risk and consider how best to uphold their rights.

“Getting diagnosed with autism helped a little, but I still didn’t understand why I seemed less capable than my classmates. I felt that I wasn’t getting the most out of my education, and this was very frustrating. I think things would have been a lot better for me if teachers had been educated on how to help children with different needs to reach their full potential.”


Children and Families Panel member

identify a range of appropriate services that can provide support or information to children, young people and families.


“We have worked for Who Cares who helped us learn about our rights and advocated for us.”

Children and Families Panel member



Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>recognise and challenge potential concerns about children's rights, especially those of children and young people whose rights are at risk.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand...
	<p>how to challenge inequality and tackle discrimination when I observe it.</p> <p>“All children are equal.” Children and Families Panel member</p> <p>how to raise concerns about children's rights.</p> <p>when to use informal and formal procedures including complaints mechanisms and whistleblowing procedures.</p>
Skills	I can...
	<p>listen to and acknowledge a child or young person's experience of stigma or discrimination in a way that is trauma-informed.</p> <p>“Because we are asylum seekers, people assume we are poor and not well educated.” Children and Families Panel member</p> <p>report and challenge bullying behaviour and seek appropriate support for a child or young person experiencing bullying.</p> <p>“My classmates didn't seem to like me and I was teased and bullied. I would tell teachers about this, but I was often told just to ignore it, which I found very difficult to do. I didn't feel listened to or properly understood.” Children and Families Panel member</p>



Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>understand children and young people's lived experiences, including those whose rights are at risk.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand...
	<p>how to be aware of and respect children and young people's needs, strengths, and circumstances, and gather the views of different groups of children and young people affected by specific issues.</p> <p>that the experiences, circumstances, identities and beliefs of a child, young person, and/or their family will inform how to work with them.</p> <p>“We celebrate the end of Ramadan with family. We have a big festival. We informed the school why our children were off because there's not much celebration of our culture in the school. It's important as this is part of him (my son).” Children and Families Panel member</p> <p>the importance of cultural sensitivity and intercultural communication, and that children and young people from ethnic, religious, or linguistic minorities should be encouraged to enjoy and participate in their own cultures.</p> <p>“We try to teach him Arabic on a day-to-day basis. He can understand and read the language, but he can't yet speak it. I think it's important as it's our language.” Children and Families Panel member</p> <p>that some children and young people have experiences, circumstances, identities and beliefs that mean that their rights are more likely to be at risk within wider systems, such as the care, justice and immigration systems.</p> <p>that actions such as forced marriage, which deny children and young people the dignity and rights covered by the UNCRC, can never be justified.</p>



Knowledge

I understand... (continued)

the impact of poverty and that children and young people are aware of the financial pressures faced by their family.

“Holidays are hard. We cannot afford to go to places because transport costs are high. Although the children are free, me and my wife still have to pay. My son feels sad because he feels different from his friends.” Children and Families Panel member

Skills

I can...

adapt or enhance my practice to meet the needs and uphold the rights of all children and young people, including those with additional support needs.

“It’s important that professionals get to know me, and what’s going on in my wider life.”

Children and Families Panel member

provide information for, or find appropriate support to communicate with, children and young people in a language or format that is appropriate, regardless of their age, culture, or disability.

“Due to our boys’ autism, we have learned to communicate in more ways than just speech. We have to be their voices so their views can be heard.” Children and Families Panel member

recognise when children and young people are having worries about family finances and take that into account in my practice to ensure children and young people are not disadvantaged because of costs.

“I told my friends I didn’t like playing football, but I do. My mum said we couldn’t afford the kit. I was too embarrassed to tell people. I’m so happy now because the club gave me gear for free.”

Children and Families Panel member



Empowerment



Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>understand children and young people's evolving capacity.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand...
	<p>that children and young people have the capacity to form their own views and recognise that they have the right to express them, and that it is not up to the child or young person to prove their capacity.</p> <p>“All children should be supported to freely express their opinions.” Children and Families Panel member</p> <p>that trauma, adverse childhood experiences, and mental ill health can impact on children and young people in many ways, including on their social relationships, confidence and capacity to understand and realise their rights.</p> <p>“Adults should consider that a child who is being disrespectful might have some sort of triggered trauma. They should be more informed about trauma.” Children and Families Panel member</p>
Skills	I can...
	<p>support every child or young person to develop their communication, language, and problem solving skills in ways which best fit their evolving capacity.</p> <p>“Adults need to realise that children are often more anxious and worried than they seem. They wrongly assume that being quiet is good behaviour. These children need your help to voice their opinions and concerns.” Children and Families Panel member</p>



Skills

I can... (continued)

show patience and creativity to adapt to a child or young person's interests, levels of understanding and preferred ways of communicating.

ensure decision making processes are accessible, inclusive and meaningful, and consider the evolving capacities of children and young people.

Learning outcome

I want to...

support children and young people of all ages and backgrounds to express their views and have the chance to talk about what is important to them.

Resources to support this learning outcome.

Knowledge

I understand...

that the views of infants, children and young people should be heard and taken into account across all areas of their lives.

how to find out what infants, children and young people have already said about a topic and take this into account when seeking further views.

that building relationships with children and young people takes time, and this step must be built into processes as early as possible.

where to find further information and support from other services and organisations for advice about understanding non-verbal communication.

the need to respect the differences in infants, children and young people's views and opinions.

“Don't compare us to other children, we are all individuals.” Children and Families Panel member



Skills

I can...



identify and create opportunities for infants, children, and young people to progressively exercise their right to give their views and highlight the issues they identify as relevant and important.

“We need more opportunities to take part. We have so much energy and enthusiasm and we want to make cool things happen.” Children and Families Panel member

provide infants, children, and young people with an environment that enables and encourages them to express their views.

“My school asked me to share something about my culture at assembly. They didn’t have much information about Muslims. It was quite nice because everyone got to know me better.” Children and Families Panel member

support the close and appropriate interpersonal relationships that might be necessary for an infant, child or young person to express their views.

demonstrate empathy and active listening, which includes undivided attention, eye contact if appropriate, positive facial expression, and non-verbal encouragement.

“Be kind and motivate us. You need to feel included to participate with adults, and see the person is interested in you and your opinions matter.” Children and Families Panel member


recognise and respect non-verbal forms of communication including play, body language, facial expressions, and drawing and painting through which infants, children and young people demonstrate understanding, choices and preferences.



Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>take children and young people's views into account in decisions that affect them.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand...
	<p>how to avoid tokenistic approaches which limit infant, children and young people's expression of views, or which allow them to be heard but fail to give their views due weight.</p> <p>“Kids will know when they are not listened to, and it can really make you think you aren't worth as much as someone who is an adult.” Children and Families Panel member</p> <p>that delays or prolonged decision making have adverse effects on children and young people.</p>
Skills	I can...
	<p>ensure that infants, children and young people are actively involved in planning and decisions, rather than seen as people for whom decisions are made.</p> <p>give due weight to infants, children and young people's views and help them in ways that lead to real change.</p>

Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>give children and young people information about things that affect them in a way they find easy to understand.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand...
	<p>how to consider children and young people's experiences, circumstances, identities and beliefs when communicating information about things that affect them.</p>



Knowledge	I understand... (continued)
	that children and young people have a right to information, and controls should be used only to prevent children and young people from accessing harmful material.
Skills	I can...
	<p>make my communication honest, transparent, accessible, engaging and free of jargon.</p> <p>“Use accessible language and check understanding with us.” Children and Families Panel member provide age appropriate information in different formats, alongside access to specialist support if needed, to ensure children and young people receive information in a way that they can understand.</p> <p>prepare to share information with children and young people in person, and plan for any follow up questions.</p>
Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>support children and young people as human rights defenders, to stand up for their own rights and for the rights of other children and young people.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand...
	<p>that children and young people are agents of change and make important contributions to human rights and environmental rights.</p> <p>children and young people’s role as human rights defenders.</p>



Skills	I can...
	<p>support children and young people to learn about their rights through accessible information, training and education.</p> <p>support children and young people to grow in confidence and capacity to fully advocate for their rights, to share ideas and influence decisions.</p>
Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>ensure that children and young people are given spaces (in person and online) where they can freely associate and advocate for their rights.</p> <p><u>Resources</u> to support this learning outcome.</p>
Skills	I can...
	<p>respect and support the right of children and young people to establish, join and leave organisations and initiatives, and their right to peaceful assembly.</p> <p>encourage children and young people to form their own organisations and initiatives.</p>
Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>build empowering relationships with children and young people.</p> <p><u>Resources</u> to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand...
	<p>how my behaviour is seen by children and young people, and how it will be perceived if it is different from how I say children and young people should behave.</p>



Skills	I can...
	<p>model the positive behaviours I seek in children and young people.</p> <p>“Treat children the way you would treat other adults. If you wouldn’t say it to an adult, don’t say it to a child.” Children and Families Panel member</p> <p>observe and listen to a child or young person’s verbal, physical and emotional communication to support them in a targeted and appropriate manner.</p> <p>reflect on the relationships I have with children and young people, and make changes as needed to improve those relationships.</p>
Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>be sufficiently trauma-informed to ensure that my work supports children and young people who have experienced or are experiencing trauma.</p> <p><u>Resources</u> to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand...
	<p>the importance of building trusting relationships and connections with children and young people who have experienced trauma.</p> <p>the services available, both public and third sector, to help children and young people recover from trauma.</p>
Skills	I can...
	<p>seek support for children and young people who are displaying signs of having experienced trauma.</p>



Participation



Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>ensure that children and young people are protected from harm and not put at risk through their participation.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand...
	<p>that before anyone is involved in participation work with infants, children and young people they should pass a Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scotland disclosure check, have child protection training, plan and allow time for appropriate support to participants and be aware of all safe guarding procedures.</p> <p>what to do if a child protection issue arises during participation work.</p> <p>that infants, children and young people should be able to express their opinions freely and not be put at risk through their participation.</p> <p>that infants, children and young people must be aware of their right to be protected from harm and know where to go for help if needed.</p> <p>the risks faced by some groups of infants, children and young people, and the extra barriers they face in obtaining help.</p> <p>how to work with practitioners who have pre-existing relationships with infants, children and young people whose rights are at risk and know how to support them.</p>
Skills	I can...
	<p>assess the potential risks when planning participation and take every precaution to minimise risks to infants, children and young people.</p>



Skills

I can... (continued)



“Be aware that children who are [recovering] from severe and complex trauma may find certain subjects too difficult to address. However, they may want to participate in wider conversations and may also wish to have their views made known through a professional and family advocate. Simply ask.” Children and Families Panel member

identify safe places and times for infants, children and young people to participate.

“Be aware we might have been sitting at a desk all day and may not feel able to concentrate. Consider if we need a run around or change of pace.” Children and Families Panel member

work in a trauma-informed way during participation, to ensure that infants, children and young people are appropriately supported to participate when they want to.

Learning outcome

I want to...

ensure children and young people are given full, accessible and age-appropriate information about their right to express a view, and how it will be taken into account.

Resources to support this learning outcome.

Knowledge

I understand...



that it is essential to be clear with children and young people about when decisions will be made, how they can participate, and how their participation will influence decision making.

“Be honest” Children and Families Panel member

that participation can be improved by being flexible in approach; using spaces and timings that suit children and young people; letting infants, children and young people lead; compensating children and young people for their time and expertise; and ensuring sufficient time, support and resources for meaningful engagement.



Skills

I can...

ensure infants, children and young people are provided with full, accessible, and age-appropriate information about their right to express their views freely.

ensure infants, children and young people understand how their views will be used, how participation will take place, and its scope, purpose and potential results.

Learning outcome

I want to...

ensure that children and young people's participation is voluntary.

[Resources](#) to support this learning outcome.

Knowledge

I understand...

that participation is voluntary and that making an environment suitable for infants, children and young people will encourage participation.

that there needs to be a clearly stated way for infants, children and young people to withdraw consent for participation at any time.

“We might not want to participate in all of a consultation as some things might be too difficult to discuss, but we may still want to give our views on other parts of the consultation. Ensure we can have time out when needed and that we are able to rejoin the group later.”

Children and Families Panel member

how to obtain informed consent from infants, children, young people and their families in research, data gathering, engagement and consultation work.



Skills

I can...

ensure infants, children and young people are never pressured into expressing views.



Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>ensure that children and young people can use various methods to express their views.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand... <p>that there are different ways that infants, children and young people can express their views, including through creative activities and non-verbal methods.</p> <p>that infants, children and young people have their own ideas of how they want to express their views.</p> <p>“Children and adults should work together, and all ideas should be treated equally.” Children and Families Panel member</p>
Skills	I can... <p>work collaboratively with infants, children and young people to create opportunities and design how they want to express their views in a way that respects their dignity.</p> <p>“Don’t make assumptions about us, just ask us, we will tell you!” Children and Families Panel member</p> <p>ground my participation approaches in practice models, theory, and evidence of what works for infants, children and young people’s participation.</p>



Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>ensure that participation is child friendly, with enough time, space and resources to ensure that children and young people feel confident to take part, whatever their support needs.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand... <p>that infants, children and young people's participation should be properly planned and supported with adequate resources and training.</p> <p>where to find effective models and support from others to better enable infants, children and young people's participation.</p>
Skills	I can... <p>work with infants, children and young people to understand what they need to exercise their participation rights and encourage their participation in planning activities.</p> <p>“Involve us in planning sessions and ask us if we have any support needs, whether we have a diagnosis or not.” Children and Families Panel member</p> <p>ensure that infants, children and young people are given up to date information; arrange meetings at suitable times and venues; use accessible and welcoming spaces; and allow for support and preparation time.</p> <p>“Provide a space where we feel safe and make sure participation is inclusive and accessible.” Children and Families Panel member</p> <p>be fully present and listen carefully when I engage with infants, children and young people.</p> <p>“Don't interrupt us, and ask us open questions so that we can give a full answer.” Children and Families Panel member</p>



Skills

I can... (continued)

ensure that participation is fun, creative and safe and that it respects infants, children and young people's dignity and capacities.

“Be curious, calm, patient, understanding and fun.” Children and Families Panel member

ensure there are mechanisms in place to regularly review the outcomes of participation by seeking feedback from infants, children and young people.

“Ask for our ideas in planning sessions and for our feedback. We want to work with you.”

Children and Families Panel member

Learning outcome

I want to...

support workers with their skills development to take a children's human rights approach to participation.

[Resources](#) to support this learning outcome.

Skills



I can...

work collaboratively with colleagues to help facilitate infants, children and young people's participation.



Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>ensure that children and young people whose rights are at risk can play a full and meaningful part in decisions that affect them through inclusive participation.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand...
	<p>infants', children's and young people's needs, and know how to take a flexible approach to participation that empowers those whose rights are at risk.</p> <p>what kind of environment will enable infants, children, and young people whose rights are at risk to participate fully.</p> <p>the need for a range of communication aids or translators to respect the diversity of infants, children, and young people's communication needs.</p> <p>“Ask if we need help with reading or writing and if we prefer either an adult or a child to do this for us. Ensure that all materials are accessible, and offer audio recording and creative art activities as alternatives to writing.” Children and Families Panel member</p>
Skills	I can...
	<p>adapt tone and language to make communication effective and appropriate for infants, children and young people of different ages and with different needs, including those whose rights are at risk.</p> <p>support infants, children and young people to be equipped with, and enabled to use, any mode of communication necessary to help them express their views.</p> <p>“Allow us time and space to tell you our needs and express ourselves in a variety of ways.” Children and Families Panel member</p> <p>facilitate participation with an awareness of social, economic and cultural barriers.</p>



Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>ensure that children and young people are given feedback on the outcomes of their participation and give feedback as part of the participation process.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand...
	<p>that effective and meaningful participation is a process, not a one off event, and that feedback loops need to be built into the process.</p> <p>“If you don’t get back to us to let us know what happened with our views you will lose our trust.” Children and Families Panel member</p> <p>that infants, children and young people must be informed about how their views have been interpreted to check they agree with the analysis of their input.</p>
Skills	I can...
	<p>provide infants, children and young people with clear information on how their participation has influenced any outcomes or decisions.</p> <p>“Keep your promises and be realistic and honest about the impact of our views.” Children and Families Panel member</p> <p>give children and young people the opportunity to participate in any follow up processes or activities.</p> <p>“Stay in touch with us and let us know the long term effect of giving our views. Give us updates.” Children and Families Panel member</p> <p>seek and accept feedback from infants, children and young people on my participation practice.</p> <p>“Professionals who already work with children need to reflect much more on their practice, by seeking feedback from children directly.” Children and Families Panel member</p>



Accountability



Learning outcome	<p>I want to...</p> <p>ensure that accountability is built into my children's human rights approach.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	<p>I understand...</p> <p>my role and responsibilities in relation to children's rights. that I am accountable to children and young people as rights-holders.</p>
Skills	<p>I can...</p> <p>review the impact of my work using feedback from children and young people, and use other methods to progress my learning about children's rights.</p> <p>support colleagues to improve their understanding and practice when they are not fully respecting children's rights.</p>

Learning outcome	<p>I want to...</p> <p>ensure that actions and decisions are effectively communicated as part of accountable practice.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Skills	<p>I can...</p> <p>follow up on commitments made to an infant, child or young person, reporting back on progress as required.</p> <p>explain my role and what I do to children and young people in an engaging way.</p>



Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>ensure that children and young people can provide feedback and have access to independent complaints procedures if they have concerns about their rights.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Skills	I can...
	<p>recognise when a child or young person might have concerns about their rights and support them to articulate their feelings.</p> <p>explain to children and young people how to give feedback if they have concerns about children's rights.</p> <p>help children and young people to challenge decisions and access complaints procedures or other forms of support and redress if they have concerns about their rights.</p>
Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>ensure that children and young people have access to advice and advocacy.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand...
	<p>that if a child or young person refuses advocacy, they should still be offered that opportunity in the future.</p>
Skills	I can...
	<p>provide children and young people with accessible information on advisory services, advocacy services or professional legal advice.</p>





Skills and knowledge required to reach Enhanced level


Members of the Children and Families Panel were involved at every stage in developing the Framework and their views informed the learning statements. The quotes in the table are their exact words and are included to demonstrate the link between practice and lived experience.

Embedding




Learning outcome	I want to...
	understand how to embed a children's human rights approach in my work. Resources to support this learning outcome.
Skills	I can... evaluate existing planning, strategies and reporting for children and young people within my organisation and articulate if these do not meet the needs of children and young people. “Ensuring children’s rights are realised currently depends on the standards of individual professionals, and that’s not right.” Children and Families Panel member
Learning outcome	I want to...
	ensure that children's rights are built into everything we do and understand the links to other policies and frameworks. Resources to support this learning outcome.
Skills	I can...
	conduct a review of all policies and related guidance to check compliance with children's rights. #Leadership




Learning outcome	<p>I want to...</p> <p>undertake Child Rights Impact Assessments and Child Rights Impact Evaluations to assess the impact of decisions on children and young people.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
	<p>I can...</p> <p>support other workers to complete Child Rights Impact Assessments and Child Rights Impact Evaluations. conduct training on completing Child Rights Impact Assessments and Child Rights Impact Evaluations and make it part of routine training programmes.</p> <p>ensure that Child Rights Impact Assessments and Child Rights Impact Evaluations are part of routine training, and embed processes that ensure that all staff access that training, where appropriate. #Leadership</p>
Learning outcome	<p>I want to...</p> <p>understand how regularly collecting and monitoring appropriate information on children and young people can help to support their rights, particularly for children and young people whose rights are at risk.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Skills	<p>I can...</p> <p>establish effective data collection systems to ensure that the data collected is evaluated and used to assess progress, identify problems, and inform policy development for children and young people.</p> <p>work with other organisations to ensure that data collection approaches are consistent, to allow comparisons to be made and analysis undertaken.</p> <p>ensure that available information about children and young people is disaggregated in useful ways that consider different groups of children and young people, particularly those whose rights are at risk.</p>



Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>understand how child rights budgeting can support children's rights, particularly for children and young people whose rights are at risk.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand...
	<p>that budgets can be systematically planned, enacted, implemented and evaluated in a manner that supports the realisation of children's rights.</p> <p>that when resources are limited, efforts should be made to reduce the impact of this on children and young people, especially children and young people whose rights are at risk.</p>
Skills	I can...
	<p>review existing or create new mechanisms to consult regularly with children and young people about budgetary decisions throughout the budget year.</p> <p>assess how consideration of children's rights has influenced budget decisions, particularly in relation to children and young people whose rights are at risk.</p> <p>make visible the parts of budgets that affect children and young people in different groups. #Leadership</p> <p>conduct audits, evaluations, and studies of the impact on children and young people of budget allocations and expenditures. #Leadership</p>



Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>be aware of the most appropriate learning and training so I can develop my skills and knowledge to take a children's human rights approach.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand...
	<p>how to design learning, training, and continual professional development with children's rights as its focus.</p>
Skills	I can...
	<p>engage colleagues and departments who are not in child facing roles and support them to understand the links in their work to children's rights.</p> <p>support workers to interact with children and young people in a manner that respects their rights and their dignity.</p> <p>conduct initial and ongoing evaluation of levels of staff skills, knowledge and understanding of children's rights.</p> <p>ensure that children's rights are integrated into continuing professional development. #Leadership</p> <p>ensure that children's rights are reflected in professional training curricula, codes of conduct and educational curricula at all levels. #Leadership</p>




Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>understand the role and functions of the Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland and the Scottish Human Rights Commission.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Skills	I can...
	<p>explain to others the role of the Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland and the Scottish Human Rights Commission.</p>
Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>understand how best to promote the rights of children and young people.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Skills	I can...
	<p>develop a communication plan to share accessible information about children's rights and how to uphold them.</p> <p>identify key individuals or establish a team with responsibility to promote children's rights. #Leadership</p> <p>"I hope to use the knowledge I have learned about rights to make a brighter future for everyone." Children and Families Panel member</p>



Equality and non-discrimination



Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>learn how to support children and young people to have equal access to their rights, with a focus on those children and young people whose rights are at risk.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand...
	<p>where there might be training gaps in supporting children whose rights are at risk and where to find specialist training to cover these topics.</p>
Skills	I can...
	<p>analyse and address where children and young people's rights are at risk, evaluating improvement opportunities and investing resources as needed.</p> <p>“School extended the ‘Books at breakfast’ programme, so children can have something free to eat before starting a school day, and a calm place to read or do homework when they can’t do this at home.” Children and Families Panel member</p>



Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>recognise and challenge potential concerns about children's rights, especially those of children and young people whose rights are at risk.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Skills	I can...
	<p>support colleagues to identify and address potential concerns about their children's rights practice.</p>
Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>understand children and young people's lived experiences, including those whose rights are at risk.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Skills	I can...
	<p>seek out specialist training that focuses on different groups of children and young people whose rights are at risk.</p>



Empowerment



Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>understand children and young people's evolving capacity.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand...
	<p>different approaches to building a child or young person's capacity as they grow.</p> <p>that internal beliefs and expectations may affect a child or young person and impact their capacity to realise their rights.</p>
Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>support children and young people of all ages and backgrounds to express their views and have the chance to talk about what is important to them.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Skills	I can...
	<p>create an environment where children and young people can freely express their opinions, including those who may be unable to participate in formal consultative processes.</p> <p>ensure children and young people have opportunities to collectively develop ideas and influence decisions.</p>



Learning outcome	<p>I want to...</p>
	<p>give children and young people information about things that affect them in a way they find easy to understand.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Skills	<p>I can...</p>
	<p>support colleagues to share information in ways that are accessible to children and young people.</p>
Learning outcome	<p>I want to...</p>
	<p>support children and young people as human rights defenders, to stand up for their own rights and for the rights of other children and young people.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Skills	<p>I can...</p>
	<p>use different methods and platforms to encourage children and young people to become human rights defenders.</p> <p>ensure that resources are identified in budgets to support education and training for children and young people to become human rights defenders. #Leadership</p>



Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>be sufficiently trauma-informed to ensure my work supports children and young people who have experienced or are experiencing trauma.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand...
	<p>that if children or young people take court action and their rights are found to have been breached, they have the right to remedy and redress, and to measures to promote their recovery if required.</p>
Skills	I can...
	<p>access training to support children and young people's physical and psychological recovery, rehabilitation and reintegration.</p>



Enhanced: Empowerment


Participation



Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>support workers with their skills development to take a children's human rights approach to participation.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Knowledge	I understand...
	<p>that before anyone is involved in participation work with infants, children and young people they should pass a Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scotland disclosure check, have child protection training, plan and allow time for appropriate support to participants and be aware of all safe guarding procedures.</p> <p>how to involve children and young people in designing and delivering training using effective participation.</p>
Skills	I can...
	<p>deliver training in participation, working jointly with children and young people.</p>



Enhanced: Participation

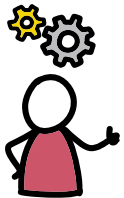
Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>ensure that children and young people whose rights are at risk can play a full and meaningful part in decisions that affect them through inclusive participation.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Skills	I can...
	<p>design participation that will specifically support infants, children and young people whose rights are at risk. carefully read signals such as body language, facial expressions, tone of voice and silences to gauge views.</p> <p>“Be aware that we might need to tell you something without using our voice.” Children and Families Panel member</p> <p>be aware of how my own body language, facial expressions and tone of voice can encourage infants, children and young people to share their views.</p>



Enhanced: Participation

Accountability



Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>ensure that accountability is built into my children's human rights approach.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Skills	I can...
	<p>raise concerns about children's rights, follow up to ensure that concerns are addressed, and give feedback to children and young people on progress and outcomes.</p> <p>initiate and develop systems of children's rights accountability, including data collection and analysis, indicators, monitoring and evaluation.</p> <p>ensure accountability to children and young people in staff supervision and performance management.</p> <p>#Leadership</p>
Learning outcome	I want to...
	<p>ensure that children and young people have access to advice and advocacy.</p> <p>Resources to support this learning outcome.</p>
Skills	I can...
	<p>support a child or young person to gain access to advice and advocacy, then continue to support them as needed.</p> <p>explain to children, young people and their families how to get legal advice, in a way they understand.</p>



Appendix A: The underpinning values



It is important to acknowledge the importance of adhering to underpinning values. When our values are activated, our emotions are engaged with our practice. Being consciously aware of our values helps us to become aware of what is important to us and what drives the decisions we make. The nature of our professional relationships, with peers as well as with children, young people and families, impacts what we set out to achieve in our work.

Everyone should have opportunities through support and supervision, coaching and mentoring, learning and development, to build a set of values suitable for their role.

The values of human dignity, kindness, empathy, trust, and love ground the Children's Rights Skills and Knowledge Framework. These serve as the foundations upon which we build our knowledge and comprehension, and on which we develop our practice. They should weave through our professional relationships and practices.

Human dignity is at the heart of the UNCRC. Every human being is important and special and has value by virtue of being born. The powerful concept of human dignity sits at the heart of our understanding of human rights, including children's rights. A commitment to the human dignity of children and young people means recognising the intrinsic value of all children and young people, protecting and promoting their rights, and providing services that ensure children and young people are healthy, happy and safe.

Appendix A: The underpinning values



Kindness means engaging with what's happening with children and young people, noticing when they need help, and responding accordingly. The Carnegie Trust talk about kindness as symbolic of [“the power of everyday relationships” \(13\)](#), they recognise that kindness is essential to wellbeing and to tackling isolation and loneliness, both of which impact on children and young people as well as older people.

Empathy is often described as being able to walk a mile in someone's shoes, in other words to be able to imagine how another person might feel. Sometimes it can feel overwhelming, but empathy has the power to open the individual to the world, to help make sense of it. Adults need to model empathic relationships, feel with the heart of a child, even when they feel challenged by the way a child or young person is presenting themselves in the moment.

Appendix A: The underpinning values



Trust means children and young people believe that they will be treated with love, kindness and understanding. It is important to understand the trust that children and young people place in adults. Children and young people must be able to trust adults to promote and protect their rights. When a child or young person needs or wants help from an adult, they need to know they can trust the adult to listen, be kind and help them with their concern.

Love gives people a greater sense of belonging, meaning and value. Children and young people need to know they are loved. The concept of love in professional relationships is viewed differently across different professional disciplines; it can be called caring, nurturing, and supporting children and young people. It requires supportive relationships with adults that are characterised by warmth, affection and connection with the child or young person.

Appendix B: References

- 1 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
<https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/ProfessionalInterest/crc.pdf>
- 2 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2024/1/contents/enacted>
- 3 Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2014/8/contents/enacted>
- 4 Glossary
<https://www.togetherscotland.org.uk/framework/glossary/>
- 5 Scottish Government non-statutory guidance on taking a children's human rights approach
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/guidance-taking-childrens-human-rights-approach/>
- 6 Introductory UNCRC materials
<https://www.togetherscotland.org.uk/framework/learning-library/introduction/>
- 7 Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland UNCRC information page
<https://www.cypcs.org.uk/rights/uncrc/>
- 8 Introduction to the UNCRC
<https://www.togetherscotland.org.uk/framework/learning-library/videos/uncrc-introduction/>
- 9 Children's rights and the UNCRC in Scotland
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vlakicbEit8>
- 10 Children's Parliament investigates a children's human rights approach
<https://investigates.childrensparliament.org.uk/a-rights-based-approach/>
- 11 How to make decisions using a children's human rights approach
<https://togetherscotland.org.uk/media/3959/making-decisions-using-a-childrens-human-rights-approach.pdf>
- 12 About the project team
<https://www.togetherscotland.org.uk/framework/learning-library/about-the-project/>
- 13 Kinder communities: The power of everyday relationships
https://d1ssu070pg2v9i.cloudfront.net/pex/pex_carnegie2021/2016/10/06153942/Kinder-Communities.pdf

Glossary

Word/Phrase	Explanation
Advocacy	Advocacy is the name given to the process of supporting children and young people to speak up, express their views and defend their rights.
Best interests	<p>Best interests, as detailed in UNCRC Article 3, mean that adults need to assess what is best for a child's wellbeing, growth and development, and then make it a primary consideration in the decision they are making about the child.</p> <p>The 'best interests' of the child, as defined by Article 3 of the UNCRC and further elaborated by the UN Committee's General Comment No. 14, is a guiding principle that requires all actions concerning children to prioritise their optimal development and wellbeing. It requires a holistic assessment of each child's unique circumstances, considering factors such as their views, identity, family environment, and needs for care and protection, ensuring that decisions are tailored to support their rights and development comprehensively.</p>
Child	Under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, this is defined as a person under 18 years of age.
Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland	<p>The Commissioner's powers are set out in the Commissioner for Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2003, as modified by the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.</p> <p>Before the 2014 Act came into force, the Commissioner could only use their power of investigation to investigate cases involving the human rights of groups of children and young people. The Act changed this to allow the Commissioner to investigate cases affecting the human rights of an individual child or young person.</p>

Child Rights Impact Assessment	A Child Rights Impact Assessment is a tool to assess how a proposed law, policy or budgetary allocation and related decisions will impact the realisation of children's rights. Scottish Government has a similar version of this called Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessments.
Child Rights Impact Evaluation	A Child Rights Impact Evaluation (CRIE) is a process that analyses and assesses how a law, policy or budgetary allocation and related decisions has impacted on the realisation of children's rights. The purpose of a CRIE is to determine whether a previously conducted CRIA sufficiently and accurately identified, understood, and addressed the potential and actual impacts on children's rights. CRIE are crucial for ensuring that CRIA are not only theoretically sound but also practically effective in improving children's experiences of their rights, and support a cycle of continuous improvement in policy and decision-making processes.
Children's rights	Children's rights are special human rights that ensure the survival, protection, and development of all children and young people under the age of 18. Enshrined in the UNCRC, these rights guarantee that every child is healthy, happy, and safe. They provide children with essentials like education and healthcare, safeguard them from harm, and ensure they can participate in decisions affecting their lives.
Children's human rights approach	A children's human rights approach is a framework for working with infants, children and young people which translates the principles of the UNCRC into practical actions, steps and solutions.

Duty bearers	<p>A duty bearer is a person (including a body of persons corporate or unincorporate) that has a duty under a law.</p> <p>Duty bearers under the UNCRC are ‘States Parties’, countries or states that have signed and ratified the Convention.</p> <p>Duty bearers under the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024 are public authorities as defined in the Act and include those carrying out public functions. While the Convention refers to responsibilities and duties of “States Parties”, such references in the UNCRC requirements in the schedule to the Act are to be read as including public authorities (which includes those carrying out public functions).</p>
Equality	<p>Equality is all people having equal opportunities and being treated fairly.</p> <p>The UK the Equality Act 2010 sets out nine ‘protected characteristics’ which are protected by this law; age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. It is unlawful to discriminate against someone (treat them less favourably) because of their protected characteristic/s. This includes direct and indirect discrimination.</p>
Human dignity	<p>A value owed to all humans, to be treated with respect.</p> <p>Every child and young person, just like every adult, has inner dignity and worth that should be valued, respected and nurtured. Respecting children’s dignity means that all children should be treated with care and respect in all circumstances, including in schools, hospitals, police stations, public spaces and children’s homes.</p>
Human Rights Act 1998	<p>This Act brings 16 rights from the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) into UK law. It ensures that these rights can be enforced in UK courts.</p> <p>It makes it unlawful for public bodies to act in a way that is incompatible with a ECHR right.</p>

Human Rights Defender	People who, individually or with others, act to promote or protect human rights in a peaceful manner.
Implementation	<p>The process by which countries give effect to the rules and regulations in a treaty that they have ratified, or agreed to adopt and abide by. To make international treaty rights real, countries must take action on a national level, and this is called implementation of treaty rights. The UN treaty bodies often say that incorporation is the first step toward implementation.</p> <p>Implementation can also include making changes to how existing laws and administrative and legal processes work, to ensure they uphold the rights given to people by the international treaty.</p>
Incorporation	Incorporation is a way of putting international human rights law into the domestic law of a country.
Non-discrimination	<p>All children and young people should feel healthy, happy and safe, no matter who they are, where they live, what they look like, or what their lives are like.</p> <p>Non-discrimination is set out in Article 2 of the UNCRC. Every child and young person should be treated fairly and protected from discrimination, irrespective of their (or their parent's or carer's) race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth, or other status. Non-discrimination doesn't mean being treated identically; some children and young people need more support than others to overcome barriers and difficulties.</p>

Public authority in the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024

“Public authorities” in the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024 covers both “core” public authorities and “hybrid” public authorities. It also includes the Scottish Ministers, a court or tribunal and any person certain of whose functions are functions of a public nature.

“Core” public authorities carry out functions that are clearly of a public nature (such as social care, housing, health, and education, all of which are publicly funded). For these authorities there is no need to distinguish between private and public functions, as all of their functions are considered to be of a public nature. Many of these are also Listed Authorities under section 19 of the Act, such as local authorities, government departments, the police and health authorities.

“Hybrid” public authorities are those that carry out a mixture of public and private functions. This may include bodies from the private, voluntary and independent sector. They will only fall within the scope of the Act in relation to their functions that are of a public nature. “Hybrid” public authorities who carry out a mixture of public and private functions will need to assess when and how the duty applies to their functions.

For the purposes of subsection (5)(a)(iii) of the UNCRC Act, “functions of a public nature” includes, in particular, functions carried out under a contract or other arrangement with a public authority. It will ultimately be for the court to determine whether or not a function is ‘public’.

Please note that the definition of ‘public authority’ per the Act itself may potentially be subject to consideration by the courts over time, and that developing jurisprudence (i.e. case law) may mean this supportive information about the definition may need to be adjusted in line with that.

<p>Respect, protect and fulfil</p>	<p>International human rights law says that when States become parties to international treaties, such as the UNCRC, they take on obligations and duties to respect, protect and fulfil human rights.</p> <p>The obligation to respect means that States must not restrict or reduce human rights.</p> <p>The obligation to protect means that States must protect individuals and groups against human rights abuses.</p> <p>The obligation to fulfil means that States must take positive action to ensure that rights-holders can enjoy their human rights.</p>
<p>Rights at risk</p>	<p>Those with rights at risk refers to groups of people (in this case particularly children and young people) that have experiences, circumstances, identities and beliefs that mean there may be an increased likelihood of their rights not being fulfilled.</p> <p>Children and young people whose rights are at risk could include migrant, refugee and asylum seeking children and young people; neurodivergent children and young people; children and young people experiencing poverty; care experienced children and young people; disabled children and young people; children and young people affected by parental imprisonment, children and young people in conflict with the law; children and young people receiving hospital treatment or long term care; young carers; children and young people affected by homelessness; infants; children and young people affected by substance misuse; armed forces families; and many other groups. This is a not an exhaustive list, and it is important to remember that children and young people have intersectional identities and experiences.</p>
<p>Rights-holders</p>	<p>Every child under the age of 18 is a rights-holder under the UNCRC. This means they have specific rights and protections in the UNCRC which public authorities have to respect, protect, and fulfil.</p>
<p>Scottish Human Rights Commission (SHRC)</p>	<p>SHRC is an independent public body with a general duty to promote awareness, understanding and respect for all human rights in Scotland.</p>

Treaty	A treaty is an agreement between two or more countries to solve an issue that affects the parties signing the treaty.
UN Committee	The Committee on the Rights of the Child, often referred to as just ‘the UN Committee’, is the body of 18 independent experts that monitors implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child by states parties. It also monitors implementation of the Optional Protocols to the Convention, on involvement of children in armed conflict and on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and considers complaints made by children under the Optional Protocol on a communications procedure.
United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)	The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is an important document that lists all the different rights that children and young people have. The rights are called articles. The UNCRC includes 54 articles, each outlining specific commitments and provisions. 42 are recognised as ‘substantive rights’ – specific rights that children and young people are entitled to, covering aspects such as health, education, and protection from harm. The remaining 12 articles relate to other aspects of the UNCRC’s implementation, such as guidelines for reporting and interpretation, making them procedural rather than substantive in nature.
UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024	The UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024 is legislation that incorporates the UNCRC into Scots law.
Values	Principles or ideals that someone holds which guide their decisions, actions and beliefs. “Values are principles, fundamental convictions, ideals, standards or life stances which act as general guides to behaviour or as points of reference in decision making or the evaluation of beliefs or actions and which are closely connected to personal integrity and personal identity.” J.M. Halstead (1996) ‘Values and Values Education in Schools’, p.5.

Development team



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The Observatory on Human Rights of Children based at Swansea University supports implementation of children's rights through research. It works with civil society and government to develop and put into practice ways of giving effect to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child through law and policy, providing information on children's rights, and supporting child rights advocacy. It is an interdisciplinary project with partners in academia and practice in the UK, Europe and globally.

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Explore the <https://www.togetherscotland.org.uk/framework/> website to find:

- A Training Plan in PDF format
- A Learning Library of children's rights resources

This is a Scottish Government-funded project. This document, and the linked resources within it have not been produced by the Scottish Government and so the Scottish Government cannot guarantee their quality or accuracy. Nothing in this document and in its linked resources is intended to constitute legal advice. Readers should seek their own independent legal advice with respect to any legal matter.

