



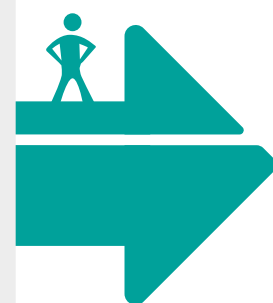
Under International law the UNCRC recognises that every child and young person should grow up in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding. When your rights are respected, it can help provide an environment where that is possible.



(CCYP/2018/2) laid before the Scottish Parliament by the Commissioner for Children and Young People in Scotland in pursuance of Section 10 (1) of the Commissioner for Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2003 on 31/10/2018.

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## THE COMMISSIONER

**The Commissioner** is someone with authority and powers to promote and protect the rights of all children and young people in Scotland. That is:

- everyone under 18, and
- everyone under 21 who is in care or care experienced.

Children and young people do not have the same economic or political power as adults, so the Commissioner's role exists to champion their rights. It was created by a law passed by the Scottish Parliament in 2003, in line with principles set out by the United Nations. This law says that the Commissioner must:

- make sure that children, young people and adults know about children's human rights, and make sure they understand them.
- make sure that people in power respect, protect and fulfil children's human rights.
- make suggestions relevant to children's human rights to improve policies, the law, and the way that people work.
- find examples of where adults work well with children and young people and share them with others who can learn from this.
- carry out research into children and young people's lives and let adults know when the rights of children and young people are not being respected.
- make sure adults listen to what children and young people have to say when decisions are being made that affect their lives.

In May 2017, **Bruce Adamson** took on the role for a six-year term. He is the third Commissioner since 2003.

This report is the story of what our office did in Bruce's first year. When he became Commissioner, he wanted to do things differently—and he wanted the children and young people whose rights he champions to be involved in any changes our office made. To make sure this happened, we set off around Scotland, meeting children and young people and their families. When we did, we learned more about the journey our office should take over the coming years.

This is our journey.



We travelled around Scotland, and children and young people told us the Commissioner should be:



**ENSURING ALL CHILDREN KNOW THEIR RIGHTS**



**BEING A CHAMPION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE**

**VISITING CHILDREN REGULARLY**

**HELPING TO PUT THE UNCRC INTO SCOTS LAW**



**MAKING A DIFFERENCE**



**ENSURING SCOT GOV AND COUNCILS CONSIDER UNCRC IN EVERYTHING**

**CHALLENGING THE GOVERNMENT**

**STANDING UP FOR CHILDREN'S RIGHTS**

**GO**

## INTRODUCTION

Being the Children and Young People's Commissioner for Scotland is the best job in the world. While I was appointed by the Queen, in line with an Act of the Scottish Parliament, I take my mandate from **over a million children and young people** in Scotland.



This year I travelled across Scotland to meet children and young people in their communities— to ask what they wanted from their Commissioner. Not just what issues my office should focus on, but how I should spend my budget, how I should spend my time, and how I should act. I travelled all around Scotland, including to our rural communities and islands. I met children and young people of different ages, with a rich variety of experiences and views and I paid particular attention to children and young people **whose rights are most at risk**. What they said helped me and my office to create a **revised version of our strategic plan**, which sets out our aims for 2018 through 2020.

Some of the highlights of the year were events which brought children and young people together. I was privileged to attend sittings of the Scottish Youth Parliament and the Children's Parliament. I camped under the stars with **care experienced young people** at the Who Cares? Scotland Summer Camp. I also co-hosted the inaugural Young People's Human Rights Gathering in Linlithgow, West Lothian organised by my **Young Advisers**.

IN 2017, WE TRAVELLED AROUND SCOTLAND SO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE COULD TELL US WHAT OUR OFFICE SHOULD DO AND BE. THIS IS SOME OF WHAT THEY SAID."



The Commissioner spoke at the Growing up in Orkney Conference.

These events created spaces for young people to be themselves, to tell their stories, and to become part of a movement for change to make Scotland better for all children and young people.

Children and young people want their Commissioner to **be compassionate, friendly, understanding and accessible** to them. But they also want a **fierce champion** who will stand up for their rights – in places of power – wearing the suit, using legal language and accessing adult mechanisms of power on their behalf. In Shetland they told me to be “savage” in holding those in power to account. You will read more about our important journey to revise our strategic plan within this report.

Children and young people shared their worries about their own **mental health** and the mental health of friends and family, their negative experiences of accessing justice, times in which they had been treated unfairly or discriminated against, and their experiences of poverty.

**Poverty** is the single biggest human rights issue facing children in Scotland today. Much of it is hidden, especially in our rural and island communities, but it impacts on every area of children’s lives: their rights to education, to the best possible mental health, to rest and leisure, and to socialise and meet friends. We shouldn’t have families choosing between heating and eating. I’ve heard first-hand about children having to go to school in unclean clothes as there is no electricity, or no washing powder. I’ve heard about the pain and embarrassment of not being able to join classmates on the school trip as the price is simply out of a family’s reach. I’ve heard children – in Scotland – talk about going hungry.

I’ve written about holiday hunger – when the lack of free school meals outside term time means families can’t afford to meet their children’s basic needs – and I’ve spoken out in the media about the severity of the problem. Inherently connected to this is food insecurity: **access to food is a basic human right**. We have been working both in Scotland and with partners in the UK on collecting data on this issue so that we can press for change.

Budget considerations cannot be excuses for human rights violations, and Article 4 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) needs to be at the forefront of the minds of all decision makers. As it makes clear, Governments should use the maximum extent of their available resources to make sure children’s rights are respected, protected and fulfilled. Particularly at a time when children and young people are worried about the wider world – including the implications of Brexit – **children’s rights should come first, not last**.

Children and young people told me that I should work **'to make laws fair'** for them. When I took office in May 2017, Scotland still allowed the **assault of children** for the purpose of punishment. We still had an **age of criminal responsibility** of 8 – which has been declared untenable in international law – and we still had not **incorporated the UNCRC** into domestic law. Unfortunately, all of these things remain true, despite some moves towards remedying them. My office will continue to advocate for changes to law that are necessary.

In order to deliver our new strategy, I have made adjustments within my office – including reorganising our teams – with the aim of ensuring that the **involvement of children and young people** is at the heart of all of our work. I have increased the **legal expertise** within the office to ensure we are better able to hold those in power to account.

During the year I worked closely with **civil society partners**. Scotland has a rich and vibrant civil society and a big part of my role is to support them in their work with and for children and young people. I was encouraged throughout the year by the increasing attention that public bodies are giving to the rights of children and young people. It has been a huge pleasure to work with fellow Commissioners from other parts of the UK and Ireland, and with Children's Commissioners and Ombudspersons in Europe.

It is important that Scotland connects to the **global human rights community** through its networks and directly to the United Nations and the Council of Europe. My office will play an effective bridging role with the international human rights framework.

My last words in this report must be to the children and young people of Scotland. Thank you to everyone who has shared their ideas, time and experience with us. I hope to meet and talk – virtually or in person – with many more of you next year. I will continue to work on your behalf, as your Commissioner, standing as a fierce champion of your rights.

**Bruce Adamson**  
**Children and Young People's Commissioner**

There are a million children and young people in Scotland, and it is our job to stand up for all their rights.

But it is easier to consult some of them than others, so certain groups are less likely to get a say when organisations talk to children and young people.

That might be because they live in a remote area – like children who live in Na h-Eileanan Siar – or because there are barriers in the way to them communicating with adults— like for young people in secure accommodation.

For our Strategic Plan consultation, we tried to talk to young people from some of these groups, who were less likely to be listened to by adults. We wanted to give them the chance to shape the future of their Commissioner, so that this was not a process that they would feel excluded from.

## YOUNG ADVISERS

We asked 11 amazing young people from across Scotland to help us create and promote our revised strategic plan.

They gave us advice about how we should communicate our work to children and young people, and planned and hosted our **Young People's Human Rights Gathering** in November.

And at the end of March they helped lay our revised plan before the Scottish Parliament.



## YOUNG PEOPLE'S HUMAN RIGHTS GATHERING

On the weekend around Universal Children's Day on 20 November 2017, we hosted our first **Young People's Human Rights Gathering**. The three-day residential was an opportunity to meet with over 60 young people from across Scotland, who discussed what we had found in our earlier workshops with children and young people, talked about how they thought our office should work and shared the human rights issues they were most concerned about.

Engaging with children and young people was a key part of revising our strategic plan. It was also a way for us to hear and understand their concerns directly, and to listen to what they felt needed to change so that their human rights were respected. We found this an incredibly valuable experience and the young people told us how empowering and energising it was for them.

They told us that they thought we should hold an event like the Gathering every year, where we could report back to young people about what we are doing and find out from them how we could improve. That is something we have committed to, and we are in the process of organising our Gathering for 2018, which will be held in Inverness.



## A NEW FUNCTION: ADVICE AND INVESTIGATIONS

When we travelled around Scotland to hear children and young people's views about what they want from their Commissioner, they told us they want him to use his legal powers to make sure that they are treated fairly.

Our Advice and Investigations team was set up in 2017. This team uses the Commissioner's powers to make a difference to how children's rights are respected in Scotland by:

- **investigating** issues affecting children's rights.
- **taking action** when children's rights are breached, including through strategic litigation.
- **providing rights-based advice** and support for children and young people.

## ADVICE

Children, young people and adults can contact our office for advice on children's human rights or on how to deal with a rights-related problem.

In 2017/18, 370 people contacted us asking for advice and information on a wide range of subjects, often including issues about:

- family contact
- education and schools
- Additional Support Needs
- restraint
- children's views in decision making
- mental health
- bullying

We have a freephone number for children and young people, but most of the calls and emails we receive are from adults. We would like more children and young people to contact us, and we plan to do some work on this next year by asking children and young people what we can do to be more accessible to them.

A lot of the enquiries we get are from people who want to complain about service providers like schools, social work or local authorities. There is information on our website to help people understand how to do this. We also want to look at ways to make it easier for children to complain when they're not happy with something, and for public bodies to support them when they do.





**We were contacted about a young person who was unhappy with his residential placement. He wanted to live in a family again but was told that because he was close to the age where he would be able to leave care if he wanted to, social work were not actively trying to find a foster placement for him. We wrote to the local authority on his behalf, reminding them of his rights and their duties as a Corporate Parent to uphold those rights, asking them to make every effort to find him a foster placement. We are keeping in touch to see how things are going.**

This young person's rights under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child include:

- Article 3 – the right to have his best interests treated as a primary consideration when the local authority are making decisions about his life.
- Article 12 – the right to have his views heard and taken into account when decisions are made about him.
- Article 20 – the right to special protection and assistance from the state, as he is a young person deprived of his family environment.

This enquiry is a good example of how supporting a parent can be an important part of upholding a child's rights.

As well as children's UNCRC Article 3 rights to have their best interests made a primary consideration when decisions are taken about them and their Article 12 rights to express their views and have those views given 'due weight' in decision-making, other rights that are important here include:

Article 19 – the right to protection from "all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse whilst in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has care of the child." This Article also goes on to say that protective measures should include "the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have care of the child...and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement."

Article 27 - the right to a standard of living adequate for the child's "physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development."

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child also reinforces a child rights-based approach in their call to recognise children as individuals with rights, rather than as victims, which is made in General Comment No 13 on the Right of the Child to Freedom from all Forms of Violence.

General Comment No 13 also calls for respect for the child's Article 12 right to be heard in all decision-making processes, with their "empowerment and participation" being "central to child care-giving and protection strategies and programmes".

Similarly, General Comment No 12 on "The Right of the Child to be Heard" links the importance of children's awareness of Article 12 rights to be heard with their right to "grow up free from all forms of physical and psychological violence."



**We received a call from a parent who had escaped from an abusive relationship along with her two young children. She was having difficulty finding support for the children and for herself. We put her in touch with an advocacy service for her oldest child, and she later called back to say that it had made a real difference to his ability to express his wishes. Accessing better support had improved his mental health, and his mother was also able to get help from a number of the services we recommended.**

## STRATEGIC LITIGATION

In legal cases, there are times when the impact of what a court decides goes beyond just the people directly involved. A court's decision may establish an important point of law and principle, affecting the rights of children and young people who aren't involved in the case.

In 2018, we established a strategic litigation team to take on legal challenges, which we believe will bring about wider changes in law and policy and help improve the lives of children and young people.

In these cases, the Commissioner may ask the court's permission to intervene (become involved). He doesn't take sides or represent anyone. Instead, he can bring rights issues to the court's attention and by doing so, help the judge make a good decision.

This is the first time the Children and Young People's Commissioner in Scotland has intervened in a case since our office was set up in 2004, but we hope it will be the first of many. Strategic litigation is an important way the Commissioner can protect children's human rights, and we intend to continue to use these powers. We are working with children's organisations and lawyers to identify more cases where the Commissioner could effectively intervene.

**In January 2018, the Commissioner asked the Court of Session for permission to intervene in a case involving the rights of children whose parents were not allowed to receive benefits because of their immigration status.**

**When children are at risk of destitution or homelessness, they have the right to have their needs assessed by the local authority. They also have the rights to have their privacy and family life respected, and to be protected from inhuman or degrading treatment (Articles 3 and 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights).**

**Governments should help families who cannot afford to provide an adequate standard of living for their children, providing the help they need to keep their children safe and healthy (Articles 26 and 27 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child).**

**The Court agreed that the Commissioner was raising important points about children's rights and the duties local authorities have towards children, deciding he should be allowed to intervene. Following the Commissioner's intervention, the case was resolved out of court.**

**We are now developing a resource to support children and families who find themselves in this position.**

As part of the Year of Young People celebrations, the Commissioner spoke at the Dumfries and Galloway Youth conference—about the importance of having young people involved in decision making at all levels in matters that affect them.

**LOCKERBIE ACADEMY, LOCKERBIE**



## INVESTIGATION: RESTRAINT AND SECLUSION

In March 2018, we used the Commissioner's legal powers to launch our first investigation, into the use of **restraint** and **seclusion** in schools.

**Restraint** is when a child or young person is held to stop them from moving.

**Seclusion** is shutting a child alone in a space and not allowing them to leave.

Although parents have made complaints, children continue to be distressed and sometimes injured when restrained or secluded at school. Children's rights to be kept safe from violence and injury, to be treated with dignity and not to be wrongly deprived of their liberty are too often overlooked.

In their last 'report card' on how well the UK is respecting children's rights, the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child said that they were concerned about the use of restraint and seclusion on children with Additional Support Needs in schools. They said restraint should only be used as a last resort, only to prevent harm, and never to discipline children.

The Committee also recommended that information should be gathered and made public on the use of restraint and seclusion in educational and other settings to see whether it is being used safely, appropriately and legally.

We used the Commissioner's legal powers to ensure all 32 local authorities sent us their policies and procedures and answered questions about how many children are restrained or secluded at school, how often children are restrained or secluded at school and who records and monitors this information.

We also ran a series of workshops with children and young people to explore their views about this issue. We will publish a report in late 2018 making recommendations for change and improvement.

Children's rights to be protected – from harm, from cruel or degrading treatment, from deprivation of liberty and from discrimination – and their rights to education, equality, dignity and physical integrity are protected in international treaties:

- The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- The European Convention on Human Rights
- The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
- The Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
- The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women



# ISSUES

**Scotland has human rights obligations to children and young people, but some of them still aren't being met by the UK and Scottish Governments. This section covers some of the key issues currently affecting children and young people's human rights, and the work we did in 2017/18 to help bring about change.**

## FOOD INSECURITY AND POVERTY

Access to food is a basic human right, enshrined in Article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). Food should be available and accessible for everyone in a way that meets their nutritional needs.

If this human right is not met for children and young people, it means that their right under Article 24 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) to the best physical and mental health possible is also unlikely to be met. Rising child poverty means more children and young people are not able to access food, so is inherently linked to the realisation of these rights.

The UN has raised concerns around how the UK addresses the right to food. It has noted that we lack data as to how many children and young people are going hungry, and that children haven't been included in discussions that affect their right to food, as is their right under Article 12 of the UNCRC.

This year, we have taken steps to tackle this. We have used the views of children around access to food to inform our evidence to the Child Poverty (Scotland) Bill, and we took a leading role in the Children's Future Food Inquiry which aims to evidence the severity of food poverty in the whole UK.

We have repeatedly and publicly highlighted how serious an issue food poverty is in Scotland. In the summer, we blogged about holiday hunger, where some children who get free school meals return from their holidays in worse physical and mental condition than when they left. The Commissioner has called for schools to open their kitchens during the summer holidays, so children without other access to nutritious food would still be able to get it.

Children and Young People's Com...  
@CYPCS

We're involved with the Children's Future Food Inquiry, who are now on Twitter: they should be tweeting soon from @CFFInquiry.

Learn about the Inquiry's remit to find out how UK children experience #FoodInsecurity: [foodfoundation.org.uk/childrens-futu...](http://foodfoundation.org.uk/childrens-futu...)



9:27 am - 26 Mar 2018

In November, we joined the UK's other Children's Commissioners in calling for the UK Government's benefit changes affecting children to be reversed, and we have continually criticised UK-level changes to the welfare system that have failed to protect those children most at risk from poverty. UNCRC Article 27 gives children the right to a standard of living adequate for their physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development, and if their parents are unable to provide them with this, they have the right under Article 26 to access to social security to realise their rights.

In Scotland, we called on devolved government to prioritise investment in healthy meals at school, and to look at the potential for providing healthy meals as part of school holiday programmes. There needs to be regular monitoring to assess the effectiveness of programmes on children's access to nutritious food— including school meal programmes, food banks and programmes for infants and children.

Through our work with the Children's Future Food Inquiry, we will demonstrate how many children and young people are having their right to food violated. This will enable us to hold those in power to account and ensure they work with children and young people to identify solutions.

This Forum prepared young people from across Europe – including two who we worked with from Scotland – to present at the 2017 ENOC Conference on Exploring and Empowering Youth Identity and Relationships.

**ENYA FORUM, PARIS**



**“**  
I urge anyone who has the  
ambition to go out and do  
something like this to do  
so: truly, **it has changed**  
**my outlook on life.**

Jack  
Young Participant in ENYA 2017

## CARE EXPERIENCE

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) starts from a basis that all children should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding. Article 20 provides that care experienced children and young people are entitled to special protection and assistance, as a family environment is not something they have access to.

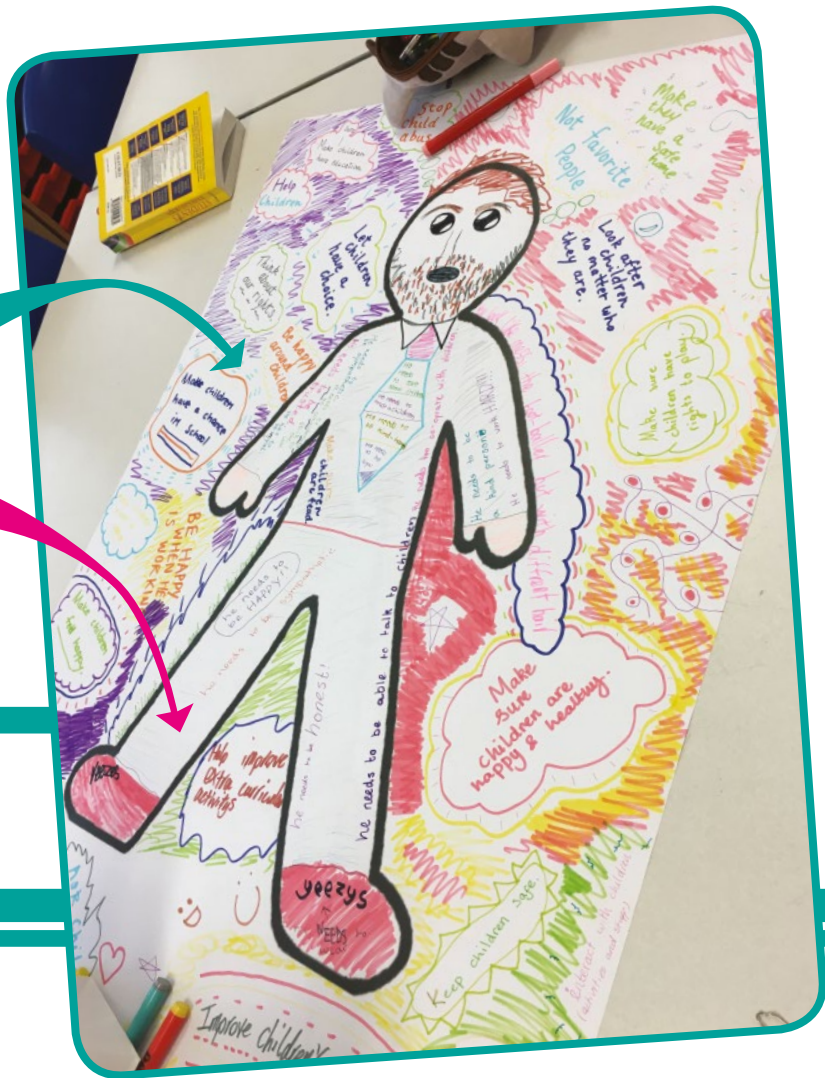
The Commissioner has a duty to protect the rights of all children and young people with care experience in Scotland, up to the age of 21. But there are a number of other people and organisations in Scotland who are **corporate parents**. They all have a duty to provide those with care experience with the best possible support and care.

In 2017/18, we continued to facilitate our Corporate Parents Collaboration Group to help them exchange views, highlight good practice and identify ways in which they can work together.



What the Commissioner should do on the outside

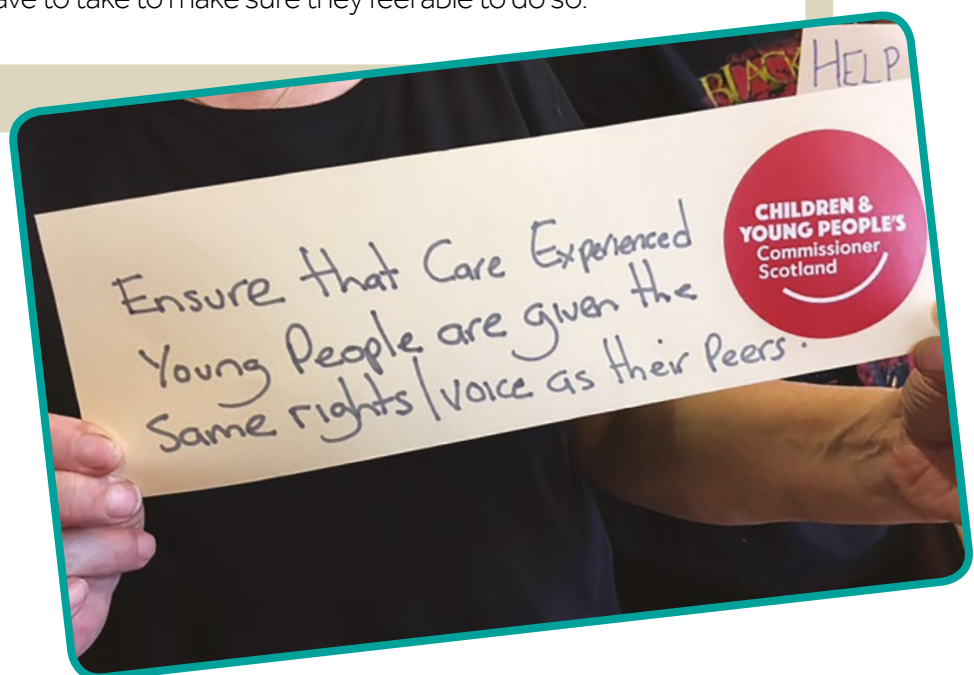
What the Commissioner should be like on the inside

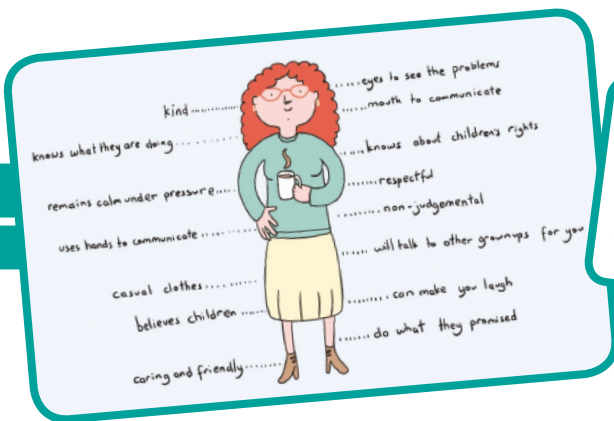


To help corporate parents meet their Article 12 duty to hear the views of young people when making decisions about them, the group hears directly from young people with care experience and makes sure their views are taken into account. Through this group, we are able to hold corporate parents to account, and to make sure they respect the rights of the people we represent.

We met with children and young people with care experience to hear what they have to say through events like our Young People's Human Rights Gathering and the Who Cares? Summer Camp. We met a large group of young people with care experience on Care Day to run a workshop on human rights and to listen directly to their views and concerns.

We will continue to work closely with care experienced children and young people, as well as organisations who advocate for them. We will be especially interested in how being care experienced affects a child or young person's ability to protect or promote human rights, and in the steps that adults might have to take to make sure they feel able to do so.





**SUPER LISTENER**  
 Children involved in Power Up/Power Down told us what qualities a super listener should have. This is the person who they all came up with.

## DOMESTIC ABUSE

Domestic abuse is a pattern of behaviour by a partner or ex-partner. Sometimes called coercive control, it involves behaviour that is controlling, coercive, threatening, degrading and/or violent. It includes sexual violence, but might also involve controlling how often someone can go out, how much money they can spend, or if they can contact their friends or family. It doesn't always involve physical violence— but it always harms children whose lives are affected by it, even if they aren't aware of the abuse.

Domestic abuse impacts on children's human rights laid out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). These include the right to life, survival and development (Article 6), to privacy and family life (Article 16), and to protection from harm. Controlling behaviour can impact on many more rights, such as the right to an education (Article 28), the right to an adequate standard of living (Article 27) and the right to rest, leisure, play and recreation (Article 31).

Children's right to have their views taken into account when decisions are made by the courts about them is enshrined in Article 12 of the UNCRC, but our previous research showed that this often doesn't happen. In 2017, we completed work on Power Up/Power Down, a partnership project with Scottish Women's Aid. This explored how children with experience of domestic abuse felt about the court process. The children involved with the project gave us lots of good ideas about how courts could help children understand what was happening and listen to what they had to say. We helped children present their ideas to the government, which included them meeting with the First Minister.

The children designed a Super Listener as part of the project. They felt it was important that all adults working with children know what makes a trusted adult a Super Listener, and we produced this image as postcards and posters to disseminate their ideas to those adults.

In 2017, the Scottish Government published a draft Domestic Abuse Bill to make the pattern of behaviour sometimes called coercive control a crime. We thought this was important as it would help keep children safe, but the first draft of the Bill did not include children at all. We highlighted our previous research and worked with partners in the women's and children's sectors to make sure the harm domestic abuse does to children was recognised by the law. We also worked to make sure the law put protection in place for children who had experienced domestic abuse, as is their right under Article 19 of the UNCRC. When the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2017 comes into force, people whose abuse of their partner also affected children will serve longer sentences as a result.



## MOSQUITO DEVICES



The Mosquito is an acoustic device that targets children and young people indiscriminately by emitting sound at a high frequency. It causes discomfort, distress and pain.

In 2010, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe declared that the use of mosquito devices could constitute a disproportionate interference with children and young people's rights under Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), which protects the right to respect for private life—including the right to respect for physical integrity.

It may also breach their rights to:

- freedom of assembly and association
- protection from violence
- play, leisure and recreation.

The fact that these devices can – and are – targeted solely at children is discriminatory and a breach of Article 2 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). We have long campaigned for them to be banned.

In 2017, we supported young human rights defenders from the Scottish Youth Parliament to campaign against their use. Amy-Lee Fraioli – then the Chair of the Scottish Youth Parliament (SYP) – heard a mosquito device at Hamilton train station while she was travelling home and contacted us to get our support to ban them. To support their campaign, we provided the human rights-based arguments that have been made against these devices at an international level.

The Commissioner and SYP met with Scotrail to demand that they remove them from their stations and in November, they announced they would stop using them. We are still calling for Mosquito devices to be completely banned in Scotland.

Supporting young human rights defenders to challenge power and demand change is an important part of our work and we will put an even greater focus on this in the coming year.



### POLLOKSHIELDS PRIMARY, GLASGOW



We visited children in Pollokshields Primary, who told us the most important things we should do and be.

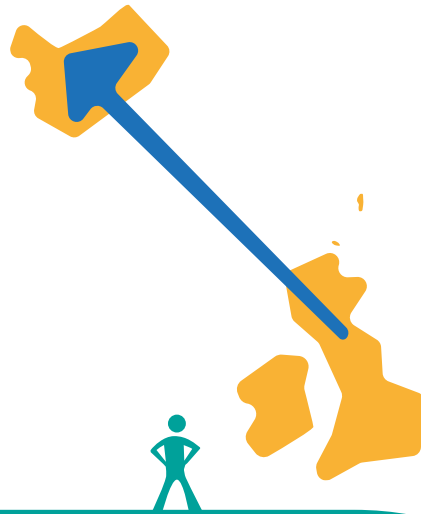




ICELAND

The Commissioner joined a study visit to Iceland to learn more about the Barnahus approach.

Barnahus is a multi-agency approach to supporting the protection, justice and health needs of child victims and witnesses.



## EQUAL PROTECTION

It is never acceptable to assault a child for the purposes of punishment. Article 19 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) gives all children the right to be protected from physical injury. Scotland is one of the few countries in Europe that still allows parents to defend assaulting their child in this way, as they can use a legal defence known as justifiable assault.

We have campaigned for a change in the law since 2004. When the current Commissioner came into office he identified this as a priority issue, and we challenged the Government on its opposition to a change in the law. The Government's position was untenable in international law.

The defence of justifiable assault has long been internationally condemned by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, as it violates multiple articles of the UNCRC and goes against established European norms. In 2017, a number of countries raised concerns about legal defences of assaulting children as part of the UN's Universal Periodic Review of the UK's record on human rights.

Green MSP John Finnie has shown leadership by bringing forward the Children (Equal Protection from Assault) (Scotland) Bill and securing cross-party support for it. The Government finally agreed to change its position in late 2017 and will now support the Bill's passage through Parliament. We look forward to this Bill becoming law and for Scotland's children to finally be protected against all forms of assault.

## MINIMUM AGE OF CRIMINAL RESPONSIBILITY (MACR)

Scotland is the only country in Europe where an eight-year-old can be treated as a criminal. We have consistently called on the Scottish Government for a higher age of criminal responsibility, and when the Commissioner came into post he was clear that this was a priority issue for the office.

Setting a minimum age of criminal responsibility recognises that offending behaviour in children is not solely their responsibility, but is a result of a range of factors, including childhood trauma, abuse or neglect. Evidence shows that being treated as a criminal while still a child prevents a person from moving on from offending behaviour and can increase the likelihood they continue to offend. A minimum age of criminal responsibility protects children from these negative effects but does not mean nothing happens—their behaviour can still be addressed, and they can receive the support they need through the Children's Hearing System.

In its 2017 Programme for Government, the Scottish Government announced its intention to raise the MACR from eight to 12. This is not good enough.

10 years ago, in their General Comment No 10 on Children's Rights in Juvenile Justice, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child said that 12 is the absolute minimum age of criminal responsibility that is acceptable, and that countries should raise it to a higher age, citing 14 or 16 as more appropriate starting points.

We will continue to use our human rights expertise to press for the MACR to be raised higher than 12, which would reflect Scotland's progressive commitment to children's human rights.

The minimum age of criminal responsibility should be at least 16 in Scotland.



## **ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR LEARNING**

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) gives all children the right to express their views when decisions are made about their education. In January 2018, the Education (Scotland) Act 2016 gave some children aged 12 and over the ability to make requests about additional support in schools to local authorities—and refer their case to a tribunal if they are unhappy with how their local authority responds.

Before it became law, we told Parliament that we were concerned with the Government's proposals.

Under Article 12 of the UNCRC, all children have the right to participate in decisions that affect their education. The new law restricts children in exercising their Article 12 rights by introducing age, capacity and wellbeing tests.

We argued that these tests were incompatible with the UNCRC and that they were not in line with existing Scots law on the age of legal capacity.

We argued that the definition of 'capacity' would exclude children under 12 and did not provide for a legal presumption that children aged 12 or over had sufficient maturity and understanding to exercise any of the rights. This runs counter to current law, such as the Age of Legal Capacity (Scotland) Act 1991.

We opposed the 'wellbeing' test to be applied to the exercise of children's rights and argued that there was no equivalent for adults in exercising their own rights (or their children's). Our view was that if a child has the legal capacity to exercise rights, irrespective of their rights, that child should decide whether it is in their best interests to do so. We made the point that the 'best interests' test would be an obstacle to children exercising their rights. In March 2018, we held an event with the Equalities and Human Rights Commission to raise awareness of the new rights and the problems with them. We will monitor how the new rights are working and whether children are being allowed to use them as they should be under Scots law. This law is still incompatible with children's human rights and we will continue to argue for it to be changed so it is compatible with the UNCRC and particularly Article 12.

## **KILBRANDON AGAIN**

Part of the Commissioner's job is to challenge and review law, policy and practice. That is why in 2017, the Commissioner joined with Action for Children and the University of Edinburgh to set up an Inquiry. It is examining what is going well for children and young people in the justice system, and what can be changed and improved.

The Inquiry will hear from young people and adults with experience of the hearings system, as well as from those working within it. It will report in Autumn 2018.

**KILBRANDON  
AGAIN**

How well does Scotland support  
children and young people in trouble?

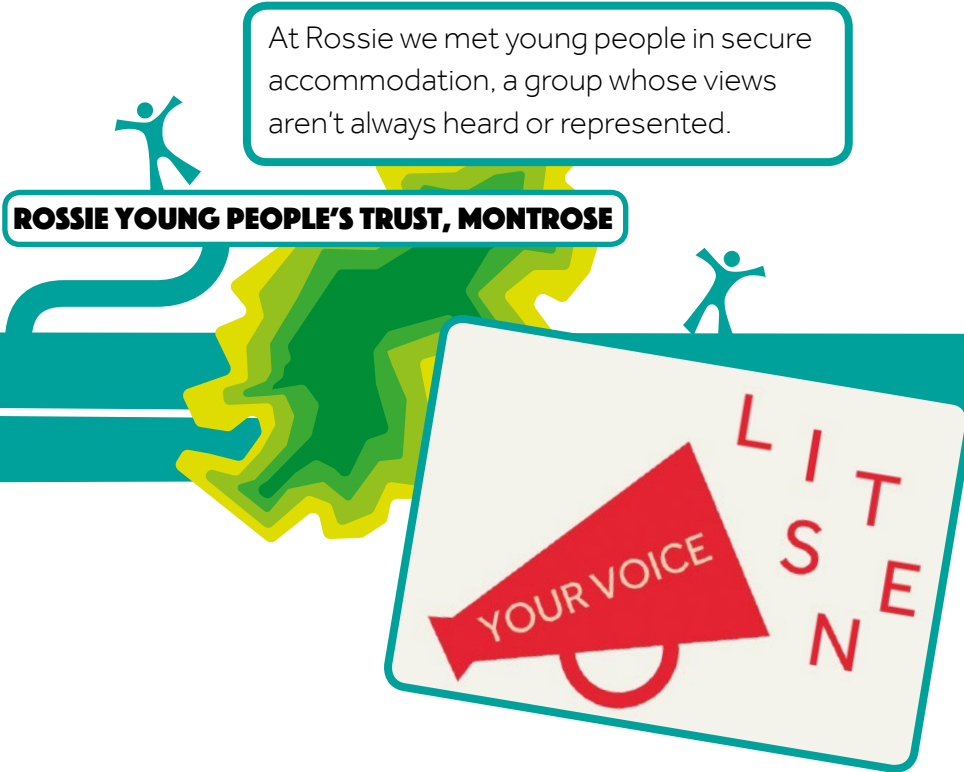
## INDEPENDENT CARE REVIEW

The Commissioner's job is to promote and safeguard the human rights of everyone under 18, or 21 if they are in care or care experienced.

As such, the rights of children in care are a priority for the office. The Independent Care Review aims to identify and deliver lasting change in the care system and leave a legacy that will transform the wellbeing of children and young people.

Since the beginning of the Care Review, we have worked closely with their team to ensure that the human rights of children and young people with care experience are at the centre of the process. We contributed to the Review's launch in May 2017 and the Commissioner has spoken at a number of events, including planning for the Journey stage of the Review which will begin to deliver improvements for all children and young people who experience care.

In the next year, the Commissioner will co-chair the Review's working group on rights with an adult with care experience where he will continue to underline the importance of rights being understood, respected and upheld by all parties involved in care.



At Rossie we met young people in secure accommodation, a group whose views aren't always heard or represented.

**ROSSIE YOUNG PEOPLE'S TRUST, MONTROSE**

## CONSULTATION RESPONSES AND EVIDENCE TO PARLIAMENT

One of the ways we protect children and young people's rights is by reviewing how new policies and legislation might affect them.

All of these publications can be found on our website.

2017

April

Response to Public Petitions Committee on petition PR1635: Review of Section 11 of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995

Consultation response: Guidance on healthcare needs in schools

MSP briefing on petition PE1548: National guidance on restraint and seclusion in schools

May

Consultation response: Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Bill (Stage 1)

MSP briefing: Child Poverty (Scotland) Bill (Stage 1)

July

Position statement: Mosquito devices

August

Response to call for evidence: Children and Young People (Information Sharing) (Scotland) Bill

Joint letter with the EHRC to John Swinney MSP: Prejudice-based bullying in schools

Consultation response: Proposed Children (Equal Protection from Assault) Bill

September

Interview with Scottish Government on the review of Part 1 of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995

Consultation response: Supporting children's learning code of practice

October

Consultation response: Evidence and procedure review

November

Consultation response: Extending children's rights

Consultation response: End Period Poverty: A proposal for a Bill to ensure free access to sanitary products

Consultation response: Proposed draft Police Act 1997/Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007 Remedial Order 2018

MSP briefing: Prejudice-based bullying debate

MSP briefing: Child Poverty (Scotland) Bill (Stage 3)

2018

January

Paper for Equality and Human Rights Committee: Opportunities for Parliamentary involvement in the Universal Periodic Review

February

Consultation response to Scottish Government: Review of the Gender Recognition Act 2004

Consultation response: Empowering schools: A consultation on provisions of the Education (Scotland) Bill

A group of care-experienced young people, YPOC share their views and experiences so that Aberdeenshire can improve the services it provides.



**YPOC ABERDEENSHIRE, INVERURIE**



**RESEARCH**

Most of our research in 2017/18 focused on our revised strategic plan. To revise our plan we consulted children, young people and adults in a few different ways, so we needed to carefully think about what conclusions we could draw from everything they said.

We asked a research consultant to do two separate analyses for us: one around the large amount of information that children and young people had told us, and one for adults' views. One of our young advisers helped evaluate the methods we were using and were actively involved in informing how our plan was produced.

We also took part in Ipsos MORI's Young People in Scotland Survey in 2017. This involved 1,780 school pupils aged 11 to 18, whose answers were adjusted by gender, year group, urban-rural classification, and classification in the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation.

The questions we asked in this survey aimed to explore awareness and views of children's rights, awareness of the Commissioner, and views on the Commissioner's work. Young people who responded said that the Commissioner should focus on 'making sure their rights are respected' and 'making sure their rights are protected.'

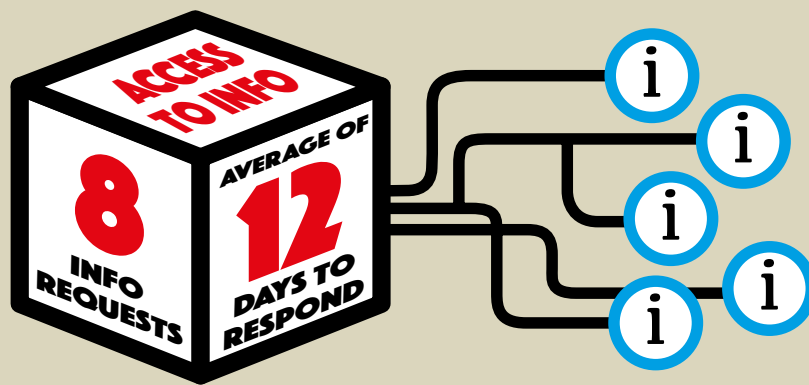
## ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Access to information is a vital right for everyone, including children and young people. It is about being aware of the decisions that are being made in your community, in your country and across the world—and making sure you have the necessary knowledge to form opinions about what you think of those decisions.

As a public body, our office is subject to laws relating to **freedom of information**, where anyone can ask to see certain information we hold.

We responded to eight freedom of information requests in 2017/18 and had no requests for environmental information or for an internal review. All of these requests were responded to within the required 20 working days, with an average response rate of 12 working days.

We are subject to **data protection law** as well as the law around freedom of information. This gives people the right to ask for and be given the personal information we hold about them unless we can give a good and lawful reason for not providing it.



Youth Ambassadors Of Change  
@ScottishFA\_YAOC

Our Youth Ambassadors with the @CYPSC staff after a successful morning of engagement and learning 👍 #trainingday



1:58 pm - 10 Sep 2017

**NATIONAL YOUTH AMBASSADORS FOR SCOTTISH FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION, GLASGOW**



## NEW STRUAN SCHOOL, ALLOA



New Struan School is a residential school for young people with autism, whose views are not always reflected in consultations organisations do.

## NEW RESOURCES

Part of our job is to raise awareness and understanding of children's human rights in a meaningful way. By knowing and understanding their rights, children and young people can demand change. It is important for adults to know and understand rights too, so that they make good decisions about laws and policies that have children's best interests at the heart.

In the past, we have produced the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in several formats to ensure that there are different ways in which this law can be understood and accessed by children and young people. This year, we returned to the actual text of the law and produced the full UNCRC in pocketbook and poster format. Making the Convention meaningful is about much more than the words contained within it, but the words do matter. They are the legal commitment the Government has made to children and young people, and the Convention can be used as a powerful advocacy tool to hold those in power to account. The pocketbook is being used by people from all parts of Scotland, and a Gaelic version is planned for next year.

We also expanded our popular UNCRC symbols supported resource which uses symbols and words to explain rights. A new poster which details all the rights and corresponding symbols has been added to the suite of resources that can be of particular use in working with younger children, those who are non-verbal, those who have speech and language challenges – such as not having English as a first language – or those who have Additional Support Needs.



## SCOTLAND: WITHIN THE UK

To promote and protect the rights of Scotland's children and young people, our office often works with organisations, elected representatives and Children's Commissioners from across the United Kingdom. In this way, we look to influence issues that affect children and young people in all four countries of the UK.

There is power in collective voices. As BINOCC – the British and Irish Network of Children's Commissioners – the Commissioners of the UK and Ireland work together when there are rights issues that cut across all our jurisdictions. Our offices share learning, discuss issues of mutual concern

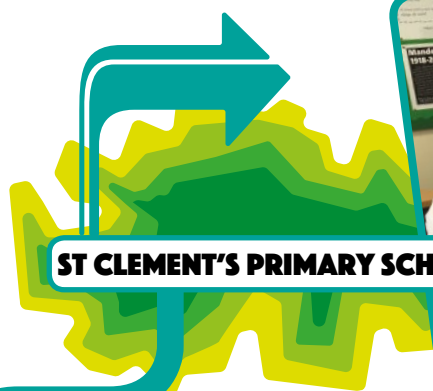
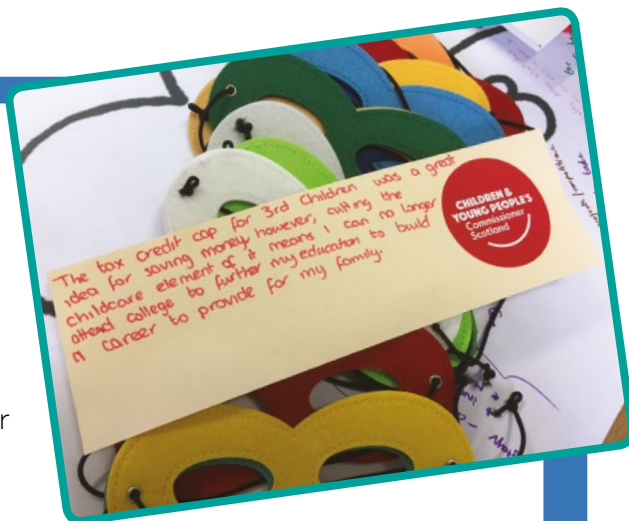


and identify where we can best collaborate. This year our new Advice and Investigations team has benefited from the Network, as it has allowed them to study the experiences of similar teams in other offices.

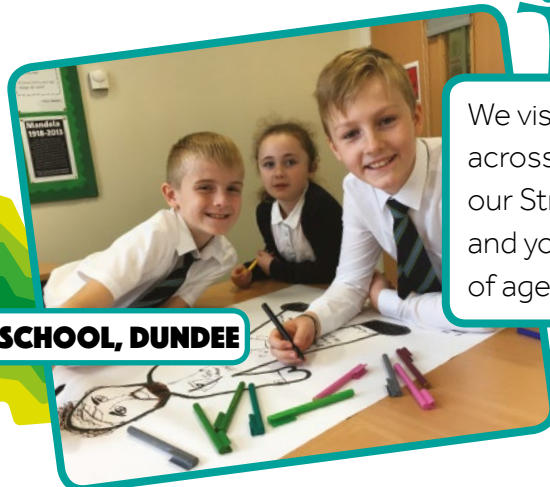
In November 2017, the Children's Commissioners of England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales collectively called on the UK Chancellor of the Exchequer to reverse changes to the benefits system that were predicted to negatively affect children more than any other group.

Brexit continued to be a huge issue for children and young people throughout the UK in 2017/18, and children and young people raised this as a major concern at our Human Rights Gathering in November. Working with civil society in Scotland, we met MPs to discuss the implications of Brexit on children's rights—and were clear that children and young people must be involved in discussions around what leaving the European Union will mean for them.

Over the next year, we will continue to work with the UK's Commissioners as issues arise that affect children across the whole of the United Kingdom.



**ST CLEMENT'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, DUNDEE**



We visited schools and communities across the country to gather views on our Strategic Plan—meeting children and young people across a wide range of ages.



**"WE URGE YOU TO TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY OF THIS BUDGET TO PROVIDE A BRIGHTER FUTURE FOR OUR CHILDREN"**

UK Commissioners, letter to UK Chancellor



## SCOTLAND WITHIN: EUROPE

In March 2018, we organised a formal study visit to the Council of Europe in Strasbourg and met with a range of people including Nils Muižnieks – then the Commissioner for Human Rights – Regína Jensdóttir, the Council of Europe’s Coordinator on the Rights of the Child, and Judge Tim Eicke of the European Court of Human Rights. We wanted to learn more about the Council of Europe and for the institution to learn more about us, so we improve our links between its work and the children and young people who we represent.

In partnership with the Children’s Parliament, we supported the involvement of two of their members who had been chosen for the children’s advisory board for the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child Day of General Discussion, to be held in Geneva in September 2018. As part of this arrangement, we prepared them for an initial meeting in Geneva in March 2018 and accompanied them to provide continued support at the event.

We are a part of the European Network of Ombudsmen for Children (ENOC), a network of 42 independent children’s rights institutions within the Council of Europe. This network shares practice, issues statements to influence key decision makers in Europe and holds a conference every year to address an important issue concerning children and young people’s rights.

Each year, young people can influence the ENOC annual conference as part of ENYA, the European Network of Young Advisers. This brings together young people from across Europe to make key recommendations on the conference’s topic, which ENOC members then receive at the conference itself. In 2017, we supported young people from Scotland to go to Paris to share their views around youth identity and relationships, so that these could be expressed at the ENOC conference that year in Helsinki.

We have created a new position of Legal Officer with an international portfolio to strengthen our links and influence with institutions like the Council of Europe, so that our office can form a bridge between Scotland and the wider world of human rights.

## SCOTLAND WITHIN: THE WORLD

As a National Human Rights Institution, a key part of our role is to monitor the international legal instruments Scotland and the UK have signed up to and hold our governments to account over the commitments they have made. By doing this, we remind those in power of the promises they've made to children and young people—and raise awareness of when these promises aren't being kept.

In 2017, we monitored the UN's assessment of how the UK's governments have kept their commitments to Scotland's children and young people under the United Nations Convention on Disabled Persons. We also drew attention to criticisms of Scotland's child rights record that countries had made as part of the UN's Universal Periodic Review of the UK—where countries from around the world get to critically assess the human rights record of a given state.

The Universal Periodic Review is an important way to draw attention to a country's human rights record, and we looked into ways the Scottish Parliament could be involved in the process as a human rights guarantor. The Parliament's Equalities and Human Rights Committee is currently considering this as a possibility, and in March 2018 we outlined ways in which we thought they could effectively guarantee children's rights.

The process of helping the Parliament become a good children's rights guarantor is an important part of establishing a culture of children's human rights in Scotland. Our new Legal Officer (International) will monitor human rights mechanisms and their recommendations. We will then work to make these changes happen for children and young people in Scotland.



## COMMUNICATING RIGHTS MESSAGES

The Commissioner makes statements in the media, using his position as a trusted expert to hold duty bearers to account to their human rights obligations. He has pressed for change on issues that affect children and young people's lives— including poverty, the minimum age of criminal responsibility, equal protection, children's access to the criminal justice system, safe places to play, mental health and praising positive approaches to care experienced young people. The Commissioner and his team have also spoken at national and international events where they bring the human rights analyses to issues, encouraging debate and empowering advocates.

Children and young people told us that face-to-face contact with the Commissioner is important to them. However, with over a million under 18s in Scotland and only one Commissioner that proves to be a challenging task. Despite this, we will always commit to travel to communities where children and young people are to listen and learn from them. We also connect through professional networks and adults who work on children and young people's behalf as well as using social media tools.

Since becoming Children and Young People's Commissioner, Bruce has been active on Twitter, regularly communicating with young people and adults about his work and the wider world of human rights. He has been willing to engage directly with the questions and concerns young people raise, and to raise awareness of the importance of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

This year we focused on our social media channels, communicating rights-based messages on Instagram and through visual and video content. These have been linked to information on our website that explains a children's rights issue or our position on it in a clear and substantive way. In 2017/18 we produced information about children's right to food, the human rights arguments for why assaulting a child is unacceptable, and why child poverty is the most serious human rights issue for children and young people in Scotland.



Online communication played an important part in the revision of our strategic plan. It is what we used to find our young advisers, and one of the ways we consulted with young people and adults in order to get their views.

In 2017/18, we began the process of auditing our website so that we can revise it to be more suited to the various groups of people who use it. We want it to be easier for everyone to find the facts and resources they need about the children's rights issues facing Scotland, and by the end of the coming year and in consultation with children and young people we will have done just that.

In 2018/19, we will use online methods to highlight how children and young people in Scotland act as human rights defenders, and how adults can support them when they do. We have taken advice from children and young people to design and create a Rights Defenders website, which we will run with support from partners from civil society. It will provide resources and updates on how children and young people can act as human rights defenders, and how adults can support them when they do.



**ROYAL BLIND SCHOOL, EDINBURGH**

**CALEDONIA PRIMARY SCHOOL, EDINBURGH**



## FINANCES

This is a summary of our annual accounts for 2017/18.

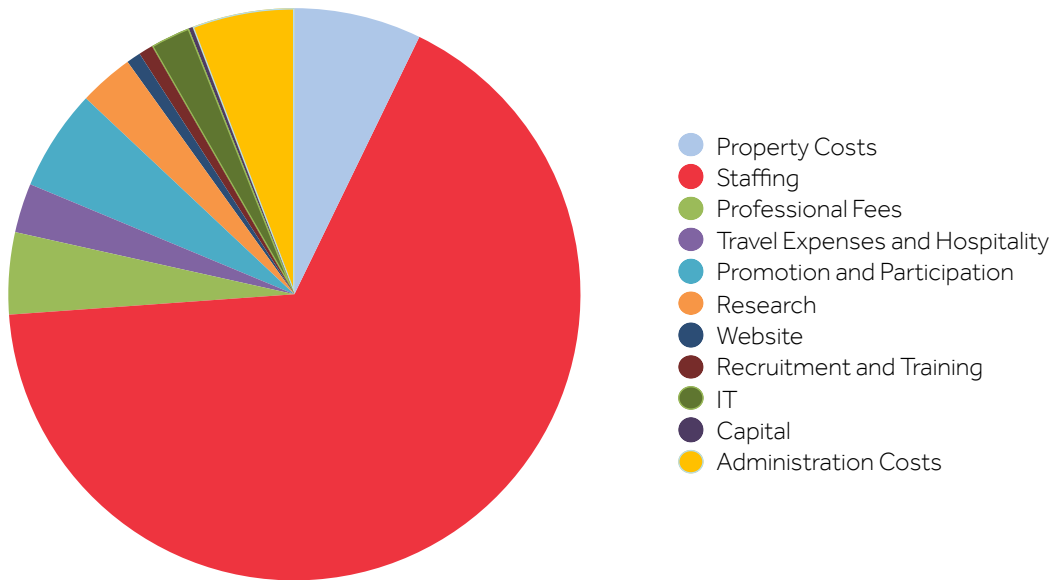
You can request a full copy of the accounts from our office or find them online at [cypcs.org.uk](http://cypcs.org.uk). The accounts are subject to approval by external auditors.

The Scottish Parliament allocated the Commissioner £1,377,000 for the 2017/18 financial year, which is made up of an allocated budget of £1,334,000 and £43,000 contingency funding for a temporary post to lead the office's Advice and Investigations team.

	<b>2018 Budget £'000</b>	<b>2018 Expenditure £'000</b>	<b>Difference £'000</b>	<b>2017</b>
Net operating costs per the accounts	1,377	1,359	18	1,267
Capital additions	0	3	(3)	0
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>1,377</b>	<b>1,362</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>1,267</b>
<b>Adjustments</b>				
Non-cash items		(28)	(28)	(28)
Working Capital (including cash)		15	15	3
<b>Cash funding from SPCB</b>	<b>1,377</b>	<b>1,377</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,242</b>

The Commissioner spent £1,362,000 on operating activities in 2017/18. This sum comprises staffing costs of £908,000, other operating costs of £451,000 and capital expenditure of £3,000.

## Operating costs



**22% was spent on property costs**, which includes all rent, rates, energy costs, property insurance, repairs, maintenance and cleaning. **18% was spent on administration costs**, including all costs of running an office such as stationery, postage, telephones, photocopying, printing and equipment maintenance. **17% was spent on participation and promotion of rights**, which includes participative and promotional activities undertaken to fulfil the Commissioner's general function to involve children and young people and raise awareness of rights. **14% was spent on professional fees**, including the costs of payroll support, legal, audit and accountancy. **9% was spent on research**, including several projects related to the Strategic Plan for 2016-20. **8% was spent on staff travel**. **7% was spent on IT**, including the cost of support and maintenance. **3% was spent on recruitment of new staff and training**. **2% was spent on website development and maintenance**, including continued development of the website as a tool for raising awareness of children and young people's human rights.

## IN 2018/19

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is still not incorporated in domestic law. That means that although it is increasingly influential in discussions around law, policy and practice, it is not directly enforceable or justiciable in our domestic courts. 2018 has been declared by the Scottish Government as the Year of Young People and 2019 is the 30th anniversary of the UNCRC. Now is the time for full incorporation. Only with incorporation can Scotland truly claim to be a children's human rights respecting society.

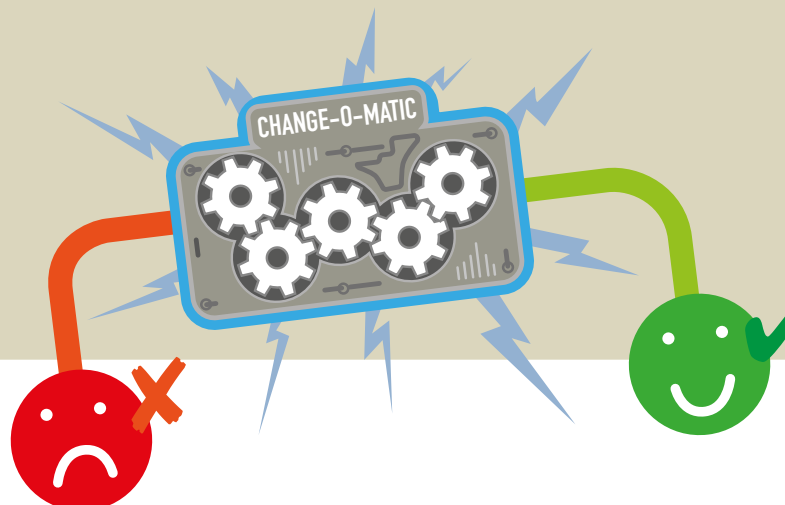
The Age of Criminal Responsibility in Scotland is the lowest in Europe and we will continue to use our human rights expertise to press for it to be raised higher than eight or the proposed new minimum age of 12.

We are pleased that there is now a cross party majority of Parliament backing the change to the law on the assault of children for the purpose of punishment. We will support the Parliament to pass this law as soon as possible.

Next year one of our major programmes of work is to inspire and encourage children and young people to act as human rights defenders: people who defend their own rights and the rights of others. This is a national project with an international reach, with a focus on empowering children and young people to hold duty bearers to account for their human rights obligations. It is incumbent upon those in power to make sure those young human rights defenders have human rights education, skills, and support. As part of this project we work with partners to play a major role in the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child Day of General Discussion in Geneva.

Already in 2018/19, we have created a Human Rights Defenders Action Group, bringing together young defenders to work to influence those decision-makers who can support and protect people their age when they act to defend human rights. The group will involve young people with interests interested in a range of different areas, including environmental justice, mental health, LGBTI issues, young caring responsibilities and Gypsy/Traveller issues.

Children and young people have told us how much they value being able to meet our team in person, and we are committed to regularly travelling to work within different communities. In the coming year we will involve children and young people in our work in different ways that are meaningful, relevant, empowering and enjoyable.



Children and young people living on Scotland's islands told us they didn't feel people in power often come to listen to their concerns, and were glad that the Commissioner had chosen to come directly to them.

**ACTION FOR CHILDREN UK, EILEAN SIAR RESIDENTIAL UNIT AND WHO CARES? SCOTLAND, EILEAN SIAR**

**STORNOWAY PRIMARY SCHOOL, EILEAN SIAR**



We will work with children and young people to develop a way of measuring how well we are doing against our three aims and continually reflect on what they tell us. With their help we will seek to review and improve our plan to make sure that our work always reflects our values.

So far in 2018/19, we have continued to support young people in Scotland to be involved in the European Network of Young Advisers, completing our project on mental health and reporting to the European Network of Ombudsman for Children to develop a new standard for mental health and children rights. The recommendations for Scotland on mental health made by our young people's group will be shared internationally with young people from across Europe, and we will work with the group's members to progress them within Scotland.

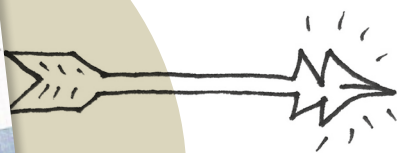
We are excited that in 2018/19 we will start work with Project Scotland to offer young people the opportunity to volunteer with us for up to six months. We have listened to what young people told us and will hold our annual Human Rights Gathering in the north of Scotland in November 2018.

Also in 2018/19, we will continue our work on tackling food insecurity and poverty with the Future Food Inquiry report. This will enable us to hold those in power to account and ensure they work with children and young people to identify solutions.

Making complaints mechanisms more child-friendly will be a focus of our work, as will ensuring that duty bearers fulfil their obligations to create space for children to seek remedies where their rights have not been respected.

We will further develop our plans around our office's use of Strategic Litigation to help us build networks and to identify cases and issues where the remedy to children's human rights violations lies with the courts. We will publish our investigation report into restraint and seclusion in schools, and we will identify further issues where the Commissioner can use his investigative powers to shed light on children's human rights breaches.





## STRATEGIC PLAN

Just before the end of the financial year on 29 March 2018, our Young Advisers laid our revised Strategic Plan before the Scottish Parliament.

For them, it was the end of a process where they had given us real insight into what we should be doing over the next few years and put in a lot of the hard work that made sure our revised plan happened at all. For us, it was the start of a two-year period that aims to change the way children's human rights are realised and understood in Scotland.

The revised plan makes it clear what values the Commissioner and the people who work for him should hold. Children and young people said we should be **fierce champions** for their rights, and that we should be **brave** and show **respect** when we do. We should display **leadership** in Scotland and the wider world, and we should be sure **participation** of children and young people is at the heart of all the work we do. And we should demonstrate **independence** from people in power, including Government.

And our revised plan has three aims, and we will work with children and young people to see how well we meet each of them.

### **1: TO BE A SUCCESSFUL COMMISSIONER WHO MAKES A DIFFERENCE TO THE LIVES OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

The Children and Young People's Commissioner is a trusted expert in children's human rights and will support children's human rights development in Scotland and connect work in Scotland to the rest of the world.

We are accountable to you, the people of Scotland. A group of MSPs in the Scottish Parliament from several political parties holds the Commissioner to account, and we uphold the highest standards as a public body.





By standing up for the rights of their constituents, the Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament are great examples of young people who act as human rights defenders.

**SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT**



## **2: TO ESTABLISH A CULTURE OF CHILDREN'S HUMAN RIGHTS IN SCOTLAND**

A culture of children's human rights is one where people understand these rights in a meaningful way— so that children and young people can use their knowledge of their rights to feel able to demand change, and adults will change how they make decisions thanks to their knowledge of rights.

We will work to make sure public bodies put children's human rights at the centre of their work, and support organisations in civil society to do the same.

We will make sure that parents and carers are given the support they need to help children and young people realise their rights.

And we will work to inspire children and young people to be human rights defenders, protecting and promoting their rights and the rights of others.



Our revised plan is available on our website.  
[cypcs.org.uk/plan](http://cypcs.org.uk/plan)

### **3: TO MAKE SURE THAT CHILDREN'S HUMAN RIGHTS ARE AT THE CENTRE OF LAWS, POLICY AND PRACTICE**

We will help make sure the Scottish and UK Governments keep the promises they made to children and young people when they signed up to international human rights laws. We will use the laws that exist in Scotland to make real changes that will improve children and young people's lives.

We will use the Commissioner's legal powers to highlight failures in law, policy and practice. We will use our power of investigation to take action around issues that affect children's human rights, including through the courts.

We will argue for human rights agreements and laws to be part of Scots law, including the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. We will report to the United Nations and other international groups about how well these agreements and laws are being respected in Scotland.

#### **Shaping our journey**

Laying our revised Strategic Plan represents the end of our journey through 2017/18.

But it is also a continuation of a longer journey: to build on what children and young people have told us as we work to support Scotland to become a truly rights-respecting society. This is a journey we are excited to be on—and it is one we want you to be involved in too.

We went back to Shetland after the revision of our Plan was underway, to let some of the young people we'd met know how we'd considered their views.

**ANDERSON HIGH SCHOOL, SHETLAND**

**OPEN PEER EDUCATION PROJECT, SHETLAND**



**NORTH LANARKSHIRE YOUNG  
PARENTS SERVICE, WISHAW**

Young parents are often a group people overlook, so we wanted to make sure we talked to them as part of our strategic plan review.

**STAFF**

As of March 2018:, we were:

**Commissioner**

Bruce Adamson

**Advice and Investigations**

Nick Hobbs, Head of Advice and Investigations

Linda Ellis Macdonald, Enquiries Officer

**Corporate Services**

Stephen Grounds, Head of Corporate Services

Heather Belmonte, Assistant to the Commissioner

Gillian Munro, Information Officer

**Participation and Education**

Cathy Begley, Participation and Education Officer

Sarah-Louise Davies, Participation and Education Officer

**Policy**

Máire McCormack, Head of Policy

Ezmie McCutcheon, Communications Manager

Megan Farr, Policy Officer

Sheila Hamilton, Research Manager

Robert Shepherd, Digital Media Officer



## THANK YOU

Thanks to all the children and young people who worked with us this year. Your views, thoughts and opinions help us make sure that we are travelling in the right direction.







Children and Young People from the Loanhead After School Club, Midlothian told us we should tell the story of our year through sound clips and colourful illustrations. You can find the story they helped us to create at [cypcs.org.uk/story](https://cypcs.org.uk/story)

**CHILDREN &  
YOUNG PEOPLE'S**  
Commissioner  
Scotland



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