

Getting it Right with Rights in Stirling



Children's Rights Report

2017-2020



NHS
Forth Valley


POLICE
SCOTLAND


Stirling
Council



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FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
Working together for a safer Scotland

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Welcome to your Report

If you are under 18 and live in Stirling, this report is for you. As a child or young person, you have a set of Rights laid out in the United Nation Convention of the Rights of the Child, otherwise known as the UNCRC. You might have heard about the UNCRC in school.

What you may not know is that Stirling Council, NHS Forth Valley, Police Scotland and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service play a very important role in making sure the Rights that you have as a child and young person, are upheld. The work of this partnership means that in many aspects of your life as you grow and become an adult, you should feel protected, listened to and able to learn and develop your thinking.

This report is going to take a look back over the last 3 years (2017-2020). It will highlight a range of activities that have been undertaken to protect, promote and defend your Rights as a child or young person living in Stirling. You will see that other organisations work alongside Stirling Council, NHS Forth Valley, Police Scotland and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to care for you and support you.

We know that you are going to have an opinion about the contents of this report. We also know that you will have ideas about how we make sure you always feel that your Rights are our priority. In the final section of the report, you will find out how to share these views with us.



What are these Rights & how did I get them?

Good questions!

In the past, there was very little protection for children. Children often had no medical care and opportunities to go to school or continue to learn after the age of 12, were limited.

It was common for children to work in mines, in mills, in factories, in fields and in people's homes as servants.

If a child committed a crime they were punished in the same way as an adult and they would have been imprisoned in an adult prison.

You might have heard older people talking about a time when children 'were seen and not heard'. This means that many people thought that children's opinions weren't important. Many people thought that children weren't important at all.

What was life like for the children who attended St Ninian's Primary School in 1890?



As time moved on, people's views changed. In many countries around the world people started to realise that all human beings should be protected from harm. From this, a set of '**Human Rights**' was created. People quickly realised that because of their age, children needed to have even greater protection and so the **United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child – the UNCRC** – was created.



The UNCRC is a document that describes 54 different Rights. In the document, the Rights are organised and numbered into 'Articles'. Each Article describes an important aspect in your life that you have the right to have or be protected from. For example, Article 12 describes your Right to express your views in everything that affects you. Article 19 says that you have the Right not be hurt or badly treated.

In this report, the Articles are grouped together under 3 headings:

Protecting

Listening to

Developing Learning and Thinking

When we talk about **protecting**, we are thinking about the Rights you have to help you grow and develop from being a baby all the way to being young adult. These are the Rights that keep you safe and well and that support you to have and recognise positive relationships in times when circumstances in your life might not be straightforward.

When we talk about **listening to**, we are thinking about the Rights you have to share your thoughts, feelings and opinions and have them taken seriously, regardless of your age. Importantly, you have the Right to share your thoughts at any time, not just when you are asked.

When we talk about **developing learning and thinking**, we are thinking about the Rights you have to be curious, to question, to wonder and to learn from others along with the skills you develop in literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing, expressive arts, languages, religious and moral education, sciences, social studies and technologies. There should be no barriers to stop you developing your learning and thinking.

How did I get these Rights?

Did I earn them? No.

Did I win them? No.

Did I buy them? No.

You were born with them. Every single child and young person in Scotland up to the age of 18, has these Rights and this has been the case in the UK since 15th January 1992. If you were born somewhere else and came to live in Scotland, these Rights still belong to you. You don't have to do anything to earn them and they can't be taken away. Some people have the opinion that by having Rights then you also have responsibilities, too. There will be some areas of your life where you will be asked or expected to be responsible for something for example, at school, you might be responsible for making sure playground toys are tidied away or for ensuring that you have washed your hands at the beginning of a Home Economics lesson, or for behaving in a certain way. At home, you might have the responsibility of washing dishes or keeping your bedroom tidy. None of these responsibilities - or any other responsibility you can think of – have any effect on your Rights.



Children's Rights in Scotland: who is listening?

Everyone. The Scottish Government has made the decision that Children's Rights are so important it is likely they will soon become law in Scotland. This means that public authorities will have to ensure that all of their work is 'compatible' with the Rights of children. To make this happen, the Scottish Government, the Children's Commissioner in Scotland and many other Rights organisations are working together to ensure that people are aware of the Rights of children so they can be promoted, protected and defended.



The big Stirling picture...

and the big Stirling question

You probably know a lot about living in Stirling. You might see Stirling Castle or the Wallace monument from your bedroom window. You might buy fish and chips for dinner from the chip shop in Plean. You might get your shopping from Tesco in Dunblane. You might go swimming in the McLaren Leisure Centre. You might play in Donaldson Park in Balforn. When we talk about Stirling in this report, we are thinking about the local authority area of Stirling, not just the city itself. In fact, more than 90,000 people live in the local authority area of Stirling. To help you think about how large that area is, these are our 7 secondary schools and the villages and towns connected to them:

- **Bannockburn High School:**

Bannockburn, Cowie, Plean.

- **Balforn High School:**

Balforn, Buchlyvie, Drymen, Fintry, Kippen, Killearn, Strathblane.

- **Dunblane High School:**

Dunblane.

- **McLaren High School:**

Aberfoyle, Callander, Crianlarich, Deanston, Doune, Gartmore, Killin, Kincardine-in-Menteith, Port of Menteith, Strathyre, Thornhill.

- **St Modan's High School:**

All areas of Stirling.

- **Stirling High School:**

Borestone, Cambusbarron, Gargunnoch, Stirling City.

- **Wallace High School:**

Bridge of Allan, Cornton, Fallin, Raploch, Riverside.

In fact, the Stirling Council area covers a land space the size of **Luxembourg**, wow!

As a child or young person living in Stirling, all of the work that we do in Stirling Council, NHS Forth Valley, Police Scotland and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service has an impact on you.

These 4 organisations are duty bearers of your Rights.

This means we have a responsibility to make sure that our services promote, protect and defend your Rights.

The big question is...

how can we get better at doing this?

This report will give you lots of examples of activities, projects, measures and initiatives that have taken place over the last 3 years in Stirling. These might be activities you've taken part in.

But giving you examples is not the only reason for this report. In fact, it's a fairly small part of it. Your Rights protect your dignity as a child or young person living in Stirling. We need your thoughts, ideas and opinions to help us to improve the work we do to ensure that you always feel that your Rights are our priority.

To help you do this, we have created "**Stirling's Dignometer**". The Dignometer (or dignity meter) will ask you a set of questions about our 3 themes of Protecting, Listening to and Developing Learning and Thinking. Your answers to the Dignometer questions will really help us to improve our thinking and our actions around prioritising your Rights.

I see



I think



I wonder





Protecting



ARTICLE 5 Responsibility of parents and carers to provide guidance and direction to their child as they grow

ARTICLE 6 Life, Survival and Development

ARTICLE 7 Birth Registration, Name and Nationality

ARTICLE 8 Protection and Preservation of Identity

ARTICLE 9 Separation from Parents

ARTICLE 10 Family Reunification

ARTICLE 16 Right to Privacy

ARTICLE 19 Protection from Violence, Abuse and Neglect

ARTICLE 23 Rights of children with a disability to live a full and decent life with dignity and independence

ARTICLE 24 Right to Health and Health Services

ARTICLE 32 Protection from Child Labour

ARTICLE 33 Protection from Drug Abuse and the Production and Distribution of Drugs

ARTICLE 34 Protection from Sexual Exploitation

ARTICLE 35 Protection from Abduction, Sale and Trafficking

ARTICLE 36 Protection from Exploitation

ARTICLE 37 Protection from Inhumane Treatment and Detention

ARTICLE 38 Protection from War and Armed Conflicts

ARTICLE 39 Recovery from Trauma and Reintegration

ARTICLE 40 Right to Juvenile Justice



In this section, we're going to take a look at the services, activities and processes we have to help you feel protected.

For most children and young people in Stirling, these layers of protection might not be something you been aware of or even think about.

If you were born in Scotland, your birth will have been registered with the Registrar of the local authority area in which your family was living at the time. The adult registering your birth will have taken along details of your birth and information about your parents. It's part of our laws in Scotland that a child's birth is registered, this generates your birth certificate. You'll need your birth certificate many times in your life: applying for a passport, applying for a driving licence, registering at college or university and so on. Importantly, by registering your birth, you are then registered with our health board, NHS Forth Valley.

As you grow up, thanks to the partnership between Stirling Council and NHS Forth Valley, we ensure that your entitlement to healthcare is available to you. Until you start school, you will have a Health Visitor who checks that you are in good general health and that all of the vaccinations that you are entitled to have before you start school, are available to you. Once you enrol in our school system, you will have your eyesight checked, dental checks and access to the vaccinations recommended for your age as part of your school experience.

As you continue to grow, many of the protection rights that you have in the UNCRC are supported within your school experience. For example, when you are older and looking to combine having a part-time job with attending school, Stirling Council asks your employer to complete a form with their details and information about your working hours that your school will keep a record of. This helps us uphold your Right to be protected from working hours that are too long or from being underpaid.



Getting it Right for Every Child

Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) supports families by making sure children and young people can receive the right help, at the right time, from the right people. The aim is to help you to grow up feeling loved, safe and respected. Getting it Right for Every Child means ensuring that every child and young person is:



Most children and young people get all the help and support they need from their parent(s), wider family and community but sometimes, perhaps unexpectedly, they may need a bit of extra help.

GIRFEC is a way for families to work in partnership with people who can support them, such as teachers, health visitors and doctors.

When action to support a child or young person is needed, the adults involved can use the Getting it Right for Every Child model which:

- gives a framework for the adults to structure and analyse information to help understand a child or young person's needs, the strengths and pressures on them, and consider what support they might need;
- promotes the participation of children, young people and their families in gathering information and making decisions as central to assessing, planning and taking action;
- makes sure that everyone understands a child or young person's needs by identifying concerns that may need to be addressed.



In Stirling we work to 'get it right' for all of our children and young people in making sure they feel safe and protected. Over the last 3 years, our children and young people have been supported by a wide range of services and specialist organisations:



Childrens Services
Youth Justice and
Inclusion Support Service

CAMHS
Child and Adolescent
Mental Health



Clackmannanshire
& Stirling
Child Protection
Committee



Believe in
children
Barnardo's
Scotland



Stirling & District
Women's Aid

There for young people 24/7
Includem



SCOTTISH
CHILDREN'S REPORTER
ADMINISTRATION

These services and organisations work in different ways. Some of them work directly with a child or young person and support them with an aspect of their life. Others work with schools and youth groups to develop the understanding of all children and young people about relationships and the different ways in which we live our lives. Some services and organisations are involved in supporting children's mental health and some services and organisations will offer specialist support to a child and their family from the child's birth to adulthood.

Sometimes, for some of Stirling’s children and young people, life isn’t straightforward. Extra care and support is needed to keep some children and young people safe and protected.

Stirling Council’s Children and Families service works closely with colleagues across Stirling Council, NHS Forth Valley, Police Scotland and other organisations in the public and voluntary sector. This service aims to support the wellbeing and safeguarding of children and young people; in particular vulnerable children and young people in need of care and protection:

Children and Families		
Additional Support Needs & Wellbeing	Reducing physical and communication barriers to participation, learning and achievement for children and young people with additional support needs.	
Children with disabilities	Supporting the safe care of children with disabilities in their homes and in respite centres.	
Residential care for young people	Offering young people safe, residential accommodation meeting the national care standards when their assessed needs cannot be met within a family setting.	
Child protection	Working directly with children, young people, parents and families and provide a range of support services to ensure children and young people are protected from abuse and neglect.	
Youth Justice	Support for young offenders through either voluntarily or through the Children’s Hearing system rather than court.	
Throughcare & Aftercare Supporting young people who are in the process of leaving care and aiming to live independently.	Mentoring for vulnerable young people	Supporting young people age 16+ who are care experienced to build a relationship with a caring adult mentor
	Supported lodgings	Allows a young person leaving care to live with an individual or family to support them in developing the skills to live on their own.



Logan's Story

Logan is 17. He is developing the skills to be able to live on his own through the supported lodgings service by living with a family in Borestone. He lives with Mike and Jenny who help him to build a daily routine, support him to manage his money and grow his confidence in being able to look after himself. Before living with Mike and Jenny, Logan lived in residential accommodation in Brucefield, Bannockburn. While he lived there, he received a lot of support from his Social Worker; from the charity, Barnardo's and from his teachers to help him come to terms with difficult experiences he had when he was younger. The child protection system protected Logan by making sure he could no longer be harmed by the behaviour of adults who were in his life when he was younger.

His mentor is supporting him to apply for a college place, he is really interested in fitness and would like to become a personal trainer. Logan is looking forward to living in his own flat soon.

Like Logan, there are occasions where some of our children and young people are harmed. This might be physical harm, emotional harm, sexual harm or it may be that a child or young person commits a crime. You might not know that Stirling Council's Education and Social Work Services along with NHS Forth Valley and Police Scotland work together to make sure:

- we bring together all of the information that we can about children and young people who are in these circumstances;
- we can protect them and support them in making sense of what has happened to them.

These are very specialist processes and lots of people are unaware this work happens.

In 2019, for every 1000 children in Stirling aged between 0-15, around 4 were placed on our child protection register. We work together to make sure children on our child protection register can no longer be harmed. Some children are able to carry on living in their own homes, some children need to be looked after in the home of another relative or by a family they haven't met before. Sometimes, like Logan, some children might live in a residential home with other young people and a specialist team of support workers and social workers. Often, we need the support of other specialist organisations to help the children come to terms with what has happened to them.





Sarah's Story

Sarah is 16 years old and has a learning disability and autism spectrum disorder. Sarah attends a mainstream high school. She is very keen to communicate with others but needs support to share her views clearly. She benefits from the use of visuals to ensure she can communicate effectively with others in a range of situations.

Sarah worked with an adult using Talking Mats to enable her to demonstrate her views clearly in relation to her subject choices, personal interests and wider world. Using Talking Mats with the support of an adult has meant Sarah is more able to share her views within decision making and planning. This work to enable her to share her views has also built her confidence and supported a better understanding of her needs across all areas of her life.



Like Sarah, we have a number of children and young people in Stirling with disabilities. Under the Equality Act 2010, a person is considered disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long term negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities.

For children and young people with disabilities, there are barriers associated with their needs/ medical conditions which we have little control over. Barriers also arise from environmental factors that we can control, for example, people's attitudes to disability and inclusion, physical barriers and communication barriers. Over the last 3 years, we have focused on **3 key priorities** to improve the outcomes for children and young people with disabilities:

Priority 1

Improve the physical environment of nurseries and schools to enable better access to education and associated services.

Feedback has been positive about building works to ensure accessibility for children and young people with disabilities in schools. Adaptations such as the additions of ramps, lowering of kerbs and changes to toilets were helpful. A few schools have identified that if they had a child who required a wheelchair in the future, further adaptations would be required, for example, Bridge of Allan Primary and Borestone Primary do not have wheelchair access to the second floor. The development of specialist provision classes in Bannockburn Primary school has also been a success.

Priority Area 2

Children and young people with additional support needs or disability, have improved attainment and achievement.

Staff are always learning and there are opportunities throughout the year for support for learning teachers continue to work together to maintain skills and knowledge.

Specialised courses for ASN specialist teachers are prioritised and funded and schools have invested in inclusive technology.

Schools reported that some children were involved in their planning and setting their own learning Intentions and support is place for children making choices about their learning. Staff have been trained in talking mats, intensive interaction and picture exchange communication to improve and support communication.



Priority Area 3

Improve communication with children and young people who have a disability or additional support need in relation to the provision of information in appropriate alternative formats, taking account of any support need preferences expressed by them or their parents.

The Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) programme across all secondary schools has included the development of MVP materials for young people with ASN and communication needs.

A partnership with speech and language therapy ensures support for children with language and communication needs.

Some children regularly take part in staged intervention meetings and use of alternative and communication approaches to gather views and opinions. Development of new tools such as the Drawing and Talking Approach are supporting more children to share their views.

Digital technology has been used to improve communication with parents and carers about their children's learning.

There's more?

Yes! We know from asking you, that you want to live in safe and inclusive communities, this is all part of feeling and being protected. We also know you want to be valued, respected and treated with dignity. The Stirling Community Planning Partnership is a group of organisations who provide services to the public. They work together to plan and put in place services that will make life better and reduce inequalities in Stirling. The ambition is to make Stirling a great place to live, work, study and visit and make life better for those who are experiencing the greatest challenges.



The organisations involved in the Community Planning Partnership are:



Working together, they organisations have committed to creating a Stirling plan which started life in 2017 and will continue for 10 years, until 2027.

The plan focusses on 4 priorities. These 4 priorities work together to make sure that as child or young person of Stirling, your Right to thrive, grow and develop into adulthood and live a life with dignity, is protected and fulfilled:



PROSPEROUS



ACHIEVING



HEALTHY



RESILIENT



And there's even more?

Yes! Over the last 3 years, Stirling Council along with our partners, have developed programmes for our schools; opportunities in our local communities and guidance for services working with you, our children and young people.

**Universal
Sanitary
Provision**

**Holiday
Fun Clubs**

**Mental
Health and
Nurturing
Approaches**

**School
Holiday
Meal
Provision**

**Mentors in
Violence
Prevention**

**Safe Drive
Stay Alive**

**No Knives,
Better Lives**

**Respect for all:
Preventing &
Challenging
Bullying
Behaviours**

**Understanding
your teenager
Parenting
Programme**



In the **spotlight**



Universal Sanitary Provision

Following the successful pilot in three schools during the 2017/18 session, during 2018/19 all primary and secondary schools in Stirling developed approaches to provide free sanitary products in a way which would be without stigma or loss of dignity.

Stirling High School's Story

Stirling High School nominated as the pilot school for Stirling Council to test the roll out of free provision. In May and June 2018, the school engaged with students to determine the best method to distribute period products. Two student voice groups were formed - one for lower and one for upper school girls. Students decided how to implement the roll out of free products. The group was initially dubbed the 'Period Posse'. Pedro is gender neutral to raise awareness of the fact that not everyone who has a period identifies as female. The steering group has grown to include new members - including many male students. Product provision was launched in assemblies, and accompanied by a high-profile poster campaign using the panda logo. A whole school approach was taken, with a focus on destigmatising periods and making access fun. Surveys distributed before and after the pilot found that 84% of students felt more comfortable talking about periods after the pilot. The project created strong leadership opportunities for pupils, who have grown in confidence - both discussing periods and in general.

Products were placed in drawered storage units in all female toilets, as well as PE changing rooms, in pupil support offices, and in a named classroom on each corridor. Although the drawered units are in the public part of the bathroom, strong work has been done to destigmatise access in this area. As the drawers are also stocked with wipes, cotton pads, cotton buds, bobbles, deodorant, body spray, nail files, and tissues, they are easier for young people to access. The Panda Posse also ran stalls during lunchbreaks in the run up to the summer break reminding students to collect supplies for the 'holiday period'.



In the **spotlight**

School Holiday Meal Provision

In 2018, Stirling Council's Children and Young People Committee established a task group with the responsibility of setting up a school holiday meal provision for children and young people during the summer holiday of 2018.

Over summer 2018, 954 were meals served as part of a holiday club session where children and young people had the chance to play games, socialise and take part in structured activities, for example with Active Stirling. This programme was supported by a team of Council employees and volunteers with Head Teachers identifying families who would benefit from the provision.

In April 2019, the Council extended the provision in partnership with third sector organisations. A fund, which enabled the set-up 49 holiday fun club sessions and delivered 800 meals from 14 organisations, was looked after by Stirlingshire Voluntary Enterprise (SVE).





In the **spotlight**



Mental Health: Alli-Chat

Stirling's young people have led in the development of a digital prototype that aims to tackle the stigma around adolescent mental health.

In the first-ever citizen sourced challenge by CivTech – the Scottish Government programme which invites tech companies to solve public sector challenges – they worked closely with Edinburgh-based company, Voxsio, to address this serious issue using conversational Artificial Intelligence technology.

Mental health champions in Stirling's secondary schools and members of the Stirling Youth Forum were among those involved in the pioneering prototype project.

In February 2019, they unveiled their prototype: a Chatbot called 'Alli-Chat'- designed to help start the conversation about mental health among the younger age group - to delegates at CivTech's Demo Day at the International Conference Centre in Edinburgh.

Stirling High S5 pupil Sarah Purser, speaking on behalf of the Stirling Youth Leaders, said: "Mental health is a key issue for young people across Scotland, and we wanted to develop a digital solution that addressed the stigma of accessing mental health and also start a conversation around this important subject.

"Seeing the Chatbot in action for the first time was really exciting and it was more impressive than we could have imagined"





How do we know that the protection we offer to you as our children and young people, is good enough?

In Scotland, public authorities need to know that they are offering the best service they can to people. There are bodies (this is another word for an organisation that makes sure groups of companies working in the same industry are following the rules of that industry) in place who inspect the work of public authorities.

In 2019, Stirling Council, NHS Forth Valley, Police Scotland and The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service were jointly inspected by the Care Inspectorate. The Care Inspectorate looks at the quality of care provided by organisations in Scotland. If that care needs to get better, the Care Inspectorate helps these organisations to make improvements. Our inspection had a focus on the support we give to children and young people in need of care and protection. These are our children and young people who are care experienced and our children and young people with disabilities and other support needs. As part of the inspection, children and young people were asked for their views.

Overall, the Care Inspectorate feel that we have many strengths in supporting our children and young people in need of care and protection. For example, we are effective in supporting children and young people to remain with their families where we can (UNCRC Article 9) and that most children and young people enjoy trusting relationships with key adults who know them well.



The Care Inspectorate highlighted areas that we need to get better at and we have an improvement plan in place to make these changes:

By 2021, we will

- 1.** make sure that the potential for any delay of processing Police concern reports is minimised
- 2.** continue to make sure that when we share information between services that it is appropriate (GDPR) and timely
- 3.** create a learning and development plan for the Child Protection Committee
- 4.** continue to make sure that adults working with children in need of care and protection have opportunities to develop their existing skills, learn new skills and enhance their knowledge
- 5.** become better at involving children and young people in planning services to support them and their needs
- 6.** improve the availability of advocacy for children and young people to support them to share their views and have these views listened to
- 7.** ensure planning for young people leaving care reflects the highest ambitions and aspirations for their future
- 8.** appoint a dedicated Through Care and After Care nurse to for our children and young people with care experience
- 9.** improve steps towards supporting young people to live independently after care. This includes accommodation; life skills such as budgeting and household management and support securing a positive destination for example, further study or an employment opportunity.

Our next Children's Rights Report will give you an update on the improvements we have made with our action plan.





Stirling's Dignometer: Protecting

We have reached the end of our section about the Rights you have to make sure you are protected as child or young person living in Stirling.

You have seen examples of the programmes, projects and initiatives that have been in place in Stirling over the last 3 years. You have read about the process we have in place to keep you safe and the services and range of organisation who work together to make this happen.

We know there will be ways in which we can improve our thinking and our actions in the way we promote, protect and defend your Rights to be protected. We need you to tell us. The final section of this report gives you information on how to share your thoughts and opinions with us, so that we can answer **our big Stirling question...**

how can we get better at doing this?

1. How well do we make sure you are and feel safe and protected as child or young person living in Stirling?
2. How well do we promote and uphold your Rights when something goes wrong in your life?
3. How well do we support and uphold the Rights of children and young people with disabilities and additional support needs?





Listening to

ARTICLE 12 Respect for the Views of the Child

ARTICLE 13 Freedom of Expression

ARTICLE 14 Freedom of Thought, Belief and Religion

ARTICLE 30 Respect for the Language, Culture and Customs of Children from Minority or Indigenous Groups





When it comes to the idea of 'listening to' and Children's Rights, most people think of Article 12: I have the right to be listened to and taken seriously. Protecting, promoting and defending your Right under Article 12 is key to many developments in Stirling over the last 3 years.

But there's more to it than this! It would be almost impossible to fulfil your Right within Article 12 without protecting your Right to the freedom of expression; your Right to the freedom of thought, belief and religion and the Right to the respect of language, culture and customs of minority groups. Articles 13, 14 and 30 deserve a round of applause!



A blue spotlight icon on the left, with a yellow beam of light shining towards the right, highlighting the text.

In the spotlight

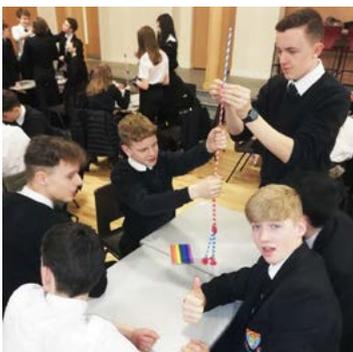
McLaren Learning Community: Equalities

All Stirling schools are committed to ensuring that children and young people's educational experiences are inclusive and respectful. Underlining this is the work of the various Equalities/Diversity/LGBT groups set up by children and young people in our schools.

In these groups, children and young people have the opportunity to connect with and support each other, talk about their views and opinions and challenge each other's thinking. In addition to this, these groups have been responsible for leading learning around the school community, challenging views and developing thinking.

In 2019, McLaren High School celebrated the worldwide 'LGBT History Month'. The Equalities group ran a series of activities designed to raise awareness of issues facing those in the LGBT community and to support LGBT young people in school. Activities took place in registration classes, junior and senior health & wellbeing lessons, curriculum classes and S1-S3 double-period LGBT focus lessons.

In the wider McLaren learning community, children at Doune Primary school were supported by the McLaren High School Sports Leaders to think about Equalities and what that idea means to them. This is a fantastic example of children and young people working together to share opinions and challenge beliefs.





In the **spotlight**

Stirling's Young Ambassadors for Inclusion: The SC7s

Who, What and why?

- August 2017: applications invited from secondary schools to find an Ambassador for Inclusion to represent Stirling nationally.
- Quality of applications made choosing just one young person, difficult. It became clear that we needed a local forum for allowing all of the young people who applied, an opportunity to not only have their voices heard but to influence improvement in our schools and communities.
- Stirling Cluster Servers (SC7s) named by the young people themselves - came to life in September 2017 using a monthly meeting format comprising young people from S1-S6 with a range of additional support needs.

Leading improvement

- It became clear in building our community that friendships and relationships were themes that the SC7s wanted to explore further... this led to sharing experiences around bullying behaviour.
- To support these conversations, we engaged with a local charity, Square Peg, to work with our SC7s to create animations around their thoughts and feelings on bullying.
- As an authority, we were also at the point of refreshing our anti-bullying guidance in line with Scot Gov's 'Respect for All'. We asked our SC7s to become stakeholders in this work.

Stakeholders - so what?

The SC7s were/are an integral voice in our anti-bullying work:

- ✓ **Their** thoughts and feelings are quoted in our refreshed guidance
- ✓ **They** were part of the judging panel of our **#StirlingChoosesRespect** initiative tying in with the national anti-bullying campaign, #ChooseRespect
- ✓ **Their** animations are a central part of the guidance launch to all of Stirling's HTs on 20th November 2018 (and included a presentation to the HTs and a challenge to share the national Inclusion film with learning communities)





In the **spotlight**

From Syria to Stirling: Resettling Families

In 2018, 5 Syrian families found shelter and a new start to life in the heart of Scotland after fleeing persecution, destruction and the humanitarian crisis that has ravaged their country in recent years.

Stirling Provost, Christine Simpson, said: “The courage shown by these families to not only flee the devastation and constant fear they were facing every day in their own homes, but to come to somewhere completely new and integrate so well is utterly remarkable.

“I want to thank everyone in the Council and local community who have made an effort to resettle these families and have shown Stirling to be the welcoming place we all know it is.

Stirling Council Leader, Scott Farmer, who welcomed the area’s new citizens and stated that inclusion and participation would lie at the heart of their time in the City.

In August 2019, the first Syrian refugee family to arrive in Stirling welcomed the birth of their daughter, Miriam. Ahd and Yehya Hilal resettled in Stirling with their 3 daughters, aged 6, 8 and 11. Miriam’s birth was registered by the district Registrar with Miriam’s parents bringing Syrian sweets and cakes to the ceremony, which are traditionally offered to celebrate a birth in Syria.



Article 12 in Action

Stirling Youth Forum:
a group of Stirling young people working towards creating opportunities for other young people

Mind of My Own, an online platform for children and young people with care experience to share their views

MSYPs: elected by young people to represent them at the Scottish Youth Parliament

School Strike for Climate Change: the demand for action to limit climate disaster

Youth Gatherings & Stirling's First Sitting

"Your Place, Your Priorities"

Young Carer's Statement

Stirling's Champion's Board



In the **spotlight**

The Champions Board

Stirling's Champions Board was formed in 2018 through funding from the Life Changes Trust and is comprised of children and young people who have experience of care. Its aim is to influence change to the care system and the lives of those it serves by supporting the children and young who have experience of it, to shape its future.

A core group of Stirling's young people aged between 13-24, with their own experience of care, are responsible for driving this aim forward through their passion for making meaningful change for all children and young people who share their own experiences.

The Champions challenge Stirling Council, NHS Forth Valley, Police Scotland and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to think differently about their role in the lives of children and young people with care experience. They work with children and young people in schools to support their understanding of the care system and with school staff to ensure they prioritise the individual needs of children and young people with care experience.





In the spotlight

The Young Carer Statement

The launch of the Carers Act (Scotland) 2016 on 1st April 2018 brought positive changes to the way in which we support children and young people with a caring responsibility. Young Carers are now able to share their thoughts and feelings around their caring role through completing a Young Carer Statement, giving them the opportunity to share their story with people of their choosing. The impact of this allows children and young people to take ownership of this part of their life: they can choose whether or not to complete a statement; how much information to give and with whom to share it.

Importantly, the statement was designed by Young Carers themselves. This was a key priority for the partnership of Stirling Council, NHS Forth Valley and Stirling Carers' Centre leading on this work. Children and young people worked together in their school groups to talk about the purpose of the statement, how much information they felt comfortable sharing through it, and what the design should be. The result of this design phase was the production of 2 template statements both of which came from the children and young people themselves.





In the **spotlight**

“Your Place, Your Priorities”

In celebration of the Year of the Young People 2018, participants in Your Place: Your Priorities were invited to submit proposals that could create opportunities specifically for this age group (8 – 26 years old).

One project led by young people was the redevelopment of the youth space at Cornton Community Centre. Two local teenagers, Scott McArthur and John Toon, were responsible for the transformation of the important community facility, with support from Council Officers and Cornton Action Planning Partnership (CAPP).

After completing the application and successfully pitching the idea to secure just over £3,000 of funding, Scott and John were involved in every aspect of the project’s delivery. This included meeting contractors, attending community council and CAPP meetings and consulting users of the centre.

One company, Brighter Blinds, were so impressed at the young duos actions that they offered to donate blinds for the project.

The refurbishment was completed in 2019, with new lights, soft furnishings and appliances creating a bright, welcoming space that is used, not only by young people, but all residents in the community.

Scott, a pupil at Wallace High School, is continuing to work to improve his community.

Scott said: “I got involved to see people’s ideas change their community.

“I’m sure other young people will have stuff to say as well but may be too shy. I’m sure they would be fine and it could help boost their confidence and let them meet new people by getting involved.

“I think it’s for the benefit of young people to get involved and the whole community can see the benefit of it. When they get older, their kids might also be involved in projects.”



In the spotlight

Youth Gatherings & Stirling's First Sitting

In 2017, young people from across Stirling came together in the city centre to give a voice to the issues facing their generation in the first “Stirling’s Youth Gathering” event.

Over 150 young people attended The Albert Halls to explore areas including mental health and wellbeing, education, young people’s rights, and how transport can create barriers to young people engaging in activities and work opportunities. Young people also took part in sessions where they discussed what ideas they had to make Stirling a better place to live.

Through workshops, sessions, activities and performances, young people explored the topics which were selected by their peers including Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament ahead of the event.

Stirling Council co-designed the event with the Stirling Youth Forum Group who work with young people in areas of deprivation in order to give them a voice and opportunity to shape the future for local young people.

Education Convenor Susan McGill said, “It’s more important than ever for young people to have their voices heard, particularly around the issues that are important to them”.

In 2018, more than 240 young people from Stirling came together to have their say on issues important to them at the city’s second “Youth Gathering”.





Their discussion focused on the four key areas which had been identified at the 2017 event - education, mental health, transport and city centre development – with the aim of making Stirling a better place to live for everyone.

Part of the day saw the young people put forward their views and ideas as part of Stirling Council’s Big Conversation. The topics were explored in a fun and interactive way through a range of workshops, activities and performances.

Young people attended the event at Stirling University from across 36 primary schools and seven secondary schools, along with various youth organisations.

It was planned, delivered and organised by 29 young people from the Stirling Youth Forum with support from Stirling Council’s Youth Participation Team.

Councillor Susan McGill, Convener of the Children and Young People Committee, said: “Stirling Council want to ensure we hear what young people are saying and use their views help to influence policy, and we are seeking more opportunities to do this.

Stirling's First Youth Sitting

Since October 2017, six different events have been co-designed by young people for young People, including both Youth Gatherings. Over 600 young people have participated in these events that paved the way for Stirling's First Sitting. Forty-eight local young people, from five high schools and Stirling University, were supported by staff from Stirling Council's Youth Participation Team and members of Stirling Youth Forum, to become young researchers.

The forum were able to use their newly launched participation toolkit to allow these young people to explore the concept of active participation and citizenship. They presented their findings at the Council Chambers to 12 elected members and 25 Stirling council staff. The wider forum of young people subsequently invited all attendees to participate in a session to develop action plans of each of the issues raised in the presentations.

The process and the event allowed young people to participate and have a direct role in local decision making and shaping the future for Stirling's young people. It has provided an opportunity for young people, elected members and officers to engage in a new and exciting way.





Stirling's Dignometer: Listening to

We have reached the end of our section about the Rights you have to make sure you are listened to as child or young person living in Stirling.

You have seen examples of the programmes, projects and initiatives that have been in place in Stirling over the last 3 years to support you in expressing yourself, in having your say, and be listened to in matters that affect you.

The big Stirling question... how can we get better at doing this?

1. Do you feel you have a say in decisions made about your life?
2. To what extent do you feel children and young people are included in important decisions made by Stirling Council about life in Stirling?
3. What opportunities do you have to influence change in your school and local community?



Developing Learning and Thinking

ARTICLE 15 Freedom of Association

ARTICLE 28 Freedom to an Education

ARTICLE 29 Goals of Education

ARTICLE 31 Leisure, Play and Culture





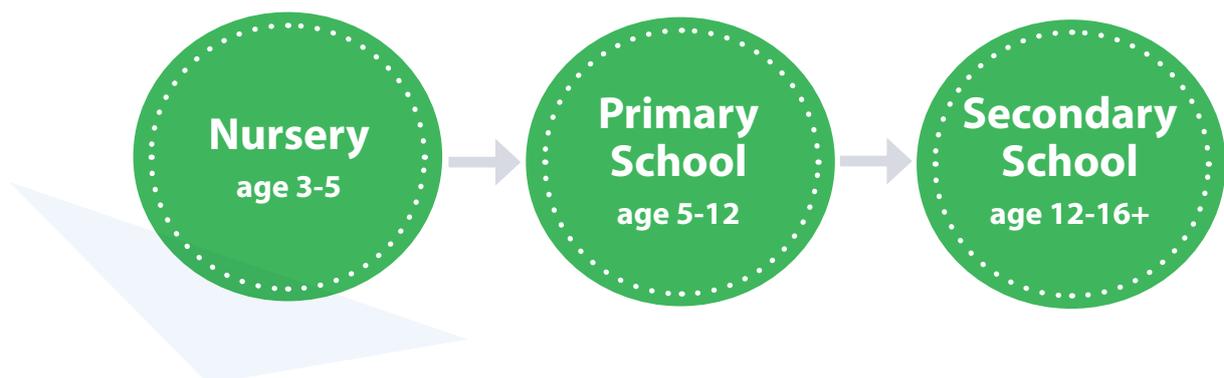
At the very beginning of this report, you found out how your Rights as child or young person, came into being. Key to the development of these is your Right to an Education. When we think about education, it's likely that our thoughts jump straight to being in a school but learning and thinking (which are the key components in education) can happen in all manner of places!

When learning about Children's Rights, most children enjoy finding out that they have the Right to play and have access to leisure and cultural opportunities – isn't that fantastic? These opportunities are vital in helping us learn and think and being involved in clubs or groups either formally or informally, help us develop our wider thinking about the world around us.

Children start learning from the moment they are born. They learn from their families and other people in their lives. They learn by watching, listening, repeating, exploring, experimenting and when they are a little bit older, by asking questions. Learning this way never stops! At the age of 3, most children in Scotland have their first experience of organised education: nursery.

Scotland has a very long history of being committed to educating its children and young people. It will seem strange to you now, but the very first schools in Scotland only educated boys! This continued for a long while but as times and thinking changed, schools became places that girls could also attend.

The education system we have in Scotland now has been in place for some time. This will probably look familiar to you:





You might be interested to know that what we learn in school in Scotland hasn't changed too much from those very early days of schools for boys. There has always been an emphasis on being able to read, write, count, have an understanding of science and of the world around us. Religious education has always featured, the very early schools were connected to churches. How we learn has changed dramatically!

Today, we are focused on each individual child's needs and are committed to supporting all children and young people to achieve the very best they can. Most children and young people attend our mainstream schools, some children and young people attend our provisions and special schools. We understand that learning is not just what happens in the classroom, in fact, you will see in the spotlight examples, that your Right to an education is fulfilled in many different ways in Stirling.

It is your Right to experience:

- a curriculum which progress your learning from 3 to 18;
- a broad general education, including well planned experiences and outcomes across all the curriculum areas from early years through to S3. This includes understanding the world, Scotland's place in it, and the environment;
- a senior phase after S3, which provides opportunities to attain and achieve, including to study for qualifications, awards and other planned activities;
- opportunities for developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work;
- opportunities to maximise your individual potential, benefitting from appropriate personal support and challenge;
- support to help you move into positive and sustained destinations beyond school.



In the **spotlight**

Makerspace at Allan's Primary School

The makerspace philosophy has enabled children at Allan's Primary School to develop 21st century skills. After a period of international research with the support of Stirling High School, the school devised its 5Cs:

Communication

Collaboration

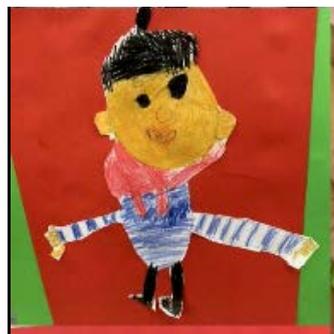
Creativity

Critical Thinking

Curiosity

The makerspace approach enables children and young people to become innovators through using a Design Thinking Toolkit. Children work together to explore, build and create. The makerspace design challenge weeks at Allan's give children the opportunity to develop their creativity and use the Design Thinking Toolkit. Children can now transfer their toolkit skills into other areas of their learning. They are confident about what the 5Cs mean and can give examples of when they have used them.

In 2019, one makerspace design challenge week challenged the children to create 'something' to support children and young people experiencing bullying behaviour. The children showcased their designs at a whole school assembly and were able to share and celebrate the thinking behind their creations.





In the **spotlight**

Play Unified at Wallace High School and Ochil House

At the heart of the Play Unified movement is the opportunity for young people with and without disabilities to come together to transform the attitudes, perceptions and practice of disability in PE and sport, ensuring all young people feel included and are happy, confident individuals.

The symbol of Play Unified is the Play Unified ball, which is viewed not only as a piece of sports equipment but as an invitation and a life-changer. Young people find out that when you pick up the ball and pass it to another person, things change. Barriers are broken, opportunities are created, connections are made and friendships develop.

Young people at Wallace High School and Ochil House come together to play volleyball, basketball, netball, football, table tennis and other sporting activities, developing understanding of each other's needs and forging lasting friendships.





In the **spotlight**

Police Scotland and Stirling Inclusion Support Service

Ten young people with experience of care participated in a project facilitated by Stirling Inclusion Support Service and Police Scotland. It was a PSE programme called Positive Lifestyle Choices to help break down barriers and build relationships with young people and the emergency services.

The programme incorporated violence, substance misuse, serious/organised crime, hate crime, rights and first aid.

The young people's overall engagement was positive especially considering that this was a new experience.

To measure the success of the programme the young people's attendance, level of engagement and also their views about the police were noted.

All young people said that their understanding and views of the police and the emergency services was more positive.



"I know that the police keep you safe and the ones we worked with were really nice. I also loved the fire station visit."

"I actually liked it and can't believe that there is so much crime associated with fake goods."

"I really liked the police – they didn't seem like the police they were really nice."

"When I met you guys I wasn't really confident... I thought you were bullies and you were going to bully me...then I realised through face to face with you, you weren't bullies, you were friends."

Play Unified Young Ambassador, Ochil House



In the **spotlight**

16 Days of Action: “Is this okay?”

The launch of the Mentors in Violence Prevention programme in our secondary schools in 2018 alongside the use of the national materials for learning and teaching about relationships, sexual health and parenthood has begun to develop the learning and thinking of our children and young people about healthy relationships, consent and violence through a gendered lens.

In December 2019, as part of the global 16 Days of Action campaign which exists to end violence against women and girls, Stirling Council and NHS Forth Valley hosted a conference for young people with additional support needs and disabilities to support them in their understanding of consent. Using adapted Mentors in Violence Prevention programme materials, young people from Stirling, Falkirk and Clackmannanshire mainstream, provision and special schools came together in Forth Valley College to share views and develop their thinking.

On the day, young people explored the idea of gender and the expected behaviours of each gender. Young people thought about scenarios within relationships and had lively discussions about whether or not they thought the behaviour shown within the relationship was acceptable by asking the question, “is this okay?”





In the **spotlight**

Ready for Work Programme

In 2018, a pilot programme was created to meet the needs of young people who were at risk of not moving on to a positive destination at the end of the time at school. These young people came from different backgrounds, some had experience of care and some came from households with low income.

Eleven young people took part and 10 were in a positive destination at the end of the programme.

The young people who participated developed a range of skills and achieved awards and qualifications in Literacy, Numeracy and Employability.

Each young person also:

- undertook two days' work placement per week
- attended Forth Valley College one day a week where they developed a range of life and work skills
- undertook a variety of work site visits in order to encourage participants to widen their knowledge of potential employment sectors and pathways
- received regular careers advice from Career Coaches at Skills Development Scotland.

In addition, the young people benefitted from support to overcome any difficulties in participating. Their health and well-being was also supported through activities from organisations such as Active Stirling and Action in Mind.



In the **spotlight**

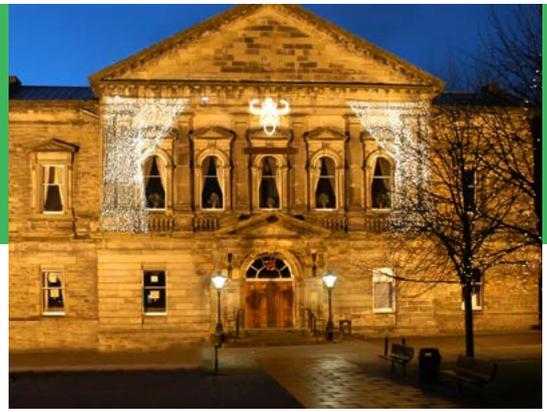
PEEP Learning Together Programme

The PEEP programme recognises that some parents and carers sometimes need support to help their very young children to get the most from everyday learning by listening, talking, playing, singing and sharing books and stories together.

Stirling Council's Educational Psychology teams leads a multi-agency group delivering PEEP training to nursery staff, family support workers, NHS Forth Valley nursery nurses, Homestart and Play Services. These organisations are then able to support families they work with to use learning from the programme with their children.

In 2018, 11 nurseries held PEEP groups for their parents. Thirty two parents reported an increase in confidence in supporting their child's learning and development following a PEEP group. Parents also reported an increase in the frequency of engaging in activities with their child such as reading, singing, mark making and number play.





Article 31 in Stirling

Your Right to leisure, play and culture.

Playing, relaxing and visiting places are all part of learning. There are lots of places in Stirling to visit or to see shows or to learn interesting facts about the area. There are play parks, swimming pools, sports centres, theatres, galleries and museums. One of our primary schools even has the historic walls of the city as part of their playground!

Do you know what or where these places are? Have you visited them before?

Playing, having leisure time and experiencing culture happens at home, too! Many children and young people in Stirling borrow books from their local library to bring home and read. Lots of children learn to play a musical instrument – sometimes more than one – and practise at home with family and friends as an audience.

Play can happen anywhere, with or without friends, with and without toys. Playing is such an important Right for children and their learning and thinking, that opportunities to play are built into a school day – teenagers easily forget that they once called break time, playtime!





Stirling's Dignometer: Developing Learning and Thinking

We have reached the end of our section about the Rights you have to make sure you are able to develop your learning and thinking as a child or young person living in Stirling.

You have seen examples of the programmes, projects and initiatives that have been in place in Stirling over the last 3 years to support you in developing your learning beyond being in a classroom. You have seen examples of groups working together, learning from each other and making sense of the world in which we live.

The big Stirling question... how can we get better at doing this?

1. What opportunities do you have to connect and take part in activities with other children and young people in Stirling?
2. How well do you feel we create opportunities for you to develop skills for learning, life and work?
3. What opportunities do you have to learn through play, or by taking part in activities that ask you to think creatively?
4. What does 'leisure' mean to you?
5. How well do you feel we make sure that all children and young people have similar opportunities to learn and participate?

So What? What Now?

Stirling's Dignometer

You've seen lots of examples of processes, projects, activities and initiatives we have in place in Stirling. Many of them, particularly within the 'Protecting' section, have been in place in Stirling for longer than the last 3 years.

We know we need to continue to sharpen our focus on your Rights. We know we need to make sure that you feel your Rights are our priority.

In 3 sections of this report - protecting, listening to and developing learning and thinking - we asked you to consider a set of questions. Your answers and opinions will make a real difference to us and our continued commitment to promote, protect and defend your Rights.

We believe that upholding your Rights ensures a life with dignity for a child or young person of Stirling. Your answers to our Dignometer questions will let us know your thoughts on this.

To help you to submit your views to us, we would like you to use Stirling's Young Scot portal. On the portal, you'll be reminded of some of the information in this report and you will be able to submit your views to our Dignometer questions:

<https://young.scot/stirling>

You can give your answers as an individual, you can work with a friend or with a group or people. It will be anonymous so you can be as honest as you can.



Protecting

1. How well do we make sure you are and feel safe and protected as a child or young person living in Stirling?
2. How well do we promote and uphold your Rights when something goes wrong in your life?
3. How well do we support and uphold the Rights of Children and young people with disabilities and additional support needs?



Listening to

1. Do you feel you have a say in decisions made about your life?
2. To what extent do you feel children and young people are included in important decisions made by Stirling Council about life in Stirling?
3. What opportunities do you have to influence change in your school and local community?



Developing Learning and Thinking

1. What opportunities do you have to connect and take part in activities with other children and young people in Stirling?
2. How well do you feel we create opportunities for you to develop skills for learning, life and work?
3. What opportunities do you have to learn through play, or by taking part in activities that ask you to think creatively?
4. What does 'leisure' mean to you?
5. How well do you feel we make sure that all children and young people have similar opportunities to learn and participate?

On behalf of Stirling Council, NHS Forth Valley, Police Scotland, The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and the many other organisations who contributed to this report: thank you for being a young person of Stirling. It is our privilege to support you and care for you as you grow up here.

If you need help or this information
supplied in an alternative format
please call 01786 404040.

