

REPORT

# **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child**

Report 2018-21

July 2021

# Introduction

Welcome to **sportscotland**'s first Children's Rights report. This report covers the period 2018-2021. It sets out all the things we have done over the last few years to help protect children's rights under the UNCRC.

The Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic seriously disrupted society. The restrictions put in place to manage the public health crisis had, continue to have, a significant impact on our activities, our partners and the sporting system.

We had to adapt what we do based on what was happening round us. We shifted our focus to prioritise supporting partners and staff to respond to the crisis. This impacted our delivery and our ability to collect data to show our impact against the UNCRC articles. We have therefore outlined progress and included measures where data was available.

## The UNCRC

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child lists the rights you have as a child. Human rights help make sure we live a safe, happy, healthy life.

Everyone has human rights, no matter where they live, what they believe or how they choose to live their lives. Children and young people aged 0-18 have 42 special rights which provide some extra protection to make sure you have the best childhood possible. [Find out more.](#)

### Why do we have to do this report?

You might not know us, but we are the national agency for sport. Our vision is for an active Scotland where everyone benefits from sport. Our mission is to help the people of Scotland get the most from the sporting system.

We work with partners across the country who deliver sport and physical activity opportunities. This could be in a school, club, community or performance-sport setting. We make sure everyone can take part in and get the most from these opportunities.

We have a duty to uphold children and young people's rights in our work, and every three years we have to show what we are doing to achieve this.

## SHANARRI wellbeing indicators

Instead of reporting against each article individually, we have grouped our contribution using the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators:

- Safe
- Healthy
- Achieving
- Nurtured
- Active
- Respected
- Responsible
- Included

Table 1 shows how the Scottish Government guidance proposes the articles can be grouped under these indicators.

**Table 1: UNCRC articles aligned to each wellbeing indicator**

Wellbeing indicator	Suggested links with articles of the UNCRC
<b>Safe</b>	(11) abduction and non-return of children (19) protection from violence, abuse and neglect (22) refugee children (32) child labour (33) drug abuse (34) sexual exploitation (35) abduction, sale and trafficking (36) other forms of exploitation (37) inhumane treatment and detention (38) war and armed conflicts
<b>Healthy</b>	(3) best interests of the child (6) life, survival and development (24) health and health services (39) recovery and rehabilitation of child victims

<b>Achieving</b>	<p>(4) Governments must do all they can to make sure every child can enjoy their rights in systems that promote and protect these rights</p> <p>(18) parental responsibilities and state assistance</p> <p>(28) right to education</p> <p>(29) goals of education</p>
<b>Nurtured</b>	<p>(4) Governments must do all they can to make sure every child can enjoy their rights in systems that promote and protect these rights</p> <p>(5) parental guidance and a child's evolving capacities</p> <p>(18) parental responsibilities and state assistance</p> <p>(20) children deprived of a family</p> <p>(21) adoption</p> <p>(25) review of treatment in care</p> <p>(27) adequate standard of living</p>
<b>Active</b>	<p>(3) best interests of the child</p> <p>(23) children with disabilities</p> <p>(31) leisure, play and culture</p>
<b>Respected</b>	<p>(2) non-discrimination</p> <p>(3) best interests of the child</p> <p>(4) Governments must do all they can to make sure every child can enjoy their rights in systems that promote and protect those rights.</p> <p>(5) parental guidance and a child's evolving capacities</p> <p>(8) protection and preservation of identity</p> <p>(12) respect for the views of the child</p> <p>(13) freedom of expression</p> <p>(14) freedom of thought, belief and religion</p> <p>(16) right to privacy</p> <p>(17) access to information; mass media</p> <p>(18) parental responsibilities and state assistance</p> <p>(30) the right to learn and use the language, customs and religion of their family.</p>
<b>Responsible</b>	<p>(3) best interests of the child</p> <p>(12) respect for the views of the child</p> <p>(14) freedom of thought, conscience and religion</p> <p>(15) freedom of association</p> <p>(40) juvenile justice</p>

<b>Included</b>	(3) best interests of the child (6) life, survival and development (18) parental responsibilities and state assistance (23) children with disabilities (26) social security (27) adequate standard of living
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You can read more about the UNCRC articles and how they are aligned to wellbeing indicators at the following link: [UNCRC articles aligned to each wellbeing indicator.](#)

## Evidence and the views of children and young people

One of our key data sources is our Active Scotland Outcomes Framework (ASOF) survey. We use this to ask children and young people about how they feel they have benefited from sport.

### Our reach

We reach a wide range of children and young people through our programmes. The key figures are:

- **Active Schools:** 313,000 children and young people
- **Club and community sport programmes:** 218,000 children and young people
- **High Performance Athletes:** 108 young athletes

There are also a large number of children and young people involved in smaller programmes detailed throughout this report.

# Safe

## What we do

### **Safeguarding in sport**

Safeguarding is a term that is typically used in the UK to denote measures to protect the well-being and human rights of children (under 18 years old) and protected/vulnerable adults from abuse, harm and neglect.

**sportscotland**, in partnership with Children 1st, work with a range of partners to safeguard children and young people in Scottish sport. This includes Scottish Governing Bodies of sport (SGBs), local authority sports/leisure departments, leisure trusts and sports clubs.

Through our 'Safeguarding in Sport' Service, we aim to help ensure children and young people stay safe and have fun while taking part in sport. We provide advice, consultancy, resources and training for any sports organisation working with children and young people. Our training and resources aim to build people's knowledge and confidence in this area and develop safer sporting environments.

### **Performance lifestyle support**

We support the welfare and wellbeing of young athletes receiving services from the **sportscotland** institute of sport through bespoke, one-to-one performance lifestyle support.

## Our progress

### **Standards for child wellbeing and protection in sport**

The Standards for Child Wellbeing and Protection in Sport and accompanying self-evaluation tool have been developed by the Safeguarding in Sport service for **sportscotland**. Together these enable sports organisations to put measures in place that help them on a journey to achieve these goals and beyond.

### **Child wellbeing and protection resources**

The Safeguarding in Sport Service is continually developing and refreshing resources to support the implementation of the Standards for Child Wellbeing and Protection in Sport.

The resources:

- are applicable for any club, SGB or organisation providing activities for children and young people under 18 years.
- can be used to look at what you already have in place, confirm the good practice that you are already doing and identify and fill gaps in provision.
- can help a new member of staff or volunteer taking on the role of a Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer (CWPO) to understand the range of responsibilities, procedures and guidelines that underpin the role.

### **Child Wellbeing and Protection Training**

sportscotland have developed in partnership with Children 1st two child wellbeing and protection training courses. The training has been developed to provide learners with the knowledge and skills required for their role in sport.

### **Performance lifestyle (PL) support**

Our PL practitioners work one to one with young athletes, taking a confidential and comprehensive approach. The range of support covers:

- Dual career management: the integration of an athletic career alongside studies.
- Transition management: supporting athletes manage changes such as leaving school, junior to senior sport, funding, injury and personal life.
- Professional and personal development: workshops, placements, development opportunities.
- Lifestyle management: integrated planning, family, relationships and personal life.

# Healthy

## What we do

The benefits of taking part in physical activity on health and wellbeing are well proven. We work with partners to help children and young people take part in in a number of ways.

### Active Schools

**sportscotland** works in partnership with all 32 local authorities to invest in and support the Active Schools Network. The network consists of over 400 managers and coordinators dedicated to developing and supporting the delivery of quality sporting opportunities for children and young people.

Active Schools aims to provide more and higher quality opportunities to take part in sport and physical activity before school, during lunchtime and after school. It also aims to develop effective pathways between schools and sports clubs in the local community.

### Club and community sport

We help children and young people benefit from sport in clubs and communities:

- **Community sport hubs:** We work in partnership with all 32 local authorities to invest in and support the development of community sport hubs. Hubs bring together sport clubs and community organisations who want to develop and grow the sporting offering in the community. We support hubs to focus on sustainable, community-led approaches that get clubs working together to develop welcoming, safe and fun environments for sport.
- **Direct Club Investment:** We invest in clubs to provide more and better opportunities for under-represented groups.
- **Scottish Governing Bodies:** We invest in Scottish Governing Bodies (SGBs). SGBs are organisation which govern and administer a sport on a national basis. SGBs are often described as custodians and guardians of their sport.
- **Sports Facilities Fund:** We support capital projects which create or improve places where people take part.
- **Changing Lives Through Sport and Physical Activity:** We work with the Scottish Government, The Robertson Trust and Spirit of 2012 to support organisations to use sport and physical activity to achieve positive individual and community change.

## **Our progress**

### **Impact of Active Schools on participants**

- 97% felt healthier
- 88% felt happier

### **Impact of club sport on children and young people who take part**

- 99% feel healthier
- 66% feel happier

# Achieving

## What we do

Sport and physical activity opportunities are a great way of supporting children's learning and development, helping them develop their talents and abilities to the full.

Participants report that they feel that they are achieving their goals, building their confidence, competence and learning new skills.

## Our progress

### Impact of Active Schools on participants

- 63% feel they have become **better at sport** or other activities
- 66% feel they have learned a **new skill**
- 60% feel more **confident** in sport or physical activity
- 68% feel they are **achieving their goal**
- **Fitness and wellbeing** were the two most common goals

### Impact of club sport on children and young people who take part

- 77% feel they have become **better at sport** or other activities
- 71% feel they have learned a **new skill**
- 75% feel more **confident** in sport or physical activity
- 90% feel they are **achieving their goal**
- **Fitness and wellbeing** were the two most common goals

### Young Ambassadors

- 85% of Young Ambassadors developed **organisational skills**

### Young people coaching qualifications

We lowered the age limit for accessing new coaching qualifications. This helps young people start their coaching journey. We enabled further education partners to deliver coaching qualifications. This helps reach young people who haven't accessed formal coach education. We worked with sports to develop our generic learning content around coaching young people into their sport-specific context. This work was paused during Covid-19. We will restart when partners capacity increases.

# Nurtured

## What we do

In 2015, **sportscotland** was designated as a Corporate Parent under Part 9 of the [Children and Young People Act 2014 \(Scotland\)](#), alongside organisations including local authorities, health boards, the police and other public bodies.

## Our progress

**Corporate parenting:** We published our first three-year corporate parenting plan in 2016. This set out our commitments to improving the lives of Scotland's care-experienced young people through participation in sport.

Our [2016-19 corporate parenting progress report](#) outlines the progress we have made so far. Key examples are that we:

- Included corporate parenting as a key driver for inclusion in our corporate strategy
- Gave care experience the same importance as protected characteristics like disability and race. We updated our internal policies to reflect this.
- Helped local authorities collect data on care-experienced participants in Active Schools. This helped them review how to make opportunities more accessible.
- Considered the needs of care-experienced young people when we developed the new Standards for Child Wellbeing and Protection in Sport.
- Funded Who Cares? Scotland and Active Communities to deliver sport and physical activity to care-experienced young people in Renfrewshire through our Changing Lives through Sport and Physical Activity fund.
- Worked with local authorities to support their work with care-experienced young people through community sport hubs and Active Schools.

**Supporting young people in performance:** We researched the experiences and perceptions of parents, guardians and carers of young athletes in the performance pathway in Scotland. This will help sports organisations support parents, parents, guardians and carers with the skills and knowledge to better support young athletes. We piloted ways to improve physical preparation in teenage judoka athletes. The findings were positive. We hope to expand these behavioural science techniques to benefit other young athletes.

### **Impact of Active Schools on participants**

- 82% have made **friends**
- 85% feel **included**
- 80% feel **interested**

### **Impact of club sport on children and young people who take part**

- 96% have made **friends**
- 96% feel **included**
- 91% feel **interested**

# Active

## What we do

Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities. Our school and community sport programmes offer a wide range of activities that children and young people can take part in.

## Our progress

Active Schools offer a wide range of activities that participants can take part in, and there are a wide variety of sports clubs across the country where children and young people can take part. This has a significant impact on how active they are:

### Impact of Active Schools on participants

- 4% went from being inactive to active
- 94% were motivated to be active in the future
- 67% were helped by Active Schools to be more active outside school

**Table 2: Comparison of activity levels of children and young people in Active Schools**

	Activity levels excluding Active Schools	Activity levels including Active Schools
<b>Active</b>	66%	75%
<b>Some activity</b>	24%	19%
<b>Inactive</b>	10%	6%

### Impact of club sport on children and young people who take part

- 4% went from being inactive to active
- 62% said they would be less active if they didn't take part in their club
- 98% of 8–12-year old participants felt that being part of their club made them want to keep doing sport and physical activity when they grew up.

**Table 2: Comparison of activity levels of children and young people in club-based activity**

	<b>Activity levels excluding Club Activity</b>	<b>Activity levels including Club Activity</b>
<b>Active</b>	71%	91%
<b>Some activity</b>	25%	9%
<b>Inactive</b>	4%	0%

# Respected

## What we do

The articles aligned to this indicator resonate with our commitment that inclusion underpins everything we do.

## Our progress

**Equality and Sport research 2020:** This report summarises the latest evidence on equality and sport. It helped us review progress and identify further action. The recommendations focus on strategy and action. This will inform our equality outcomes for 2021-25.

**The Equality Standard for Sport:** The Equality Standard for Sport is a crucial tool to support SGBs to understand their membership and respond to equality. We also support SGBs through awareness, knowledge and training.

**sportscotland School Sport Award:** The School Sport Award is a national initiative designed to encourage schools to put young people at the heart of decision making, planning and implementation of extra-curricular school sport. The award also encourages sporting links between schools and the communities around them, providing opportunities for young people to progress. We provide tools to help school self-assess their current school sport offering, to engage with young people on their needs as well as resources and ideas to support continuous improvement.

**Fit for Girls Solutions workshops:** In partnership with the Youth Sport Trust (YST), we developed Fit for Girls Solutions workshops. Young leaders facilitate the sessions. They help local practitioners understand the needs of girls and young women in sport.

**Local partner support for women and girls:** We supported local partners develop plans for girl's specific delivery. In 2019, we helped City of Edinburgh establish a think tank to drive an improvement plan for female participation. This is now part of their new sport and physical activity strategy.

**Scottish Women and Girls in Sport Advisory Board:** The Women and Girls in Sport Advisory Board was established to provide independent advice to the Minister for Public Health and Sport on female participation and awareness raising in all areas of sport and physical activity. We supported the board to develop recommendations to drive women and girls' participation. These were published in the 2019 report Levelling the Playing Field. We shared the report with local and national partners.

**Active Girls Day:** We run Active Girls Day each October. It encourages girls and young women to get involved in a day of sporting celebration with the parallel goal of increasing female participation in PE, physical activity and sport. We supported the

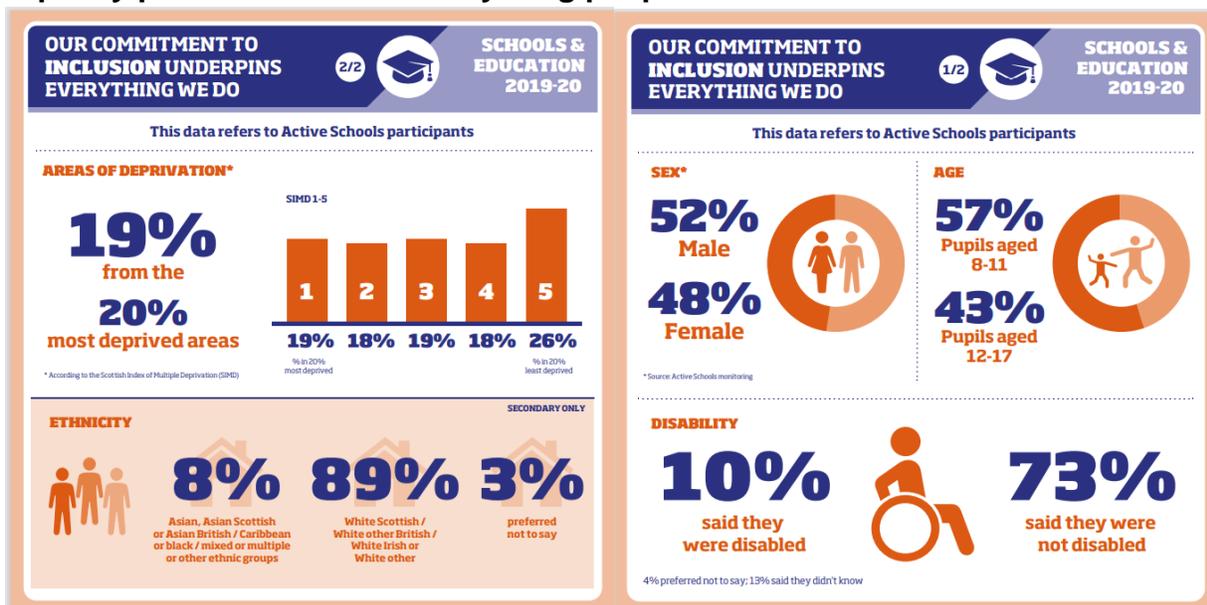
Young People's Sport Panel to inspire their peers to become #ActiveGirls by developing a promotional toolkit and online resource pack. We promote the positive work of our partners across our social media channels.

**Women and Girls in Sport Fund evaluation:** The Women and Girls in Sport Fund evaluation found the projects successfully supported women and girls to engage in physical activity and sport. Participants noted the activity had a positive effect on their physical and mental health, increased their confidence and helped them develop teamwork, leadership and communication skills. We produced a learning note to highlight the key factors which deliverers should consider when designing projects for women and girls. We shared the findings with partners and published the resources on our website: Women and Girls in Sport Fund evaluation.

**Period Equality Grant:** We managed the distribution of the Scottish Government's £50,000 fund to support access to free sanitary products in sports clubs. These grants supported 497 sport clubs across Scotland to provide free sanitary products to their members, participants and visitors.

**The sportscotland national training centre Inverclyde:** The sportscotland national training centre Inverclyde is an important part of the landscape in disability sport. It ensures disabled participants, from young people through to performance athletes, can experience world-class, fully integrated, multi-sports facilities. We continued to promote the centre as a leading residential facility for mainstream and additional support needs (ASN) schools in Scotland. We provided a two-day residential experience for four ASN schools in Scotland. We provided a two-day residential experience for four ASN schools and two schools from our most deprived communities. Further work to build on this engagement was delayed due to Covid-19.

### Equality profile of children and young people in Active Schools



## **Equality profile of children and young people in clubs**

- 37% of respondents were female; 63% male
- 10% came from the most deprived areas in Scotland
- 32% came from the least deprived areas in Scotland
- 12% said they were disabled; 84% said they were not disabled

# Responsible

## What we do

We believe that young people can make a valuable contribution to influencing and leading in sport and contributing to building a world class sporting system. We lead a number of programmes to develop young people into leadership roles, and give them opportunities to have their voices heard.

### Young People's Sport Panel

The Young People's Sport Panel provides a national platform to represent the voice of young people across Scotland. The panel influence and shape the future of Scottish Scotland and raise its profile. The programme's principle is that young people's views are heard and valued, and they have the opportunity to influence decision making and drive change.

### Young Ambassadors

Young Ambassadors is a key element of **sportscotland's** contribution to developing young people as leaders in sport. We believe young people make a meaningful and important contribution as leaders in sport, and they should have access to a range of leadership roles reflecting their interests and abilities.

Each year, two pupils from every secondary school in Scotland have the opportunity to be selected as Young Ambassadors. They promote sport and motivate and inspire other young people to get involved in sport.

### Competition organiser training

We offer competition organiser training to help secondary school pupils aged 14+ develop as leaders in sport. Competition organisers have responsibility to plan, organise and deliver events and competitions. They receive training and support to help them experience and identify the essential aspects of well-organised, safe, fun, fair and inclusive intra-school competition.

## Our progress

**Young People's Sport Panel:** The Young People' Sport Panel has:

- Contributed to national policy and strategy consultations
- Co-designed and facilitated the development of Fit for Girls Solutions workshops
- Developed Walk and Talk campaign with the Scottish Association for Mental Health (SAMH) to encourage people to combine physical activity with social connection.

**Young Ambassadors:** There have been over 5,000 Young Ambassadors in Scotland since the programme started in 2012. 650 new Young Ambassadors have the opportunity to attend one of our national conferences in order to provide understanding of the role.

### **Impact of Active Schools on participants**

- 18% had been a sports leader, coach, sports captain or member of a sports council
- 75% of sports leaders and coaches said being part of Active Schools had helped them learn a new skill

### **Impact of club sport on children and young people who take part**

- 6% reported they were coaches, volunteers or other
- 83% said that coach and volunteer development helped them learn a new skill

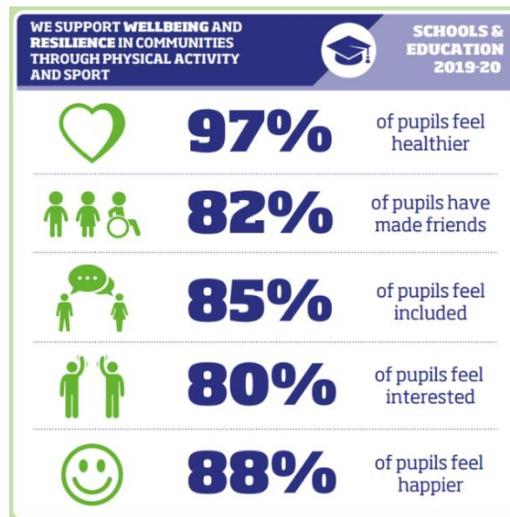
# Included

## What we do

Alongside the work to make sport more inclusive, we can also look at how children and young people feel included. Are they making friends, and feeling closer to their community?

## Our progress

### Impact of Active Schools on participants



### Impact of club sport on children and young people who take part

- 96% have made friends
- 96% feel included
- 91% feel interested

# Next steps

## Our key programmes

The programmes described in this report have wide ranging impacts across the rights within the UNCRC. The key next step is to progress these and continue to aim for the greatest impact on children and young people in Scotland.

In addition to this, we need to progress specific changes:

- **Targeted local work:** We will be working with our local authority partners to develop more targeted approaches to address equality, diversity and inclusion in sport. This helps a wider range of children and young people experience the benefits of sport.
- **Safeguarding:** We are piloting an online Tool to help clubs assess their child wellbeing and protection policies and practices against the Standards and produce an Action Plan with links to SGB specific resources and generic Children 1st resources, templates and good practice.
- **Child Wellbeing and Protection Training:** We will roll out further awareness and training resources for child wellbeing and protection.
- **Corporate Parenting:** We have paused the development of our refreshed Corporate Parenting Plan 2020-23 due to the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic (Covid-19). We remain committed to making a difference to the lives of care-experienced young people and will resume this as soon as possible.
- **Young Ambassadors:** We will focus on developing resources, tools and online training to support and influence new and existing Young Ambassadors for the year ahead.
- **Fit for Girls Workshops:** We moved these workshops online due to Covid-19. This will be launched in summer 2021.
- **Young People's Sport Panel:** We will continue to support the panel to develop initiatives which respond to the needs of children and young people, such as Kit For All and #FeelYourPersonalBest.
- **Mental health:** We will work with SAMH to roll out mental health awareness training to Active Schools, community sport hubs, sport development and SGB staff.
- **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion:** We will respond to the Equality and Sport Research 2020 in a new equality, diversity and inclusion approach.

We recognise that the UNCRC will be made part of the law in Scotland. We're looking forward to working with more children, young people and other partners to understand what this means for us and the work that we do.

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