

# RIGHTS

# RIGHT

# NOW!



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## About Together

Together (Scottish Alliance for Children’s Rights) is an alliance of almost 500 children’s organisations, academics and interested professionals. Our vision is that all children in Scotland have their human rights respected, protected and fulfilled. To achieve this, we work to inspire and enable everyone in Scotland to put children’s human rights at the heart of everything they do.

## Introduction

This report outlines Together’s key findings, insights, and recommendations from the Rights Right Now! (RRN!) project. RRN! was established as a pilot project to support children and young people’s meaningful and inclusive participation in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) implementation programme and the work of the Strategic Implementation Board (SIB)<sup>1</sup>. Together coordinated the project in partnership with six Together members: Aberlour, Carers Trust Scotland, Children in Scotland, Scottish Commission for People with Learning Disabilities (SCLD), Scottish Youth Parliament (SYP) and Who Cares? Scotland. The pilot was supported by 17 Together members who acted as Associates, alongside Professor Laura Lundy from Queen’s University Belfast and the Observatory for Children’s Human Rights in Scotland.



Figure 1: Participants of Rights Right Now!

Rights Right Now! was originally known as the Interim Children and Young People’s Consortium. It was renamed by the children and young people involved to create a sense of identity and ownership. The new name demonstrates their commitment to universal rights awareness and highlights their calls for UNCRC implementation to happen urgently. The pilot project started in August 2021, with an extension from January to mid-April 2022 to support transition arrangements for the next phase.

<sup>1</sup> [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\) Strategic Implementation Board - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/resources/documents/2021/08/United-Nations-Convention-on-the-Rights-of-the-Child-UNCRC-Strategic-Implementation-Board-2021-2025.pdf)

# 1. Rights Right Now! (the Interim Children and Young People's Consortium)

## 1.1. Background

In March 2021, the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill<sup>2</sup> was passed unanimously by the Scottish Parliament. When commenced, this will make children's UNCRC rights binding in law. It marks the start of the journey towards true and meaningful transformational change for children and their families.

*"It must be remembered that the UNCRC is a floor, not a ceiling for rights protection"<sup>3</sup>*

A three-year programme has been set up to implement the UNCRC and provisions within the Bill. To provide strategic and collaborative leadership, Scottish Government established a Strategic Implementation Board (SIB). This is made up of members who represent the roles of duty bearers and rights holders from a range of sectors including those working in Scottish Government, housing, health, education, police, justice, social work, and children's rights organisations.

Effective implementation of the UNCRC has to be underpinned by a commitment to proactively seek the views and experiences of children from the outset of decision-making processes. Children's views must be taken seriously and used to inform legislation, policy, practice, and service design. This aligns with Article 12, one of the general principles of the UNCRC.

*"State parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child."<sup>5</sup>*

In recognition of this, Scottish Government committed to support the inclusive and impactful participation of children and young people in the work of the SIB and wider UNCRC implementation. Scottish Government approached Together to convene a diverse group of members to create an interim Children and Young People's Consortium through

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.parliament.scot/-/media/files/legislation/bills/current-bills/united-nations-convention-on-the-rights-of-the-child-incorporation-scotland-bill/stage-3/bill-as-passed.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> [socrr-22\\_final.pdf \(togetherscotland.org.uk\)](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Microsoft Word - CRC-C-GC-12 advance unedited for distribution.doc \(ohchr.org\)](#)

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.cypcs.org.uk/rights/uncrc/articles/article-12/>

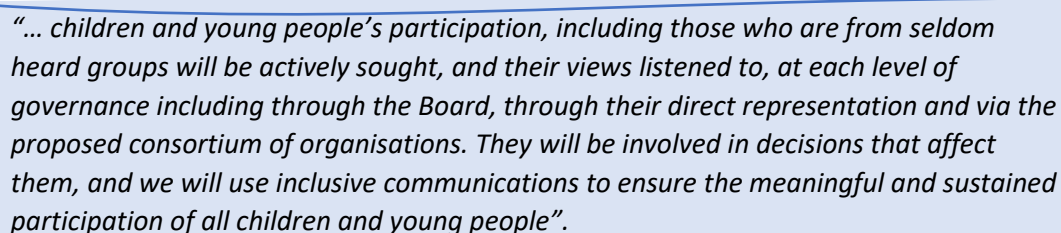
which children and young people could be at the heart of SIB's collective leadership and decision-making. The specific aims of the pilot project were to:

- Build partnerships with Together members that already have trusting relationships with children and young people in order to strengthen SIB's capacity to involve children and young people with a broad range of experiences and backgrounds;
- Develop, document and disseminate innovative best practice on children and young people's participation in SIB in a way that it be built upon through the ultimate Children and Young People's Consortium.

Scottish Government anticipates being able to select the new Consortium Coordinator by April 2022 through a formal tendering process.

## 1.2. Strategic governance and the role of RRN!

As set out in the Scottish Government's Action Plan for Children's Rights,<sup>6</sup> RRN! is positioned at the same level of governance as the SIB and should oversee the four key workstreams of the Scottish Government's UNCRC implementation programme. A principle set out in the SIB Terms of Reference<sup>7</sup> is that:



*"... children and young people's participation, including those who are from seldom heard groups will be actively sought, and their views listened to, at each level of governance including through the Board, through their direct representation and via the proposed consortium of organisations. They will be involved in decisions that affect them, and we will use inclusive communications to ensure the meaningful and sustained participation of all children and young people".*

As such, it was expected that the children and young people involved in RRN! should be able to help shape the SIB agenda and hold both SIB and Scottish Government to account.

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/progressing-human-rights-children-scotland-action-plan-2021-2024/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/uncrc-strategic-implementation-board-terms-of-reference/>

## UNCRC 3 Year Implementation Programme Overview

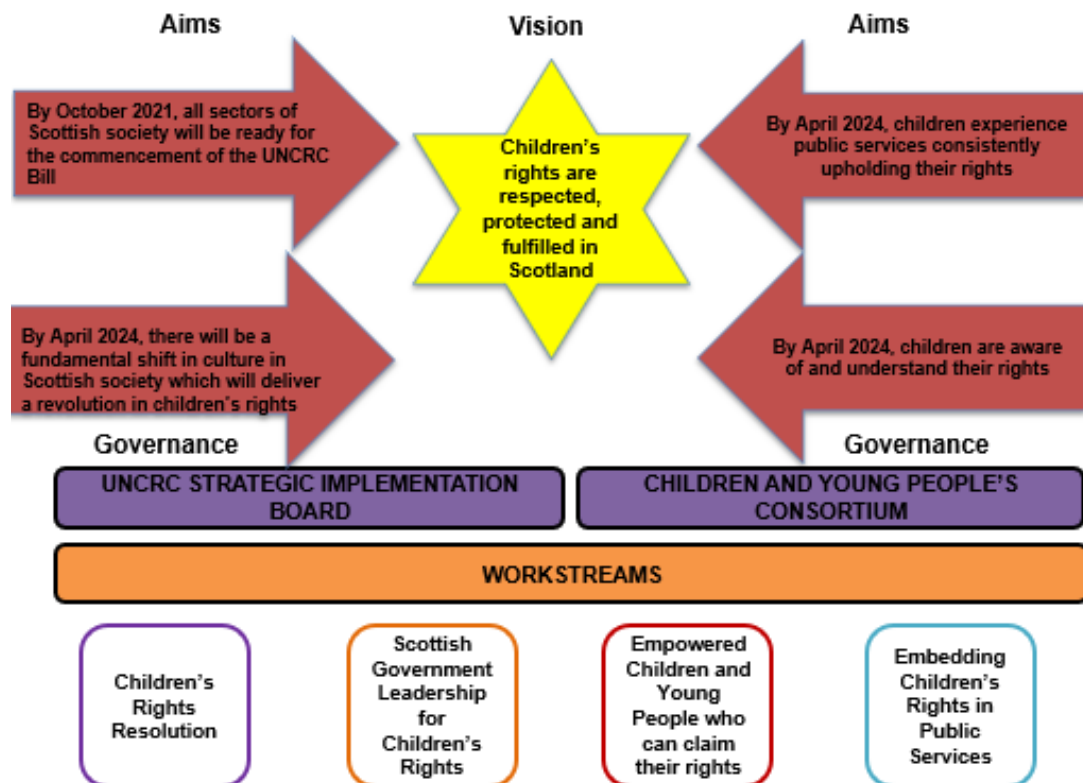


Figure 2: Scottish Government's UNCRC Implementation Programme

### 1.3. Staffing and resourcing

Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights)

To support the delivery of the Rights Right Now! a member of staff was seconded (three days a week) from a member organisation to take on the role of Rights and Participation Lead.<sup>8</sup> Due to the short-term nature of this project the staff member required in-depth experience of delivering participation and engagement with children and young people on a national level. Additionally, the project was supported by a Participation Intern (three days a week) and the Membership and Outreach Assistant as an extension to their role (one day a week). The project was initially supported by an independent consultant (one day a week), with expertise in delivering trauma informed participation, to offer advice and mentoring. Staffing was reviewed and revised halfway through the project as it became clear that there was not sufficient capacity to deliver the full workplan for the pilot project.

Partners

Children and young people participating were supported by either one or two members of participation staff from their partner organisation. In recognition that high quality

<sup>8</sup> [Appendix 1 – Rights and Participation Lead Job Description](#)

participation requires resourcing, staffing, and funding; each individual partner organisation was provided with £500 a month to cover staffing costs. In addition, money was available to further accessibility, for example to support with translation and interpreters.

#### Children and young people

As part of RRN! participating children and young person were remunerated with £20 per session. This was provided either as a voucher or as a cash payment and was distributed by partners. Payment in any format acknowledges the contribution of time, energy and expertise and values lived experience in the same way as *“professional efforts and expertise”*<sup>9</sup>.

### 1.4. Partner recruitment

The first phase of the recruitment process involved developing success criteria to support the selection of partners (members supporting children and young people). Selection criteria covered the following:

- Diversity of experience and identity of the children and young people involved, with a particular emphasis on marginalised communities and seldom heard groups;
- Children and young people who have previously been involved in engagement around the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill or children’s rights;<sup>10</sup>
- Capacity of member organisations to support children and young people at every stage of the process;
- Methods of engagement to support children and young people to participate in the process.

Applications to the project<sup>11</sup> were open to all Together members and advertised through our UNCRC Implementation Strategy Group <sup>12</sup>and our e-newsletter.

The original plan was to recruit 18 children and young people from six partnership organisations. A core group of 14 children and young people from six organisations participated in the project. Children and young people came from across Scotland, ranging in age from 10-17 at the start of the project, and had diverse lived experiences. One of the partner organisations extended its reach by involving a wider group of 10 children and young people from two of their services. This included young people over the age of 18 due to their lived experiences.

The assessment and selection process of partners was undertaken by an expert panel, including Professor Kay Tisdall, Chair of Childhood Policy, University of Edinburgh, Professor Laura Lundy, Queen’s University Belfast, and experts in participation and trauma informed approaches.

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<sup>9</sup> [Paying people with lived experience for their participation \(scottishhumanrights.com\)](https://scottishhumanrights.com)

<sup>10</sup> [Appendix 6 – RRN! Application Criteria](#)

<sup>11</sup> [Appendix 7 – RRN! Application Form](#)

<sup>12</sup> [UNCRC Implementation Strategy Group Terms of Reference](#)



Additionally, Together members had the opportunity to express interest in becoming an “associate”. The initial role of the associate was to support the project, offer strategic advice and expertise, participate in training sessions and to capture the views of a broader range of children and young people.

## 1.5. Training and induction

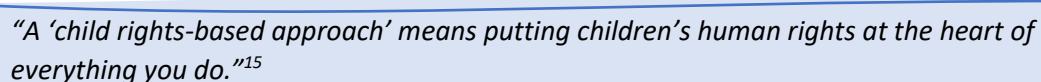
Once partners had been selected, individual meetings were set up with organisations to discuss the project and provide further information. This provided the opportunity to find out about the needs of the organisation, including accessibility requirements and support arrangements for individual children and young people.

Following individual sessions, a collective induction session took place with partners to explore accessibility, communication, trauma informed practice and monitoring and evaluation. Additionally, a training session was hosted with both partners and associates. During the session, Professor Laura Lundy introduced the Lundy Model. Paul Sullivan, Sector Engagement Lead at CELCIS, delivered a presentation on trauma informed practice in relation to engagement as part of the Independent Care Review.<sup>13</sup>

Following the success of the training delivered by Professor Laura Lundy, Together hosted a follow up discussion session, a ‘Coffee Conversation with Laura Lundy’, which was open invitation and attended by over 30 partners, associates and Together members. Associates were sent a weekly update email<sup>14</sup> which highlighted the work of RRN! and additional opportunities for children and young people's participation taking place across Scotland.

## 1.6. Methods and approach

Child-rights based



*“A ‘child rights-based approach’ means putting children’s human rights at the heart of everything you do.”<sup>15</sup>*

Core to the development of RRN! was that children and young people should be involved throughout and given clear feedback about how their views have been used to influence the work of the SIB.

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<sup>13</sup> [ICR Evidence Framework v2-1.pdf \(carereview.scot\)](#)

<sup>14</sup> [Appendix 8 - Example of weekly email update to Associates](#)

<sup>15</sup> [socrr-22\\_final.pdf \(togetherscotland.org.uk\)](#)



The project was underpinned by the Lundy Model of Participation<sup>16</sup> and supported by the expertise of Professor Laura Lundy. The Lundy Model provides a practical way of understanding a child’s right to participate. The model is made up of four key concepts: Space, Voice, Audience and Influence. These concepts stand alone, but their interconnectivity creates the necessary conditions to enable meaningful and impactful child participation.



Figure 3 - The Lundy Model of Participation<sup>17</sup>

### Trauma informed

RRN! adopted a trauma informed approach throughout, taking into consideration the physical and emotional needs of everyone in the process, including those participating and delivering the project.<sup>18 19</sup> This can mean balancing the benefits gained from participating in certain discussions or processes against the potential risks or triggering experiences. Creating a trauma informed shared space with children and adults provides a foundation for future action and opportunities for impact and influence. It challenges the way things have always been done, forces adults out of their comfort zone, disrupts power dynamics, establishes new norms and encourages the establishment of new structures based on the principles of accessibility, inclusivity, safety and creativity. From this starting point, children and young people can question, challenge and foster a dialogue with adults which will ultimately enable them to feel confident to hold adults accountable.

<sup>16</sup> ['Voice' Is Not Enough: Conceptualising Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child on JSTOR](#)

<sup>17</sup> [The Lundy Model of Participation.](#)

<sup>18</sup> [Research-Integrity-Framework-RIF-on-Domestic-Violence-and-Abuse-DVA-November-2020.pdf \(womensaid.org.uk\)](#)

<sup>19</sup> [Supporting documents - Trauma-informed practice: toolkit - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

We heard directly from children and young people about the importance of being able to feel safe when participating. Children and young people worked to establish what a safe space would look and feel like in the initial session by developing a group agreement. This incorporated values, principles and practical concerns, including being respected, feeling listened to, working as a team, accessibility, having different options to participate, making things less formal, thinking carefully about language (avoiding the use of acronyms) and being able to have fun together. The group agreement was developed into a top tips document which was a paper shared with SIB members and sent in advance to individual attending SIB members.<sup>20</sup>

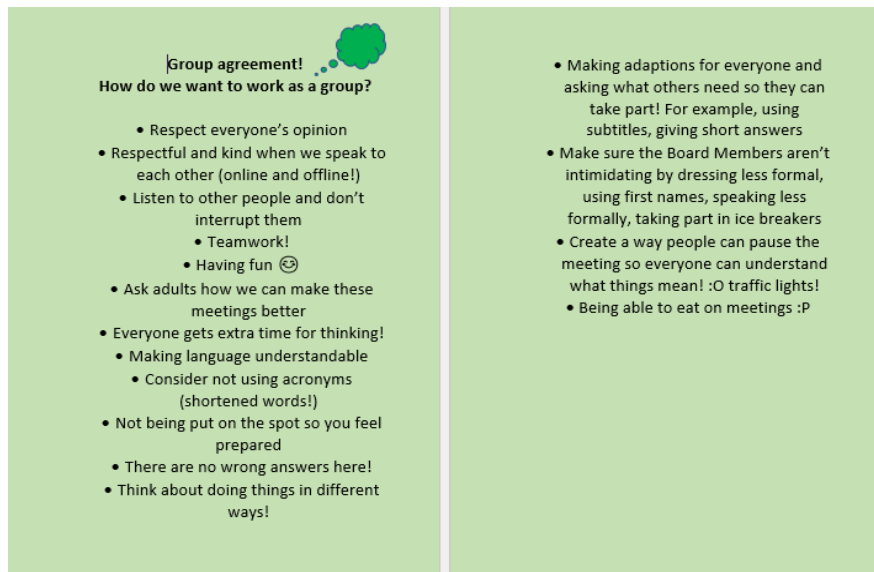


Figure 4 - RRN! Group Agreement

Support workers with established and trusting relationships with the children and young people were involved throughout. In advance of sessions, support workers met with children to go through questions and activities to help them feel prepared and comfortable to participate. They attended RRN! meetings and were available following the session if support was required or a child or young person wanted to raise a concern.

*“Young people told us they felt in control of the meetings and that they enjoyed the prep meetings with us, which were guided by the very useful 'info/activities' documents.” (Partner evaluation)*

#### Engagement model

The engagement model established for RRN! involved developing a safe child and adult shared space, which took the form of online meetings. This was influenced by the logistics

<sup>20</sup> [Appendix 2 – Top Tips document](#)

of facilitating a group or children, young people and adults from different parts of Scotland, alongside the continued challenge of COVID-19.

Initially, online meetings took place every three weeks. Following feedback from partners, this was changed to monthly to allow more time to fully prepare. Information and preparation materials were sent to partners 10 days in advance of each session.<sup>21</sup> A week prior to each session taking place, partners met with Together online to discuss the project's progress and upcoming session.

A mixed method approach to project delivery was taken throughout RRN! to enable children and young people to provide their views in a variety of different ways. This included preparatory sessions with support workers, anonymous feedback surveys<sup>22</sup> and Jamboards,<sup>23</sup> and creatively using crafts. Two sets of resource packs, including pens, paper and creative materials, were sent to children and young people to help them feel equipped to participate in each session.



*Figure 5 - Resource packs sent to RRN! Members*

A maximum of three SIB members attended each RRN! session. SIB members alternated to give children and young people the opportunity to interact with the diverse membership. As the Chair of the SIB, Michael Chalmers was the consistent member and acted as a key link between RRN! and the SIB. During the duration of the project, RRN! meetings were attended by 11 individual SIB members and three members of the Scottish Government Empowered Children and Young People team.

#### Responding to additional opportunities

As the project progressed and RRN! became more established, the number of opportunities available to the children and young people increased. A total of 13 engagement requests were received, including to support the development of a child friendly version of the Action Plan for Children's Rights, Police Scotland engagement on event and protest service delivery and the Scottish Parliament Health, Community and Sports Committee inquiry into children and young people's health and wellbeing.<sup>24</sup> When deciding whether to accept these

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<sup>21</sup> [Appendix 3 - Example of preparation materials \(session 6\)](#)

<sup>22</sup> [Appendix 4 – Anonymous feedback surveys](#)

<sup>23</sup> [Appendix 5 – Example of Jamboards \(session 2\)](#)

<sup>24</sup> [Health, Social Care and Sport Committee, Health and wellbeing of children and young people.](#)

opportunities, RRN! had to choose which aligned most closely with the strategic direction of the project, in addition to considering available capacity. Children and young people took part in four additional engagement opportunities, this included two Scottish Government rights awareness sessions, a Theory of Change<sup>25</sup> session and Together’s State of Children’s Rights Report launch. The model of establishing smaller thematic groups helped to give effect to children and young people’s call to see action taking place. Additional opportunities were shared with the Associates through the regular email updates.

## 1.7. Monitoring and evaluation

Anonymous evaluation took place with children and young people at the end of every RRN! session using Jamboards to collect their views. The Jamboard pages were kept simple and used visual aids such as emojis or images to help children to think about the questions<sup>26</sup>. Each time, children and young people were asked what they enjoyed about the session, to name a special moment and about what they would improve. Feedback was incorporated into the following sessions.



Figure 6 - Example of Children and Young People’s Evaluation Jamboard

At the end of the project, children and young people were given an optional online survey<sup>27</sup> to fill in. This included six questions asking them about their experience of RRN!. They were also invited to share feedback through a drawing, video, piece of writing or any other format that they felt comfortable with. In the final session, a game with various questions

<sup>25</sup> [Observatory of Children’s Human Rights Scotland, Theory of Change.](#)

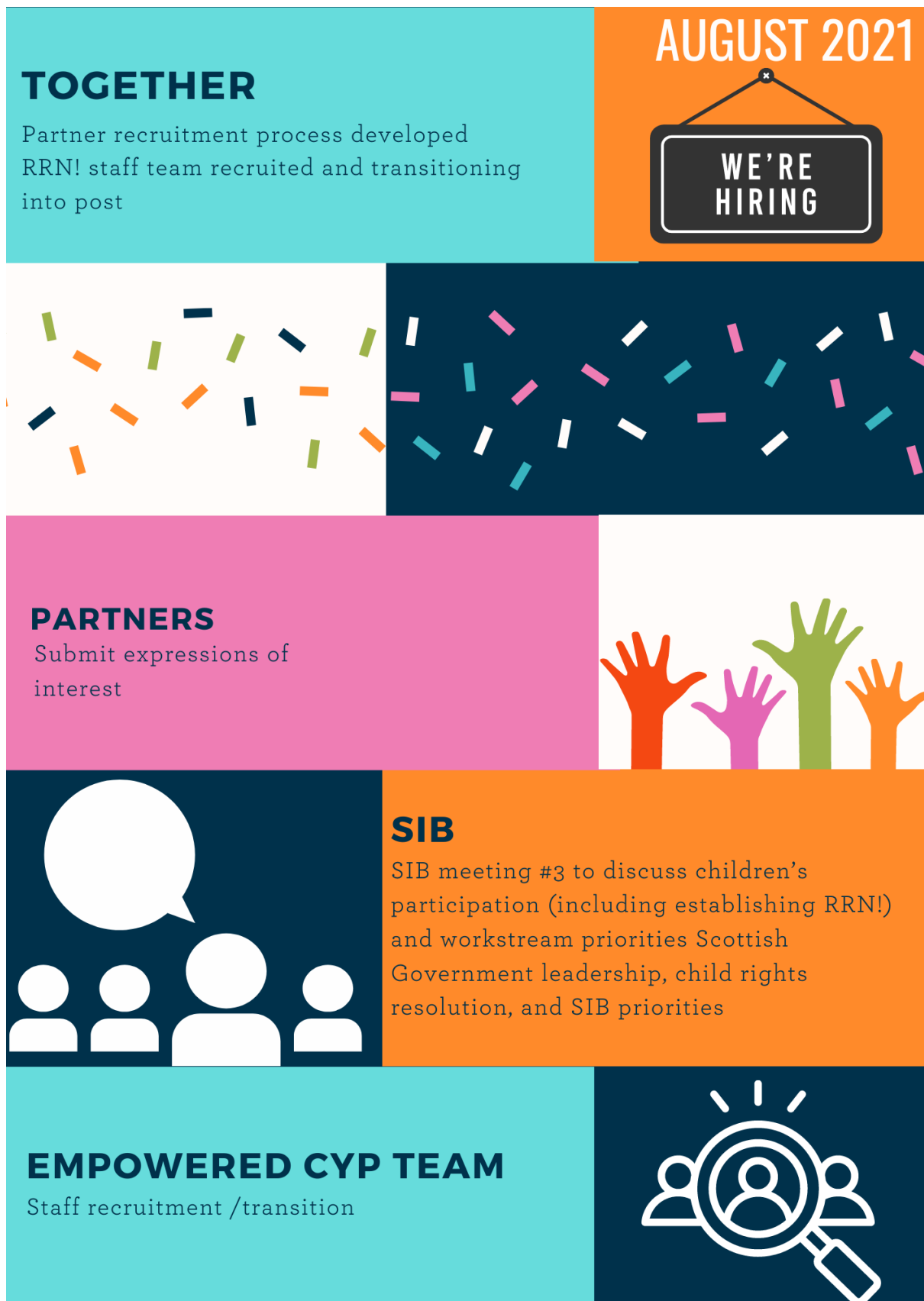
<sup>26</sup> [Appendix 9 – Example of Children and Young People’s Evaluation Jamboard](#)

<sup>27</sup> [Appendix 10 – Children and Young People’s end of project survey](#)

(including fun questions unrelated to RRN!) was used to ask children about anything that they would have changed, what they would do differently and how it felt to engage with decision makers. The quotes included throughout this report are drawn from this feedback.

In addition, the Observatory on Children's Human Rights was commissioned to undertake reflective focus group discussions with key stakeholders in the project. These discussions provided the opportunity to reflect on their experiences prior to, mid-way, and at the end of the project. Through the sessions, the Observatory drew out what stakeholders had found to be the strengths and challenges of the project and discuss the most significant moments from their perspective. It also provided an opportunity for stakeholders to influence and inform the recommendations made in this report.

## 1.8. Timeline



## TOGETHER

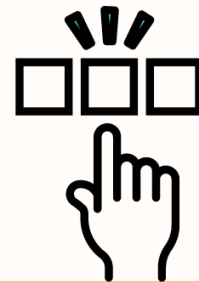
RRN! staff team in post  
RRN! child protection training  
RRN! Rights and Participation Lead presents to SIB

SEPTEMBER 2021



## PARTNERS

Partner selection  
1:1 meetings with Together  
Induction session  
Training and awareness session (also including associates)  
Recruit children and young people.



## SIB

SIB meeting #4 with Children's Parliament presenting on children's participation and engagement, an update on RRN!, UNICEF UK presentation on international evidence and learning on UNCRC implementation



## TOGETHER

Development of questions, activities and information briefing for children and young people for session 1  
Briefing paper for SIB following RRN! meeting

## OCTOBER 2021



## RRN!

RRN! meeting #1  
Introduction and exploring key issues for children and young people

## PARTNERS

Partner meeting #1  
Partners preparatory meetings with children and young people



NEW  
**UPDATE**

## SIB

SIB meeting #5 with update on UK Supreme Court judgment, RRN! update, reflections from Education Scotland and Police Scotland, the Promise and UNCRC implementation update  
4 SIB members attend RRN!



## TOGETHER

NOVEMBER 2021

Development of questions, activities and information briefing for children and young people for session 2

Partner meeting 2

RRN! meeting 2- Action Plan on Progressing Children's Human Rights

Write up of findings from engagement around Action Plan on Progressing Children's Human Rights

Briefing paper for SIB following RRN! meeting

RRN! Rights and Participation Lead presents at SIB



## RRN!

RRN! meeting #2

Action Plan on Progressing Children's Human Rights

## PARTNERS

Partner meeting #2

Preparatory meetings with children and young people



## SIB

SIB meeting #6 with UNCRC implementation update, proposals for targeted engagement on response to UK Supreme Court judgment, introduction to Theory of Change work and RRN! update.

4 SIB members attend RRN!



## EMPOWERED CYP TEAM

Empowered Children and Young People Programme lead in post

'Launch of Progressing the Human Rights of Children in Scotland: action plan 2021 to 2024'



## TOGETHER

DECEMBER 2021

RRN! Together and Empowered Children and Young People and team partnership meeting (developed RRN!/SG Working Agreement)  
Development of questions, activities and information briefing for children and young people for session 3 & 4  
RRN! Strategic Lead in post  
Briefing paper for SIB following RRN! meeting 3 & 4  
RRN! Together and Empowered Children and Young People team partnership meeting



## RRN!

RRN! meeting #3 - The goal of the interim consortium  
RRN! meeting #4 - Prioritising key issues and festive fun

## PARTNERS

Partner meeting #3  
Preparatory meetings with children and young people



## SIB

3 SIB member attend meeting #3  
1 SIB member attends meeting #4

## EMPOWERED CYP TEAM

RRN!, Together, Empowered Children and Young People team and team partnership meeting (developed Partnership Agreement)  
Empowered Children and Young People team shared the SG Spectrum of Participation framework with RRN!  
2 members of Empowered Children and Young People team attend RRN!  
Empowered Children and Young People team produced a child friendly update on RRN! input into the Children's Rights Action Plan

## TOGETHER

# JANUARY 2022

RRN! Together and Empowered Children and Young People and team partnership meeting  
Development of questions, activities and information briefing for children and young people  
Coffee conversation with Professor Laura Lundy for Together members  
Liaison meeting with RRN! team and Theory of Change team  
Briefing paper for SIB following RRN! meeting



## RRN!

RRN! meeting #5 - Rights awareness session

## PARTNERS

Partner meeting #5  
Preparatory meeting with children and young people  
Coffee conversation with Professor Laura Lundy for Together members



## SIB

SIB meeting #7 with UNCRC implementation update, update on progress in addressing UK Supreme Court judgment, update on Commencement Order, RRN! update, Theory of Change update

## EMPOWERED CYP TEAM

Empowered Children and Young People team created accessible minutes from SIB meeting for RRN!  
RRN! Together and Empowered Children and Young People team partnership meeting  
1 member of the Empowered Children and Young People team attend RRN!



## TOGETHER

# FEBRUARY 2022

RRN! Together and Empowered Children and Young People team partnership meeting  
Development of questions, activities and information briefing for children and young people  
Liaison meeting with RRN! team and Empowered Children and Young People team re. Rights Awareness Campaign work  
Theory of Change session with RRN!  
Briefing paper for SIB following RRN! meeting  
Liaison meeting with RRN! team, Professor Laura Lundy and Empowered Children and Young People team re. SIB Input (and Deep Dive session)



## RRN!

RRN! meeting #6  
Thinking about feedback loops and introduction to rights awareness campaign  
Theory of Change session with RRN!

## PARTNERS

Partner meeting #6 - Preparatory meetings with children and young people

## SIB

SIB meeting #8 with UNCRC programme board update, update on addressing UK Supreme Court judgment, follow up on commencement paper, public private and individual sectors duty, RRN! update, discussion of future agendas

## EMPOWERED CYP TEAM

Created accessible minutes from SIB meeting for RRN! and child friendly feedback on Ipsos survey work at RRN! meeting  
RRN! Together and Empowered CYP team partnership meeting  
Tender for new Consortium released  
3 members of the Empowered CYP team attend RRN!  
Liaison meeting with RRN! team and Empowered CYP team re Rights Awareness Campaign work  
Liaison meeting with RRN! team, Professor Laura Lundy and Empowered CYP team re SIB Input (and Deep Dive session)  
Development of Invite and Research Overview for RRN! to join Rights Awareness Sub-group

## TOGETHER

MARCH 2022

RRN! Together and Empowered Children and Young People team partnership meeting  
Liaison meeting with RRN! team and Empowered Children and Young People team re Rights Awareness Campaign (x2)  
Development of questions, activities and information briefing for children and young people  
Planning for final in person session (rescheduled)  
Rights awareness sub-group meetings 1 and 2  
Preparatory meeting with RRN! ahead of March SIB



## RRN!

Two members participate in rights awareness sub-group meetings 1 and 2  
Two members of RRN! Input at March SIB

## PARTNERS

Preparatory meeting with children and young people  
Preparatory meeting with RRN! ahead of March SIB  
Two members of RRN! Input at March SIB meeting



## SIB

SIB meeting #9 with UNCRC programme board update, update on progressing in addressing UK Supreme Court judgment, refining Terms of Reference, Overview of Lundy Model of Participation, Feedback on Skills and Knowledge Framework and Innovation Fund, RRN! update including children and young people from RRN!  
Observatory evaluation

## EMPOWERED CYP TEAM

RRN!, Together and Empowered CYP team partnership meeting  
Liaison meeting with RRN! team and Empowered Children and Young People team re Rights Awareness Campaign (x2)  
Rights awareness sub-group meetings 1 and 2  
Development of accessible notes for members of RRN! who took part in the sub-group.  
Observatory evaluation

## TOGETHER

RRN! Final meeting 7  
Deep Dive Session for SIB with Professor Kay Tisdall and Professor Laura Lundy

APRIL 2022



## RRN!

RRN! Final meeting #7  
Evaluation and celebration

## PARTNERS

Partners preparatory meeting with children and young people



## SIB

Deep Dive Session for SIB with Professor Kay Tisdall and Professor Laura Lundy  
Observatory evaluation

## EMPOWERED CYP TEAM

Empowered Children and Young People team produced accessible notes, research findings PowerPoint, a feedback form and a thank you letter for members of RRN! who took part in the sub-group.

Deep Dive Session for SIB with Professor Kay Tisdall and Professor Laura Lundy  
Observatory evaluation





## 2. Key themes and learning

A total of seven RRN! sessions took place with three other opportunities for children and young people to get involved in extra initiatives brought to RRN! by the Empowered Children and Young People team at Scottish Government.

### 2.1. Strategic governance and the role of RRN!

*“I think it would be important to have a collaborative conversation (Empowered Children and Young People team, SIB, partners, children and young people) to think about what the Consortium is and what it is not. To consider the strategic approach to participation and how this works across the government. Consortium has a specific purpose and is only one part of the overall picture” (Together staff evaluation)*

In the early stages of RRN! it was recognised by all those involved that effectively and sustainably involving children and young people from RRN! in the ongoing strategic governance of UNCRC implementation would require more time and capacity building than was available for the pilot project alone. SIB members would need to be supported to engage with children and young people and understand how they could use their views to shape their work. Additionally, children and young people would need information, support, and guidance to enable them to feel confident to challenge adults. Critically, this would (and did) come after feeling safe and supported in spaces and once they had been able to develop relationships with key adults and decision makers.

RRN! did not operate in a vacuum. There were a range of different power dynamics and agendas which intersected across the different spaces, groups and organisations. Taking a trauma informed approach means recognising that everyone is bringing their own lived experience and individual perspectives. For the future Consortium, it will be important to keep this in mind and explore this further, working across the different groups, spaces and organisations to identify different power balances and agendas and take steps to mitigate any negative impacts.

*“It may therefore be unhelpful to imagine children’s participation as a process by which adults, who ‘have’ power, empower children by ‘giving’ them some of this power. It might be more interesting to look at precisely how power is exercised, through a whole range of different techniques, in the interactions between the individuals involved.”<sup>28</sup>*

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<sup>28</sup> [Saying It Like It Is? Power, Participation and Research Involving Young People \(ed.ac.uk\)](#)

Everyone operating in the space should have a clear understanding of child rights governance and what this means and looks like in the context of UNCRC implementation. This would require accessible information and ongoing training. It should take place across all the groups and spaces and should include long-term strategic planning, decision-making processes, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation and any other activities to realise the strategic aims.

It is also important to ensure that children and young people feel informed and in control as members of the Consortium. As part of RRN! children and young people told us about the importance of understanding how their views have been used and what they have influenced. The new Consortium will need to build on the foundations of RRN! with the aim of ensuring children and young people feel are influencing and setting the agenda of SIB's work. The tight timeline of RRN! meant that this aim could not be fully realised during the pilot phase.

*“People being apathetic, not actioning our ideas when we have put a lot of effort into things” (RRN! member during discussion on barriers to achieving the goal of the Consortium. Young people want to know how their views had informed and influenced decision makers)*

## 2.2. The RRN! space

In the early stages, children and young people spoke about what they wanted to achieve. They felt it was important to develop a space which feels safe and inclusive. It was important to them to understand the changes that took place once they had shared their views and spoke about the need to see action and *“easy wins”*.

During the project we heard that children and young people had mixed prior experiences of interacting with decision makers. Some shared negative experiences, suggesting it can be *“daunting, stressful and emotionally draining”* and instances when adults have challenged their experiences to *“try to trip you up”*, which can be *“off-putting and aggressive”*. They highlighted the importance of relationship building, adults asking questions and establishing safe environments like RRN!.

*“Being able to set the group agreements (e.g. eating on calls/camera use) felt like young people were in control from the start” (Partner evaluation)*

## Ensuring diversity

A success of RRN! has been the diversity of children and young people and partners involved in project. As RRN! developed, group members began to build relationships, learn from each other, and develop key messages for decision makers through sharing their views and experiences. This enabled a wide range of collective views and experiences to be shared with both SIB and Scottish Government.

Some children and young people, alongside some members of Scottish Government's Empowered Children and Young People team, noted that the process could sometimes feel repetitive and did not always seem to move to action.

A challenge of working with a diverse group of children, young people and partners is that a "one-size-fits-all" approach does not always meet the needs of every child or young person.

For some of the children and young people, it was important to have time to reflect on the questions in advance. For others, this felt repetitive, and they would have preferred more open and unstructured discussion. The range of ages, needs and preferred methods of participating will be an important to consideration for the new Consortium.

Two partner organisations suggested that the new Consortium should be extended beyond the current age limit to support the different lived experiences of children and young people. The new Consortium coordinator would need to consider how this sits with the age of the child being defined as under 18 years-old in the UNCRC.<sup>29</sup>

## Creating a safe and inclusive space

Feedback throughout the project showed that children and young people felt they were in a safe and supportive environment.

*"Everyone was really nice to talk to and had a really encouraging atmosphere" (member of RRN!)*

*"speaking to decision makers who are nice and not in grilling mode" (member of RRN!)*

*"Nice people and we got to show and speak our thoughts" (member of RRN!)*

*"Everyone was supportive - everyone listened - no one talked over anyone, and we all got opinions heard. You didn't feel guilty because you didn't forget what you wanted to say because no one jumped in" (member of RRN!)*

Throughout the project, we observed children and young people's confidence grow. In one of the early sessions, a child asked Michael Chalmers, Chair of the SIB, how their views were going to be used and actioned. At one of the final RRN! meetings, children and young people

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<sup>29</sup> UNCRC Article 1

directly asked the Empowered Children and Young People team how the rights awareness survey would be distributed to children.

*“Seeing the confidence of the two young people asking me questions about the survey. That moment of dialogue was really good” (Scottish Government Empowered Children and Young People team session evaluation)*

By the end of the project, there were a range of views on how well the project delivered its aims. Most of the children and young people participating felt that RRN! provided a safe and inclusive space to share their views and opinions and feel listened to. They valued the opportunity to meet and develop relationships with decision makers.

*“SIB understanding of children and young people’s experience and views has grown. We think Together staff will have helped them to understand what quality ongoing participation looks and feels like.” (Partner evaluation)*

*“They enjoyed the project, felt included and listened to. They felt that they knew what to expect in the meetings and enjoyed the discussion. For some, it made them think even deeper about these issues” (Partner evaluation)*

Ensuring sessions are child-led

Partners and members of the Scottish Government Empowered Children and Young People team highlighted that they would like the sessions to be more child and young person led.

*“While I know it is a challenge to create and takes time. I hope the main Consortium may feel like a more child led space. Initial suggestions include getting young people to set the agenda, to introduce the guests, lead the discussions” (Scottish Government/SIB feedback)*

It will be important for the new Consortium to consider how to enable and support children and young people to take more of a lead during sessions including designing the agenda, activities and facilitating discussion.

Partners noted that children and young people have *“busy lives”*. Careful thought will need to be given as to how children and young people can take a lead in a safe and supportive way without feeling overburdened. The Consortium Coordinator and partners will need to work with children and young people at the early stages to find out how they would like to be involved and what they are able to commit to. Flexible participation and the choice to

withdraw from the process should be an option for all children and young people throughout.<sup>30</sup>

Direct support and additional capacity provided by the new Consortium Coordinator could help ease capacity pressures from supporting organisations and help foster a greater sense of trust with the children and young people. This would enable children and young people to take on more of a leading role. This will include time to build the foundation of sufficient understanding, develop structures and support arrangements.

#### Managing the child to adult ratio

It was a challenge to manage the child to adult ratio during sessions. This was regularly reviewed and discussed during partner meetings and with the Scottish Government Empowered Children and Young People team.

*“It’s a fine balance between having enough supporting staff (especially those who children and young people know and trust) and keeping the space the young people’s space.” (Together team evaluation)*

During RRN! sessions, it was noted that some children and young people turned their cameras off to help feel more comfortable in the space. Based on feedback from children and young people, the sessions were designed to include at least half the time for breakout discussion (with fewer adults) and feedback.

*“In the middle of the big meetings, we went into little breakout rooms, so it is easier to say how we feel.” (member of RRN!)*

We heard directly from children and young people about past experiences where they had felt outnumbered by decision makers, this had led to them feeling intimidated and uncomfortable. As a result, a maximum of three SIB members were invited to attend each session. In line with the importance placed on building relationships between RRN! and SIB, Michael Chalmers was the consistent SIB representative. Nevertheless, a young person reflected that there were *“...so many people coming in and out and not enough time to get to know one another”*.

The consistency of adults in the space and breadth of adults being able to listen to children’s views first hand will need to be balanced in the new Consortium.

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<sup>30</sup> [UNCRC General Comment 12 \(Basic Requirements\)](#)

Towards the end of RRN!, some children and young people started to grow in confidence and attended meetings without their support workers.

*“Staff worked hard with the children and young people to work out what works best for them in the online meetings, such as less adults and more breakout spaces” (Partner evaluation)*

This was particularly notable during the additional smaller sessions including the Theory of Change session and two rights awareness subgroup sessions. Future development of the new Consortium should consider other models of effective working including smaller thematic subgroups, separate RRN! children and young people sessions and different participants taking part in sections/formats. A couple of partners and children and young people suggested that a session should be hosted with children and young people at the beginning to find out what would work best for them.

Supporting SIB members in the space

*“Would have been good to get some more guidance as participant e.g. wasn't clear on link to Jamboard, wasn't sure if I'd be going into breakout room and if I did whether or not I should speak” (SIB member session evaluation)*

In April, Professor Laura Lundy and Professor Kay Tisdall facilitated a deep dive session with 23 SIB members and Scottish Government colleagues to explore the conceptions of childhood in Scotland and how to develop the conditions for meaningful participation. This was an initial session in working with the SIB members and Empowered Children team members outwith the RRN! meetings. It is important to recognise that adults in decision-making roles may need support to learn and develop the skills to support meaningful participation. This is likely to include an understanding of children's rights and rights-based approaches, active listening, engagement skills and establishing structures and ways of working that enable adults to share power with children and young people. This is a crucial area for development in the next stages of the Consortium and should be co-designed and co-delivered with children and young people.

### 2.3. Key themes and issues for children and young people

Throughout the sessions the children and young people identified a range of key issues and themes that were important to them. It was important that sessions were directed by what children and young people were interested in rather than adult-led agendas. Following sessions discussions and key themes were written up and shared with both children and young people and the SIB.

Climate change was identified as an important issue for many of the children and young people at the meeting. It was felt that this is an issue which impacts them right now and in

the future. We heard that pressure around exams and exam results can impact children and young people. There is a lot of stress, and it can feel that *“everything is riding on one exam”*.

It was highlighted that certain groups of children and young people need flexibility or extra support, for example young carers. It was expressed that equality and equity are central when thinking about certain issues including education - for example, children and young people being supported to access mainstream education. Children and young people told us that schools should teach about care experience in schools to help raise awareness and challenge stigma.

Poverty was another issue which can have an impact on lots of different parts of children’s life and rights. It is important to recognise that everyone’s circumstances are different.

*“Poverty can prevent some young people from having their rights”*

Support for mental health in schools was another area of focus. The group shared that in some cases there was no accessible support within schools. Concern was expressed about the impact of the pandemic on children and young people and there was a feeling that the current support available might deteriorate.

Rights awareness was another key theme and something that became a key focus of future sessions and the development of a subgroup. A core challenge was how meaningful and impactful action could be taken on the topics above the children identified as being important to them, especially large and complex issues like climate change and poverty. With more time, these concerns could have been incorporated into the overall work of the group and influence the work of the SIB. It will be important for the Consortium Coordinator, SIB and the Empowered Children and Young People team to look at how to incorporate these issues and use them as a lens to explore discussions around governance and UNCRC implementation.

## 2.4. Children and young people’s experience of impact

Most children and young people shared positive experiences about their views being taken seriously:

*“I definitely think so as there were decision makers on the calls and they seemed very interested in what we had to say, as well as participating in our discussions.” (RRN! member)*

*“Having decision makers there makes you feel more instrumental.” (RRN! member)*

*“I think Scottish Government will use our opinions to help them make UNCRC part of the law.” (RRN! member)*



One young person reflected:

*“there is a lot that I would change...Development wise it did not work like it should have been”.*

This young person felt that there had been a lot of individual contributions and that it would be good to take more collective decisions or actions. They suggested it would have been helpful to work together as a group to identify key agreements or conclusions which could be shared at future SIB meetings. Drawing from this young person’s comments and broader learning from RRN!, we would suggest that the new Consortium should develop key goals or recommendations on what needs to change for children’s rights to be realised. Through an ongoing process of feedback and dialogue, SIB would need to revisit and review these recommendations and regularly share feedback with the new Consortium on how and when actions are being taken forward.

Given the short-term nature of the pilot, it has been difficult to fully determine the level of impact and influence that RRN! has had on decision making processes within SIB and with the Empowered Children and Young People team at Scottish Government. This was recognised by children and young people, partners, the Together team and members of the SIB.

*“My understanding is that this was because Together themselves did not always have clarity about what was happening outside of RRN itself...how information shared by the children and young people would actually be received or actioned, or how things would be taken forward following the life of the interim consortium.” (Partner evaluation)*

*“Do you know where your opinions are going next? ‘no it would be good to know’”  
(RRN! member evaluation)*

Early in the project, RRN! took part in a session to explore and inform the Scottish Government’s draft action plan on children’s rights.<sup>31</sup> Feedback from children, young people and partners revealed that this felt “tokenistic” and did not feel like it had impact. This could have been improved if Scottish Government were clearer about the level of influence and impact RRN! could have on the action plan at that stage in the process. This feedback was taken on board by the Scottish Government and a member of the Empowered Children and Young People team committed to work with RRN! earlier in the process in future to ensure children and young people are able to choose what is important to them.

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<sup>31</sup> [Progressing the human rights of children in Scotland: action plan 2021 to 2024 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/resources/documents/2021/06/Progressing_the_human_rights_of_children_in_Scotland_action_plan_2021_to_2024.pdf)

## 2.5. Building relationships

Children and young people

Building and fostering trusting relationships is essential to enable children and young people to feel supported and engaged to share their views. The short timescale for RRN! meant that there was not sufficient time to develop team building and fun activities from the outset. Relationship building was a continuous challenge throughout the project. To help overcome this, icebreaker games, videos and 'getting to know you' profiles were incorporated into the RRN! sessions. Some children reflected that online sessions were good because it meant children from across Scotland could be involved without travelling, making their involvement quick and easy. Online meetings did present challenges to relationship building between the children, young people and adults involved.

From the outset, children, young people and partners stressed the importance of being able to attend meetings in person.

*"Feel like we could have gotten to know each other better first before diving into doing stuff" (member of RRN!)*

*"lacks a sense of community (online)"*

*"One interviewee expressed that 'sometimes working with children and young people can take up to a year for children to bond.' The challenge of a time-bound process for the interim consortium was noted by several participants, one expressing that it sometimes felt like 'building the ship as you're sailing on it.'" (Observatory evaluation)*

COVID-19 made the possibility of face-to-face work very difficult and, on occasion, changes had to be made at very short notice. A full RRN! in-person meeting was due to take place at the end of the project but had to be cancelled due to staff sickness. This was disappointing for the children, young people and adults involved who consistently fed back their preference to meet in person.

At the beginning of the project, there was a discussion with partners about establishing an online space, for example Basecamp, to engage directly with the children and young people. Due to the diverse nature of the group, it was challenging to identify a platform that would be able to meet everyone's needs. It was recognised that this would require support, guidance, and training for support workers to enable them to support the children and young people they were working with.

The future Consortium should look to include in person meetings and opportunities for the coordinating team to engage directly with children and young people and build

relationships. Children and young people suggested doing fun things and team building activities together (both for children and adults) including pizza parties, bowling, and escape rooms to support with trust and relationship development at the early stages

### Partners

Key to this model was the relationship between Together and the partners. Individual induction meetings and a collective meeting was held with partners at the beginning of the project to discuss roles, responsibilities, and expectations. Partners highlighted that when working together over the next six months, it was important to consider: being supportive, positive experience sharing, listening, defining clear objectives and openness. Partners who participated in the evaluation expressed that they felt clear on their roles and responsibilities throughout the project. The partners meetings were viewed as helpful spaces to discuss the progress of the project and support requirements. It was suggested that the days and timing of these could be reviewed.

*“Within partner meetings there was also an open and honest discussion at any time and would have felt able to raise feedback then as well as other evaluation tools”*

Communication was a challenge throughout the project for both the Together team and for partners within the tight timescale of this project. Communication delays from partner organisations coupled with part-time staffing arrangements at Together meant that some decisions could occasionally be delayed, leading to some uncertainty. Capacity was an ongoing issue for partners and the lack of direct relationship between Together staff and the children and young people placed additional pressures. It was noted by most of partners that the information provided by Together was clear and accessible although could sometimes feel overwhelming. One partner highlighted the challenge of information delays:

*“It felt some things were challenging for Together to manage, like Scottish Government sending info last minute. So things came to us last minute.” (Partner evaluation)*

Although Together was the lead organisation for delivering this project, it was important to take a collective approach to delivering the project. It was recognised by the Together team that it would have been helpful to work in collaboration with partners at the beginning of the project to co-create a partnership agreement. This would have explicitly set out the commitments, activities, and expectations from both the Consortium Coordinator and partner organisations.

*“This improved greatly over time with Scottish Government colleagues preparing child friendly notes, videos etc. They seemed to get more child/young person friendly as time moved on.” (Partner evaluation)*

*“Having profiles of [Empowered Children and Young People team members] for the young people to know a bit about them were really nice. The feedback from them was also helpful.” (Partner evaluation)*

*“The Empowered Children and Young People team feedback could have been a lot more accessible/interactive and the use of video/child friendly summaries (with pictures!) would have been helpful.” (Partner evaluation)*

From December to March, monthly meetings took place between the Together Strategic Lead and the Scottish Government Empowered Children and Young People’s Team Leader and wider colleagues. A Working Agreement<sup>32</sup> was developed at an early stage to capture the key relationships, roles, expectations and ways of working together. These meetings acted as a space to explore and develop how SIB and Scottish Government would take action in response to the children and young people’s priorities from RRN! This included the team taking responsibility for developing accessible materials including child friendly minutes of the SIB meetings<sup>33</sup>.

The team also began to explore the complexities and conditions required to ensure parity between children, young people and adult decision makers in SIB. Whilst there is a strong desire from both SIB and Scottish Government, it was recognised that this is a complex task that requires significant development, including systems and structural change.

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<sup>32</sup> [Appendix 11 – RRN!/SG Working Agreement](#)

<sup>33</sup> [Appendix 12 – Child friendly minutes of Strategic Implementation Board Meeting](#)

*“Some young people didn't feel the input/access to the SIB was enough.” (Partner evaluation)*

*“The opportunity to be part of relevant conversations framed by children and young people themselves. And to be reminded how informed, complex and sensitive that conversation is, profiling perspectives we are unlikely to get elsewhere.” (SIB/Scottish Government session evaluation)*

*“Being part of a group that generated a feeling of 'being of value'. Members take their responsibility as spokespeople for their peers very seriously, consciously reflecting and challenging themselves. Lots that adult reps could learn from this.” (SIB member session evaluation)*

*“One participant stated ‘I think actually some people who talk a fairly good game actually are very uncomfortable in the space’ and highlighted that adults need to be okay with being uncomfortable at times to really make these intergenerational spaces work.” (Observatory evaluation)*

Throughout the project, SIB and the Empowered Children and Young People team used a range of methods to share feedback and updates with the children and young people (short videos, PowerPoint presentations, bullet pointed notes, accessible minutes from SIB meetings and accessible notes from subgroup meetings etc). Children, young people and partners shared what they needed to make materials accessible and this was a learning journey for everyone involved. Accessible materials, communications and timely feedback loops will continue to be an important part of the next stages of the consortium. Again, it should be noted that at the end of RRN!, some children and young people did not know what would happen with their views and what was happening next.

*“The videos had positive comments about them (although some [young people] wished that they could be shorter!)” (Partner evaluation)*

*“While adults have been listening, a pertinent issue, one participant expressed, is whether or not ‘we have nailed the connection between what we hear and we take forward.’ Another reinforced this sentiment asking how we ensure adults listen and not just listen as ‘that was nice’ but in a way that encourages adults to feel that children have ‘completely challenged the way I’m thinking and working’ and as a result will act differently” (Interviewee from Observatory evaluation).*

## 2.6. Additional opportunities

The additional opportunities offered to children and young people were delivered through a model of smaller subgroups. These included the Theory of Change session and rights awareness sessions. These were easier spaces for children and young people to get to know each other better and they said that they enjoyed the experience and format and suggested that these would be good to continue as part of the future of the project.

### Awareness raising subgroup

One of the additional opportunities available to RRN! was involving children and young people informing the development of a Scottish Government national awareness raising campaign. The rights awareness raising subgroup was facilitated by members of the Scottish Government Empowered Children team and supported by Together staff. This took place over two separate sessions and two of the RRN! members co-designed and carried out action research as part of the subgroup. This will influence a national children's rights awareness project and was developed as a direct result of children and young people in RRN! requesting to see action on their views. Members of the Empowered Children and Young People team produced all the child friendly materials for the sessions including the subgroup Invitation,<sup>34</sup> research notes<sup>35</sup> and findings<sup>36</sup> from the sessions. It will be important that Scottish Government continues to ensure these children and young people are involved and informed in the next stage of this work beyond RRN!

### Theory of Change

The Theory of Change workshop was facilitated by two staff from Matter of Focus, on behalf of the Observatory for Children's Human Rights Scotland. This took place over one evening session and six RRN! members took part in a range of activities to explore and share their views about their rights are upheld. The children and young people's views were incorporated into the emerging Theory of Change and Matter of Focus produced a short video to feedback to explain the impact of the children and young people's input.

### Speaking at SIB

A number of RRN! members felt it was important to be present at the SIB meetings. Two young people attended the SIB meeting in March 2022. The young people were supported ahead of the meeting to decide what they wanted to ask and share with SIB members, this included an ice-breaker, sharing their experiences of RRN! and asking about the impact of the project.

*"All the adults were really nice and welcoming. They were really conscious they didn't want to be intimidating and were really good" (RRN! member attending this SIB)*

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<sup>34</sup> [Appendix 13 – Rights Awareness Subgroup Invitation \(Scottish Government\)](#)

<sup>35</sup> [Appendix 14 – Rights Awareness Research Notes \(Scottish Government\)](#)

<sup>36</sup> [Appendix 15 – Rights Awareness Research Findings PowerPoint \(Scottish Government\)](#)

Partners noted that the demands of the additional opportunities could be at times difficult and challenging to manage both from an organisational and children and young people's point of view. Partners suggested that the timescales expected by the Scottish Government Empowered Children and Young People team could be overwhelming for them and for the children and young people. It was suggested that the number of potential opportunities was not clear at the beginning of project and this was underestimated by support staff.

For the new Consortium, it will be important to consider how to strike the right balance, offering children and young people choices without overwhelming or overburdening them. Consideration needs to be given to ensuring any additional opportunities are relevant and the expected timescales realistic.

## 2.7. Timescales

Given the part time staffing and short term nature of RRNI, the project began at pace and would have benefited from more set up/lead in time. Some partners suggested that the pilot nature of the project created uncertainty about what could be achieved within the timescale.

*"Because the interim meetings were to prepare for the 'ultimate' group, it was difficult to know at times what the end goal was and some young people felt as though there was not a clear outcome from the meetings" (Partner evaluation)*

*"They could also have been given a better understanding of what was going to happen next. The transition to full consortium has been clunky" (Partner evaluation)*

Other partners stressed that the tight timescales put pressure on the delivery and limited what children and young people could achieve, influence and impact.

*"...challenging to deliver the good practice I want to in terms of participatory practice (building relationships, being child led, closing the feedback loop, building capacity and understanding) within the confinements of the funding/capacity/timescale available" (Together staff evaluation)*

## 2.8. Staffing and resourcing

Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights)

One of the significant challenges identified throughout the project was lack of capacity. Effective and impactful participation requires adequate resourcing, funding, skilled and knowledgeable staff. The complexity of the work required balancing different elements of



the project with a small, but passionate and committed, staff team who were all working part-time. Team members felt that for the longer-term support and sustainability of a future consortium, and to enable high quality participation, a full-time staff team would be essential.

*“The constant challenge...is balancing the various elements of work, the strategic, the practice and the admin- all of which take up significant time. There is an issue of capacity...As this is a new and pilot project there really needs to be time for reflecting on all the feedback and planning for the short, mid and long term” (Together staff evaluation)*

#### Partners

Responding partners suggested that they spent on average between 5-10 hours a month supporting project delivery. In general, partners were satisfied with the level of payment received for their involvement. One partner said that this would need to be reviewed as more opportunities arose due to issues around staff capacity. Several other partners highlighted that capacity was challenging, especially when there was staff sickness, if they had to meet with children or young people separately or to support with additional opportunities.

Staffing changes within partner organisations provided an challenge to relationship building, information sharing and Together’s capacity to keep new staff members up to speed with current progress.

#### Children and young people

Most partners suggested that the remuneration for children and young people’s involvement was appropriate. One partner stated that it should have been greater as it was less than the amount that they remunerated children for similar activities.

*“Our young people were really happy about this amount and enjoyed being part of the project” (Partner evaluation)*

#### Wider resourcing

For the future Consortium, Scottish Government will need to give consideration to the cost of in person meetings, to cover accessibility and outputs from future activity, as well as participation packs and materials for online meetings.

### 3. Conclusion

RRN! has provide a foundation from which the new Consortium can be built. The recommendations from RRN! are based on ongoing learning from the development and delivery of RRN! over eight months. It is clear that more needs to be done to develop a shared vision across all stakeholders involved in the governance of the UNCRC implementation programme as to the role and level of influence of both the new Consortium and SIB. A shared vision of child rights governance needs to be established by children and young people, partners, the Consortium Coordinator, SIB members and the Empowered Children and Young People team. Roles and responsibilities for decision-making and feedback processes need to be clearly articulated and agreed. This will be essential to ensure children and young people involved in the Consortium feel valued and are able to see the impact of sharing their experience and insight.

Many of the tools and approaches developed through RRN! can be used as a starting point for the new Consortium Coordinator. RRN! succeeded in creating a diverse, safe space through which children and young people felt able to share their views and opinions. The model of smaller subgroup working has proved a successful method of developing stronger relationships between children and adults and of children and young people seeing the impact of their involvement. Greater emphasis needs to be put into developing relationships across all the stakeholders to ensure that sessions can be child-led and that SIB members feel supported to participate in the space of the Consortium. More work needs to be done on developing feedback processes and mechanisms between the Consortium and SIB so that the spaces have parity and SIB is able to take what children and young people have said and action, implement and make change within a reasonable timescale. In this way, children and young people will clearly be able to see the impact of their work on SIB's decision-making.

### 4. Recommendations

The following recommendations have been developed following feedback, insights and suggestions from children and young people, partners, the Together, the Scottish Government Empowered Children and Young People team and members of the Strategic Implementation Board. Whilst there will be shared responsibility for taking forward many of the recommendations, we have set out which of the stakeholders the recommendations are likely to be most relevant to as follows:

- Consortium Coordinator (CC)
- Partners (P)
- Scottish Government Empowered Children and Young People team (ECYPT)
- Members of the Strategic Implementation Board (SIB)

In taking these recommendations forward, stakeholders will ensure that children and young people in the new Consortium are able to have real influence and impact on the work of the SIB and the UNCRC implementation programme.

#### 4.1. Creating a shared vision

- ✎ All stakeholders should agree a shared vision and mission which articulates the scope of what the new Consortium and SIB can influence, and the timescales involved. Expectations should be ambitious but achievable. (CC, P, EGYPT, SIB)
- ✎ There should be an independent evaluation of the new Consortium and SIB to monitor impact, achievement and influence of children and young people on the SIB and the wider Scottish Government UNCRC implementation programme. (CC, EGYPT)

#### 4.2. Setting out processes

- ✎ Partnership agreements should be co-created to set out the commitments, role, responsibilities and expectations from all groups involved including: the Consortium Coordinator, partners, SIB and Scottish Government Empowered Children and Young People team. (CC, P, EGYPT, SIB)
- ✎ Communication processes should be agreed that set out how information will be shared between the new Consortium and SIB. This should include a process for accessible, concise and timely feedback to the Consortium on how and why their feedback and recommendations have/have not been taken into account in line with the Lundy four 'F' feedback model. (CC, EGYPT)
- ✎ A system for rewards and remuneration for children and young people should be designed that takes into account the existing processes of partners, as well as the individual context and circumstances of the children and young people participating. (CC, P)

#### 4.3. Building capacity

- ✎ All stakeholders should be supported to develop a clear understanding of child rights governance in the context of UNCRC implementation. This should include an ongoing process of training and sharing of accessible information and promising practice. (CC, EGYPT)
- ✎ All stakeholders should be committed to producing child-friendly communications including written information, videos etc. (CC, EGYPT, SIB, P)
- ✎ Resourcing for the new Consortium should be sufficient to cover appropriate staffing, resourcing for in person meetings, accessibility costs and outputs from future activities including creative outputs videos/physical resources. (EGYPT)

#### 4.4. Developing relationships

- ✎ Specific SIB members should be assigned to regularly attend Consortium meetings and develop safe and trusting relationships with children and young people. These SIB members should take responsibility for championing the views of children and young people at SIB meetings based on what they have heard at Consortium meetings. (CC, SIB)
- ✎ The new Consortium model should have direct engagement between the Consortium staff team and children and young people at its core. This will provide opportunities for children and young people to build supportive, safe, and trusting relationships and ease delivery pressures for partners. (CC, P)
- ✎ The child to adult ratio should be monitored and reviewed throughout all aspects of the work. Consideration will need to be given to how to foster consistency and relationship development against having a range of adults to support and listen to children and young people first-hand. (CC, EGYPT)
- ✎ Opportunities should be created for both in person and online meetings, including team building opportunities at the beginning of the project to allow children and young people and adults to get to know each other. (CC, P, EGYPT, SIB)
- ✎ All stakeholders should be continually mindful of the demands on the Consortium's time, working alongside the children and young people involved to establish how much they would like to be involved and are able to commit to. (CC, P, EGYPT, SIB)

#### 4.5. The Consortium

- ✎ A collective decision-making model should be created with children and young people to decide on key areas of focus for the main group. Children and young people should have the opportunity to lead in the design and delivery of Consortium sessions including designing the agenda, activities and facilitating discussion. (CC)
- ✎ The Consortium Coordinator should explore the development of a subgroup model to support the overall direction of the project and work distribution. Consideration should be given to capacity and staffing arrangements for partners and children and young people. Where capacity allows, children and young should be supported to participate in other opportunities to allow all voices and interests to be catered to. (CC, EGYPT)
- ✎ Consider the development of an "associate model" to ensure that a wider range of children and young people's views and experiences can inform the work of the Consortium and SIB. (CC, EGYPT)
- ✎ A commissioning process should be developed through which Scottish Government can submit additional opportunities for children and young people. Criteria as to how opportunities are promoted and selected should be designed with children and young people. (CC, EGYPT)

- 🗨️ Evaluate and review the age limit of the Consortium whilst recognising that the UNCRC defines a child as being up to the age of 18 years old and the Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland has powers to promote and protect the rights of Care Experienced young people up to the age of 21 years-old (CC, P, ECCYP, SIB).

#### 4.6. SIB

- 🗨️ Agenda items for SIB based should be developed in line with the Consortium's priorities. (CC, EGYPT, SIB)
- 🗨️ Some SIB meetings should be hosted at times convenient to children and young people to promote greater inclusion and accessibility. (CC, EGYPT, SIB)

## 5. Appendices

- [Appendix 1](#) – Participation and Rights Lead Job Description
- [Appendix 2](#) – Top Tips document
- [Appendix 3](#) - Example of preparation materials (session 6)
- [Appendix 4](#) – Anonymous feedback surveys
- [Appendix 5](#) – Example of Jamboards (session 2)
- [Appendix 6](#) – RRN! Application criteria
- [Appendix 7](#) – RRN ! Application Form
- [Appendix 8](#) – Example of weekly email update to Associates
- [Appendix 9](#) – Example of Children and Young People's session evaluation Jamboard
- [Appendix 10](#) – Children and Young People's end of project survey
- [Appendix 11](#) – RRN!/SG Working Agreement
- [Appendix 12](#) – Child friendly minutes of Strategic Implementation Board Meeting  
(Scottish Government)
- [Appendix 13](#) – Rights Awareness Subgroup Invitation (Scottish Government)

- [Appendix 14](#) – Rights Awareness Subgroup Research Notes (Scottish Government)
- [Appendix 15](#) – Rights Awareness Subgroup Research Findings PowerPoint (Scottish Government)