

Children's Parliament meets the Scottish Cabinet 2023



*I am excited to get a
chance to talk about
children's rights.* ”

- Member of Children's Parliament

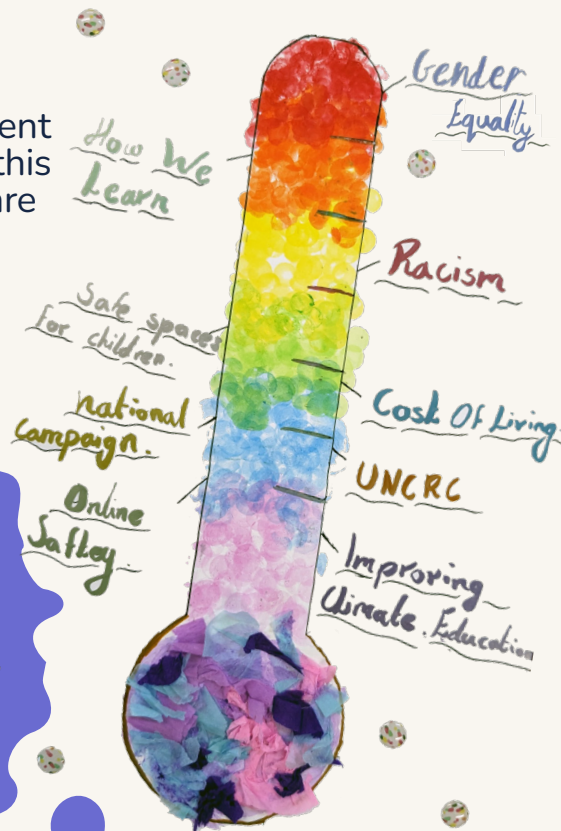
**Annual Scottish Cabinet meeting with children
and young people, 6th June 2023**

Our Calls to Action

Members of Children's Parliament (MCPs) took part in discussions and workshops, and surveyed MCPs from across Scotland to find out the important issues facing children in Scotland today. After a lot of hard work, we agreed our key issues for Cabinet as 'Cost of Living' and 'How we Learn.'

Gender Equality in Schools and Anti-Racist Education again came out high in this year's survey. These issues have been to Cabinet in recent years so whilst not part of this year's 'Calls to Action' we are keen to hear about ongoing progress on these issues.

99 Not all adults take children's rights seriously. 99
- Member of Children's Parliament



UNCRC Incorporation

We are excited to see UNCRC Incorporation into Scots Law happening as soon as possible. While putting children's human rights into law is an important step, it is putting these rights into practice that will make real change. We need to see children's rights demonstrated, lived and acted out in the everyday. All adults need to know, understand and respect children's rights to make them a reality in Scotland, this means changes in attitudes and behaviour.

Q: How will the Scottish Government make sure adults deliver on their responsibility to put children's human rights into practice?



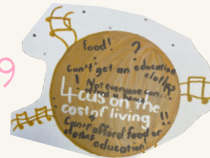
Cost of Living

We call on the Scottish Government to reduce the impact of the rising cost of living on children being able to have a happy and full life in Scotland:



pp **Cheap food doesn't fill you up.** *pp*

- Member of Children's Parliament



1 Ensuring access to basic needs:

- Food, clothing, housing, internet access, heating and education supplies are all going up in price.
- Children are going to school hungry so can't concentrate in class and they can't keep up with schoolwork if their parents can't afford the right supplies or support at home.



Q: What can the SG do to help families in Scotland with the cost of their basic needs?

2 Improving access to clubs & activities

- Children make friends at clubs and activities, learn new skills and share similar interests with people who understand them.
- Opportunities are limited if there isn't funding for local clubs. This means further to travel, but for many children transport is too expensive or not an option.
- The activity and the kit can cost too much to take part.

Q: What can the Scottish Government do to improve access to varied clubs and activities for all children in Scotland?



3 Reducing isolation from friends and loved ones

- Children feel singled out, lonely and bullied if they don't have certain items that allow them to have connections and shared experiences, for example clean clothes or access to a phone.
- Children are often missing out on a social life, sometimes they cannot go to a birthday party as they cannot afford to dress up or buy a present.
- Children can't always talk to their parents and carers about these problems. Parents and carers are needing to work longer hours to increase their wages. This means they don't have as much time to spend with their children.

Q: What can the Scottish Government do to support parents & carers to have more time with their children, and help them afford important social experiences?



pp **Kids are worrying about things they shouldn't need to worry about.** *pp*

- Member of Children's Parliament

4 Preventing adult worries becoming our worries

- Children are taking on adults' worries and stresses about the cost of living.
- Children are overhearing conversations at home and information through the media about the cost of living, which makes them feel anxious.
- These worries are impacting children's mental health and wellbeing.

Q: What can the Scottish Government do to prevent children and their families having these worries? When children are worried about the cost of living, how can the Scottish Government support them?

How we Learn

Children have the right to have a say on what and how they learn at school. We call on the Scottish Government to ensure every child in Scotland is reaching their full potential through their education:

1 Prioritising dignity in school

- Children have the right to feel healthy, happy and safe in their school.
- When children are compared to their classmates, embarrassed, shouted at or punished by a teacher, they feel humiliated and upset. This prevents children from wanting to go to school and negatively impacts their learning.
- Children see positive relationships with their teachers as key to making school the best learning environment.

Q: What can the Scottish Government do to ensure every school in Scotland prioritises dignity for children?

2 Making learning active and relevant

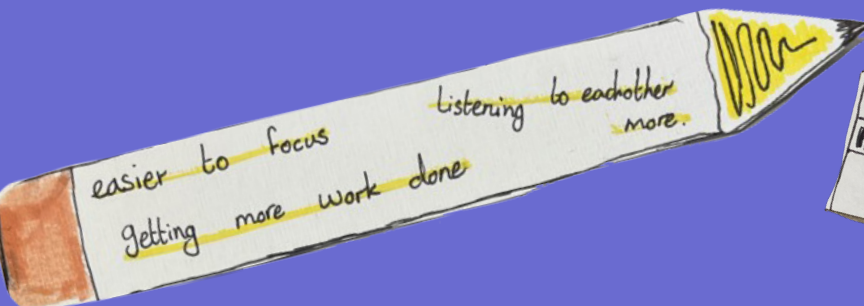
- Children don't want to just sit and learn at a desk. All children learn differently and need the opportunity to learn in lots of different ways.
- Children are excited about their future and want to learn key life skills at school. They want:
 - To work in small groups, where they can learn better and support their classmates.
 - A fun and creative approach to learning, with time outside.
 - Learning achievements to be celebrated in different ways, not just by doing well in tests.
 - Extra-curricular activities to be seen as equal value to homework.
 - To learn life skills to support their future e.g., finance lessons and cooking.

Q: What can the Scottish Government do to make learning active and relevant for all children in Scotland?

3 Valuing friendships in learning

- Friendships matter and have an impact on how children learn. When there are breakdowns in friendships, this affects learning experiences.
- Friends help children with their learning and make it fun.
- Teachers need to respect and value the impact friendships have on learning, positive and negative.

Q: What can the Scottish Government do to ensure relationships are supported in school?



More about Children's Parliament

Our dream is that children grow up in a world of love, happiness and understanding. Our mission is to inspire greater awareness and understanding of the power of children's human rights and to support implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) across Scotland.

For more about our story and the work we do:

www.childrensparliament.org.uk



“ I am excited to talk about how everything can affect children. ”

- Member of Children's Parliament

 **Children's Parliament**

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