



# THE RIGHT WAY

## A Children's Human Rights Approach to Education in Wales

### A children's human rights Approach

is a principled and practical framework for education settings to enable human rights education under the duties of the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021.

*Making rights  
a reality*

# THE RIGHT WAY

## Who is this framework for?

This framework will support the leaders of education settings to develop a children's human rights approach in their setting. All education settings in Wales can adopt this approach, including: schools; early years settings; Further Education; EOTAS settings; informal education and youth work settings and home education settings. Education departments of local authorities can also use this framework to support children's rights approaches across their provision. Higher Education Institutes can use this framework to support Initial Teacher Education.

Individual educators will also find useful resources and ideas for rights-based practice throughout this framework. Successful implementation of a children's human rights approach requires a whole setting approach with clear leadership and commitment from all staff in the setting.

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# INTRODUCTION

**Wales should be a country where every child experiences their human rights.** For this to happen the human rights of children need to be part of our laws. But just as important is that human rights are understood, and are part of our culture and environment.

Human rights education is a [cross-cutting theme of our new curriculum in Wales](#). Human rights education means that adults and children:

- Learn **about** human rights;
- Learn **through** human rights;
- Learn **for** human rights.

This means that children and adults know and understand their human rights, they experience their human rights in their education, and they are empowered with the skills to advocate for their rights and those of others.

This theme is visible through Welsh Government's curriculum guidance. Developing an understanding of rights is integrated into learning descriptions for the [Humanities](#) and [Health and Wellbeing](#) Areas of Learning and Experience, and [Relationships and Sexuality Education](#). The wider requirements of the curriculum set out [human rights education as a cross cutting theme](#) of the curriculum and set out how learners need to [meaningfully experience their participatory rights](#) in curriculum design.

Importantly, children's human rights are on the face of the [Curriculum and Assessment \(Wales\) Act 2021](#), which sets out that all staff involved in delivering the curriculum need to develop knowledge and understanding of children's human rights under two UN Conventions:

- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCPRD)

The UNCRC sets out the human rights of children. The UNCPRD sets out what human rights mean for disabled people, including disabled children. Explanations of both of these Conventions are included in this framework. Both of these Conventions are also fundamental to the [Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal \(Wales\) Act 2018](#).

The Right Way: a children's human right approach for education in Wales, complements the Welsh Government guidance. It sets out how education professionals can draw together different elements of their provision into a practical and coherent approach based on the principles of these two Conventions. Throughout this framework, there are links to how this supports the curriculum and the wider duties of the school.

This approach to education will enable professionals to put their learning about children's human rights into practice. And it is this practice that will mean rights become a reality for every child in Wales.



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This framework is an adaptation of the [Children's Commissioner's Right Way for Public Bodies](#), which was created with expert advice from the Wales Observatory on Human Rights of Children (based at Swansea and Bangor universities).

In addition, thank you to members of our Advisory Panels and the following organisations and settings for their advice in the development of this framework:

- Cefn Saeson Comprehensive School, Neath Port Talbot;
- Central South Consortium;
- Equality and Human Rights Commission;
- Estyn;
- Education Achievement Service (SE Wales);
- Our Lady's R.C. Primary School, Rhondda Cynon Taff;
- Parents Voices in Wales;
- Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Dewi Sant, Carmarthenshire;
- Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Rhosafan, Neath Port Talbot;
- Ysgol Hafod Lon, Gwynedd;
- Ysgol Y Wern, Cardiff;

## Case studies

Thank you to all the settings providing examples of rights-based practice. These have been shared through this framework and on the Children's Commissioner's website, which we will update on an ongoing basis.

Case studies are included to enable professionals to share rights-based practice that their setting has developed. In most examples, descriptions of practice have been provided directly by professionals themselves.

The Children's Commissioner's office does not have a role in accrediting human rights approaches in settings. However, we are keen to hear and share ideas that can inspire rights approaches across Wales. If your setting has a case study you would like to share with us, please contact: [post@childcomwales.org.uk](mailto:post@childcomwales.org.uk)

# HOW THE RIGHT WAY FRAMEWORK SUPPORTS YOUR STATUTORY DUTIES

Children's human rights are relevant to **all laws and guidance** relating to education settings, and the Right Way approach is an effective framework to help you meet all your statutory duties. This section summarises how the Right Way framework supports you to meet some key elements of the curriculum and wider education guidance.

## Curriculum

- The Right Way supports the four purposes and learning in all Areas of Learning and Experience. This [mapping](#) document shows how curriculum outcomes link to children's human rights.
- [Section 64 of the Curriculum and Assessment \(Wales\) Act 2021](#) sets out a duty to promote knowledge and understanding of UN Conventions on the rights of children and persons with disabilities.
- [Section 63 of the Curriculum and Assessment \(Wales\) Act 2021](#) sets out a duty to have regard to mental health and emotional well-being of children and young persons. This is aligned to Article 24 of the UNCRC, and the aims of education set out in General Comment Number 1.
- Human rights education is a [cross-cutting theme of the curriculum in Wales](#), and the principles of a human rights education, informed by the UNCRC and the UNCRPD, are part of the wider requirements settings must consider when designing their curriculum.
- Participation is a key cross-cutting principle of both the UNCRC and the UNCRPD. Curriculum guidance sets out that learners must [participate in curriculum design](#) in their setting.

## Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018

- The [Additional Learning Needs Code for Wales 2021](#) sets out a rights-based approach as a key underpinning principle of the ALN system. It sets out how the Code is informed by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), and references the principles of the Children's Commissioner's Right Way approach.
- The participation of children and young people in decision making about their ALN is an essential part of the rights-based approach.

## Statutory anti-bullying guidance: Rights, Respect and Equality

- This [statutory guidance](#) sets out a rights-based approach to preventing and responding to bullying, which is informed by children in the setting;
- Guidance also includes duties on governing bodies to record and monitor bullying and to use this information to plan preventative approaches.

## Public Sector Equality Duty

- Equality and non-discrimination are central human rights principles and a principle of The Right Way approach. Under the Equality Act 2010 public bodies must have due regard to the need to:
  - (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under that Act;
  - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
  - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

## School Councils

- Participation is a key cross-cutting principle of both the UNCRC and the UNCRPD. The [School Councils \(Wales\) Regulations 2005](#) set out that a school must have a school council to discuss matters relating to their school, education and any other matters of concern or interest and to make representations on these to the governing body and head teacher.

## Keeping Learners Safe



- Protection from harm is integral to the UNCRC (articles 19, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37). Welsh Government guidance, [Keeping Learners Safe](#), sets out that developing children's understanding of their rights is an important preventative measure to safeguard the welfare of children and young people. Enabling children to experience their right to have their opinion heard when adults are making decisions that affect them (article 12 of the UNCRC) is a key safeguarding tool.
- The Keeping Learners Safe guidance recommends and outlines the principles of the Children's Commissioner's Right Way approach.



# THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF CHILDREN

## What are human rights?

All humans have human rights. These were set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. This declaration was introduced as a direct response to the atrocities of World War II, but built on ideas about justice and fairness that had been in existence in many different societies and cultures. The Universal Declaration was not legally binding but soon it became the foundation stone of international human rights law. This body of international human rights law is always evolving, with efforts to apply and develop the rights and freedoms of the Universal Declaration to particular issues and social groups. There are now over 80 international human rights treaties that protect human rights, based on the core principles of the Declaration.

Human rights guarantee basic freedoms and meet the basic needs of all humanity, underpinned by respect for human dignity. Human rights treaties and Conventions are binding on government and on public authorities at all levels in the UK, and provide a strong ethical framework for planning, decision-making and action.

## The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

Children aged 0-17 years are given special human rights protection by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). In 1991 the United Kingdom formally agreed to ensure that every child in the UK has all the rights listed in the convention by ratifying the UNCRC. The Welsh Government adopted the Convention as the basis for policy making for children and young people in Wales in 2004. The Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011, strengthened and built on the rights based approach of the Welsh Government to making policy for children and young people in Wales, placing a duty on all Welsh Ministers to have due regard to the UNCRC when exercising any of their Ministerial functions.

The UNCRC recognises that children are in a different situation than adults and will often have different needs, and that children face particular challenges because childhood involves stages of physical or emotional development. The rights set out in the UNCRC are an additional safeguard of their safety and development, and support children's capacity to take decisions and act autonomously. All of the articles of the Convention cover three main themes: **Participation**, **Provision** and **Protection**.

The articles on **Participation** are based on the idea of the child or young person as someone who actively contributes to society as a citizen, and to the decision making that affects their own life.

**Provision** articles cover the basic rights of children and young people to survive and develop. These range through health care, food and clean water to the requirements for education and environment.

**Protection** articles deal with exploitation of children and young people at work; physical, sexual and psychological abuse; discrimination and other mistreatments which many still suffer, including in the UK.



## The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)

The United Nations General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol on 13 December 2006. Before the adoption of this Convention, other human rights instruments already addressed disability, either as part of a general focus or more specifically. But the Convention was necessary to reaffirm the human rights of persons with disabilities and to ensure their participation in society as equal members. The Convention could also more fully address the challenges facing persons with disabilities and could better protect and promote their rights through a legally binding instrument.

The purpose of the Convention is set out in its article 1: to promote, protect and ensure the **full and equal enjoyment of all human rights** and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity. Article 1 also explains what is meant by “persons with disabilities”. The Convention does not provide a closed definition of disability. It states that disability is an evolving concept, and includes all disabilities. The Convention also reflects **social and rights-based model of disability**.

The [Additional Learning Needs Code for Wales 2021](#) also refers to a social model. This model advocates that it is society that creates barriers (in attitudes or the environment) which disable people, rather than people being disabled by physical or mental impairments. The social model is a positive approach to disability, which focuses on removing barriers to equality.

The **principles** of the UNCRPD are set out in Article 3. These are:

- Respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy including the freedom to make one’s own choices, and independence of persons;
- Non-discrimination;
- Full and effective participation and inclusion in society;
- Respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity;
- Equality of opportunity;
- Accessibility;
- Equality between men and women;
- Respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities and respect for the right of children with disabilities to preserve their identities.

The UNCRPD also includes specific considerations relating to **children**. Article 7 sets out that disabled children have the same rights as all other children. Article 23 provides disabled children and their families with the right to information and support and Article 24 sets out that disabled children have the right to inclusive education with support to develop their skills and talents to the full.





# A CHILDREN'S HUMAN RIGHTS APPROACH

This section sets out how settings can use a children's human rights approach to develop a rights-based practice in their setting. The Right Way approach supports settings that are beginning to develop this practice, and also supports those settings who are already familiar with rights-based approaches to develop their practice and further embed the principles of human rights. The approach has been developed from the [Children's Commissioner's children's rights approach for public bodies](#). This bespoke approach for education is linked specifically to the legal requirements of education in Wales, and uses case studies from across Wales to illustrate rights-based education practice under each of the principles. Many education settings in Wales already have well-developed practices to develop a human rights approach for children: often adopting the principles and suggestions described below will complement or improve what is already working.

The principles of a human rights approach for children are:

- Embedding children's human rights
- Equality and Non-discrimination
- Empowering children
- Participation
- Accountability



Education settings can use our tool to self-evaluate how far these principles are already integrated into their practice, and to set targets for improvement.

## Young People's Advice

The Children's Commissioner's Young People's Advisory Panel gave the examples below as indicators of a children's human rights approach in an education setting.

We know rights are **embedded** when:

- The school council is involved as an integral part of decision making
- There is mutual respect between staff and pupils
- Our learning is linked to our rights

We know there is **equality and non-discrimination** when:

- We have a safe place to go to if we feel we are experiencing discrimination
- We have space to practice our faith and halal food is available in the canteen
- Our school is honest about bullying

We know we are **empowered** when:

- We have an opportunity to explore and discuss our rights in school

We know we can **participate** when:

- We all experience our right to have a say
- Our school lets us all know about opportunities to have a say

We know our setting is **accountable** to us when:

- Teachers tell us how our views have been taken into account
- We get monthly e mails on how our school uses our feedback
- We know what is done when we raise issues like bullying or discrimination

## Embedding children's human rights

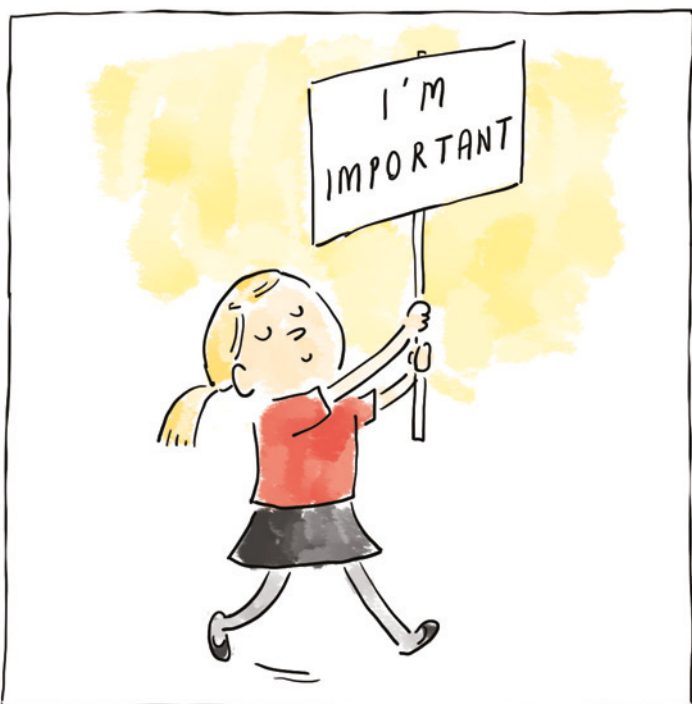
### Children's human rights should be at the core of whole setting planning and delivery.

Leadership is critical to ensuring that rights are embedded in the setting. At a senior level, leaders need to understand children's human rights and set a clear direction to embed rights into their organisation. This should be supported with an action plan that is monitored and regularly reviewed.

Professional learning is also a central requirement: all staff in the setting, including leaders, associate and support staff, should develop knowledge and understanding of the UNCRC and the UNCRPD, in line with the requirements of the new curriculum. Clear leadership should ensure that this understanding enables staff to make links with their practice, and to promote rights in their day-to-day work.

Similarly all governors need awareness of the principles and content of children's human rights, and should be able to consider these in decision making. As school policies are reviewed, staff and governors should ensure they are consistent with the principles of these Conventions.

There should be coordination across different areas of the school, and also with external services to ensure that the principles of children's human rights are always applied. This will help ensure that the best interests of the child (article 3) are a primary consideration in all decision-making concerning individual children and groups of children. It should be clear how children's human rights have been taken into account.



In order to put the principle into practice:

- Develop a clear strategic vision to embed a children's rights approach. Evaluation shows that leadership is key to ensuring this. **Leaders in a setting need to champion this vision** and drive it forward with a clear action plan.
- Leaders should implement this vision with an **action plan** of specific, measurable, and time-bound targets, which are based on this Right Way framework.
- Identify **key individuals or a team** with responsibility to take forward your action plan, and to support others to develop their practice. Implementation of your action plan should be reflected in the performance management and appraisal of individuals.
- Children are **key individuals** to include in this group and you could also include governor representatives. This group could also run the Children's Commissioner's free and bilingual [Ambassadors scheme](#) in your setting.
- Ensure that the whole staff body have professional learning to develop knowledge and understanding of the UNCRC and UNCRPD, in line with legal requirements of the curriculum. Support this with Welsh Government's professional learning resources, due September 2022 on Hwb.
- Refer to the UNCRC and UNCRPD in all policies and other documents setting out vision and values.
- Ensure your **governors** (or equivalent governance structure) have training in children's human rights. Support this with Welsh Government's professional learning resources, due September 2022 on Hwb.
- Make sure parents and carers know that children's human rights are important to your setting and include the UNCRC and UNCRPD in your **communications and events**: website; letters; open days; reports to parents; open assemblies; school performances; governor's annual report; school prospectus. You can use our [simple parents' guide](#) to children's rights to do this.
- Ensure that you link children's human rights to the **four purposes** and the six **Areas of Learning and Experience**. You can use our curriculum [rights-map](#) to support this.
- Carry out an **initial and on-going evaluation** of levels of knowledge and understanding of children's rights amongst staff, governors, pupils and the wider school community.

### Case Study: Mudiad Meithrin: enabling young children across Wales to learn through rights

This children's rights framework can be adapted for maintained and non-maintained settings. We also believe the principles can greatly enhance the offer of the new curriculum in Wales for early years settings. We have teamed up with Mudiad Meithrin – the main provider of Welsh-medium early years care and education – to develop resources to support early years settings and others working with younger children, including Wales' Flying Start programme, to implement rights-based practice. All these resources are aligned with The Right Way, and here, Dr Gwenllian Lansdown Davies, chief executive of Mudiad Meithrin, explains the reasons behind supporting rights-based practice in the early years:

**"At Mudiad Meithrin, we are passionate about enabling all children in Wales to access their rights to play, learn and grow in Welsh. Having a framework which enables us as an organisation and our settings to turn this ambition into a reality is something we were keen to support. We hope that by producing such materials we can clearly demonstrate to everyone working with children, at whatever stage of their lives, that a children's rights approach is something practical, achievable and powerful."**

The materials being developed with Mudiad Meithrin will be available from our Right Way hub on our website: [www.childrenscommissioner.wales](http://www.childrenscommissioner.wales)

### Case Study: Ringland Primary: children's rights as the foundation for the whole school

**"Part of being a teacher at Ringland is knowing the value of children's rights and how this affects our everyday pedagogy and practice."**

Children's rights are the foundation of the school values and ethos in Ringland Primary School in Newport. The curriculum is designed to fulfil the UNCRC and the four purposes together. Each school week starts with an article of the UNCRC, linked to the curriculum, which is explored through 'Mindful Monday' across the whole school. Weekly assemblies focus on a value each week, and the link between the value and children's rights is explained. Curriculum design is reviewed and evaluated using pupil voice groups, which then feeds into development planning. The rights ambassadors lead wellbeing learning walks, and feedback to teachers using a RAG system (Red, Amber, Green).

In addition to directly linking the principles of the Convention to learning, the school has a children's rights strategy and has linked children's rights to policies, with approaches wellbeing and engagement based on articles of the UNCRC. All staff and governors have received children's rights training and staff have formed a children's rights steering group of Super Ambassadors report regularly to the school Governing body and the schools Wellbeing Governor.

Ringland Primary has also taken part in the Children's Commissioner's Ambassador Scheme for the last five years: the rights ambassador group and the Super Ambassadors are a vital part of the approach to rights, ensuring that children's voices are reflected in the schools planning and practice.

Dawn Robertson-Stannett, Deputy Head, explains the impacts for children,

**"Our Super Ambassadors are informed about their rights and are given opportunities to be creative with their missions. They have been pivotal in delivering information about safety and wellbeing in school. They are empowered to make decisions, take assemblies and deliver presentations to our Governors."**

**"All our children are able to confidently discuss their rights and they know why they are so important. This is an integral part of building their confidence, self-belief and awareness of the rights of others."**





## Equality and non-discrimination

Equality is about ensuring that every child has an equal opportunity to make the most of their talents and develop to their fullest potential, and that no child has to endure poor life chances because of discrimination.

Promoting equality means taking action to tackle discrimination, which is a right under the UNCRC (Article 2). Non-discrimination is also a principle of the UNCRPD (Article 3). The UNCRPD also sets out the principle of inclusion (Article 3) and the duty to respect this principle (Article 4). Inclusion requires an accessible, barrier-free physical and social environment. This can mean changes to attitudes as well as changes to space.

Education settings need to promote changes so that children can always participate on an equal basis with others. This means that settings need to make sure all children have equitable experiences across all areas, both inside and outside of the classroom. This can involve planning and adapting activities so that they develop the abilities and capacities of each pupil, it also needs to involve understanding and removing barriers to participation in learning and in wider enrichment such as school clubs, groups and trips.

Settings need to prevent and tackle both direct and indirect discrimination. Sometimes children face direct discrimination due to their identity, for example, prejudice-based bullying. Children can also experience indirect discrimination, for example, through a lack of diversity in the curriculum.

To eliminate discrimination, settings should take an active stance against forms of discrimination. This means that all staff, learners and the wider community need to work together to ensure that children do not experience discrimination in any form. Settings should put in place clear actions that expressly challenge discrimination on any basis, for example by taking anti-racist, anti-sexist or anti-ableist approaches. This is not an exhaustive list but an illustration of the types of pro-active approaches that can be taken by a setting. Such approaches go beyond previous emphases on, for example, 'celebrating diversity' (whilst welcomed) as they actively tackle systemic discrimination.

In addition to preventing discrimination of children with protected characteristics, education settings must also take action to prevent discrimination on the basis of poverty. Education settings will also need to account for the impact of multiple discrimination: when a child faces discrimination on more than one ground (e.g. a disabled child who is living in poverty). Local authorities have a duty to support settings with this under the [Socio-Economic Duty of the Equality Act 2010](#).

In order to put the principle into practice settings should aim to:

- Include a **clear commitment to taking action against discrimination on any basis** in policies and vision, and share this as a clear and consistent message with the school community. Make the implications of discrimination widely understood by staff and children and be proud that your setting is taking action.
- Support children and young people to take an **active stance against different types of discrimination**. For example, the Children's Commissioner's [Tackling Islamophobia](#) resource will support your settings to take express action against faith-based discrimination. The Children's Commissioner's [Intergenerational resource](#) will support you to take positive action against age-based discrimination.
- **Poverty proof** your setting: our [Check with Ceri](#) and [Revolve](#) resources help school leaders, governors and learners make sure no child experiences discrimination due to poverty.
- Develop an **anti-discriminatory approach** to participation. This will ensure learners have **equal chances to have their say** and take part in decision making. [Our top tips for improving participation](#) will support this.
- Enable all children, young people and staff to **explore and feel proud of their own unique personal identity**, and celebrate the different identities in your setting. You can use the Children's Commissioner's [Here I Am](#) resource to support this.



- **Gather relevant quantitative data** to enable identification of groups of children or young people who may be experiencing inequality. This analysis data should include a focus on the following:
  - **Educational progress** disaggregated by protected characteristics and socio-economic background
  - **All incidents and types of bullying**, as set out in [Welsh Government statutory anti-bullying guidance](#). This should include recording specific types of bullying related to protected characteristics. Regularly review and use this data to plan preventative action to respond to specific issues in your setting.
  - **The use of restraint**. This should be recorded and analysed, with appropriate support given to staff and children. You can find out recommendations from the Equality and Human Rights Commission around restraint [here](#). Welsh Government framework for reducing restrictive practices is available [here](#).
  - **Incidents when children are isolated** from their peers, for example, excluded from the classroom or kept in isolation over break times. Analyse this information to identify other methods to support children and to ensure isolation is limited. You can find more information about isolation, exclusion and a toolkit that can help prevent the use of isolation with young children [here](#).
- **Include qualitative data** as well as quantitative: **ask children** about their experiences to help you identify inequalities. Children can also participate or lead peer research to find out about experiences and views.
- Develop **targeted programmes of action** to ensure equality for groups of excluded, socially marginalised and disadvantaged children. In some cases your pupil development grant can help resource this.
- Require **external services and experiences** to be provided in ways that do not discriminate against children or groups of children, for example: school visits; visitors to the setting; music services; transport. Ensure external providers enable disabled children and children with additional learning needs to fully participate in experiences.
- Audit the [diversity of representation](#) across your curriculum and involve children in this. **Identify opportunities to increase diverse representation** so that your learners develop understanding of the lives and achievements of disabled people and people of different sex, gender, race, religion, age, and sexuality.
- In line with the [RSE Code](#), ensure your Relationships and Sexuality Education is **LGBTQ+ inclusive**, and that you **promote gender equity** across your whole school community.
- As set out in [Welsh Government statutory anti-bullying guidance](#), **record all incidents and types of bullying**, outlining specific types of bullying related to protected characteristics. Regularly review and use this data to plan preventative action to respond to specific issues in your setting.

#### Case Study: Ysgol Clywedog: working with communities to overcome barriers to education.

Ysgol Clywedog in Wrexham is an English medium 11-16 school. With the support of Wrexham Traveller Education Service the school have been focusing on supporting young people currently not registered at a setting to integrate into the school by working with families to develop a bespoke curriculum package.

Rhian Parry, Inclusion Officer with the Traveller Education Service, explains, '**traditionally some of our Gypsy and Traveller families feel the curriculum can be less relevant to their children. In response, Ysgol Clywedog has developed a bespoke curriculum for some learners who were previously not engaging with any setting. Young people and their parents take part in designing their timetable, and they have a sense of ownership about their learning. This is achieving outcomes for young people: they are gaining qualifications, are included in the wider education system and they are building self-esteem.**'

Staff at Ysgol Clywedog have developed an inclusive understanding of the Gypsy and Traveller culture, and have strengthened engagement with the community. Families have been encouraged by this engagement and have been actively requesting opportunities for younger siblings. Examples of the alternative curriculum provided by the setting include: building work; lifestyle skills; wellbeing; cooking; managing finances; budgeting; history of art; music; poetry; dress-making; hair and beauty. Some of these are accredited courses through which young people gain qualifications.

Rhian Parry describes the longer term impact on young people, '**By understanding some of the previous barriers to education, and working to overcome these, young people have been able to envisage a future that can include their culture and identity, and can enable a pathway to further education and training. For the first time the young people we are working with are realising that they can have both.**'

### Case Study: Coleg Cambria: Inclusion in Post-16 Education and Employment

Coleg Cambria is a Further Education College in North East Wales. Below are two programmes of work that have enabled inclusion for disabled and neuro-diverse young people.

#### Programme 1: Removing barriers to inclusion for neuro-diverse learners

Coleg Cambria has responded to the needs and aspirations of neuro-diverse young people in the local community by developing an innovative approach to transition, learning programmes and social support. This has been achieved through:

- A bespoke transition process to college for autistic learners. This includes actively contacting learners following application to college and working directly with them to develop their own transition plan. It also includes mentoring support and support with transport and social times.
- A bespoke programme that increases life skills and confidence for autistic learners. NeuroTech is a collaboration between the Inclusion Department and Computing Technologies to create an IT course specifically tailored to neuro diverse learners who can have barriers to participating in a mainstream course. Learners are supported by an ASC Mentor and Inclusion Support Assistants. Progression from this into mainstream courses is planned and supported.
- Providing a college based club and safe space for neuro-diverse learners. Autistic learners told staff that lunch and break times can prove challenging and that low sensory spaces would help. In response, N-GAGE was developed, a fully supported low sensory space on all sites. N-Gage provides opportunities for social activities as well as a calm space.

The supports the principles of the UNCRC and UNCRPD by increasing opportunities for learners who would otherwise not be able to access mainstream provision in their local environment. Equality is achieved by providing individualised approaches, therefore removing the barriers to success. Focus is given on providing support and skills development in areas that are specific for each learner, such as social communication, resilience and self-efficacy. 100% of the cohort in 2020/21 remained on the college programmes through to completion and success, with 60% of this group progressing to mainstream courses. The College has recorded a 26% increase of applications from autistic learners over the last two years.

#### Programme 2: Student-led social enterprise to enable equal opportunities

In 2021 students at Coleg Cambria established "Coffe-Equality", a pop-up coffee shop to enable disabled students to gain work experience. This project was initiated by three students who are themselves disabled. The group worked with the college's commercial team, hospitality and catering, and childcare students, and created pop-up coffee shops, advertised the events and raised money for charity. All learners involved in the initiative had additional learning needs and have been peer-mentored by Level 3 students from Hospitality and Catering.

Rona Griffiths, Learner Experience and Enterprise Manager explains, **"this project gave the whole team a sense of pride and achievement, and a sense of belonging. The whole ethos behind Coffe-Equality was to offer opportunities to those who can face additional barriers and discrimination in finding work experience. This was something tangible and proven for each young person's CV. The three students who initiated this project took positive action to support their own rights and the rights of others."**



## Empowering Children

Human rights should empower children. Empowerment means developing children's capabilities and skills so they are better able to take advantage of rights, and to engage with, influence and hold accountable those individuals and institutions that affect their lives.

Empowerment is a central concept of the social and rights based model of disability in the UNCRPD. Under this model, persons with disabilities are empowered, in control of their lives and enjoy full participation on an equal basis with others. The duty to ensure this opportunity falls on Government and wider society, not the person themselves.

Empowering children in an education setting can also empower them in their life with their family, in their community, and as a citizen. Empowered children know they have rights and that they should be taken seriously. This means they can speak out about their opinions and experiences and raise concerns if their rights are not met.

Empowering children is an essential outcome of the [cross-cutting theme of human rights education in the curriculum in Wales](#). This draws on the elements of human rights education set out in Article 2 of the UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training and sets out that children will:

- Learn *about* human rights (acquire knowledge about human rights, the UNCRC and the UNCRPD);
- Learn *through* human rights (develop and experience values, attitudes and behaviours that reflect the principles of human rights);
- Learn *for* human rights (children are empowered as active citizens to advance respect for the rights of all).

Empowering is also fundamental to Wales' [purpose-driven curriculum](#), and is essential to enabling the four purposes in an holistic way. The suggestions below support curriculum design considerations in settings and can be directly integrated with learning in Humanities, particularly in relation to the following statement of what matters: *Informed, self-aware citizens engage with the challenges and opportunities that face humanity, and are able to take considered and ethical action.* Suggestions also directly support the progression steps of Health and Wellbeing, particularly in relation to the descriptions of learning that inform the following statement of what matters: *Healthy relationships are fundamental to our wellbeing.*

To empower children, all individuals in a setting need to understand children as rights-holders. Empowerment is about ensuring children have the information and skills they need to make choices and to affect outcomes for themselves and their communities. Empowerment changes the relationship between children and professionals. It means adults sharing power with children, so that children can better control and direct their lives, in particular in areas where this ability was previously unavailable to them.

This principle also applies to younger children and should be seen as an important contribution to the development of the child. It may be especially relevant to children who are members of excluded, marginalised or disadvantaged social groups.

In order to put the principle into practice, settings should aim to:

- Provide children with **opportunities to act collectively** to develop ideas and proposals to bring about change **in your setting**. Consider how all children can take part in this, and develop ways your school council and pupil voice groups can be representative of all your learners. Our [resources to support school councils](#) will help this.
- Make sure children on your school council and other pupil voice groups can **meaningfully influence decisions in your setting**. Establish clear processes for how your pupil voice groups influence decisions about your curriculum, pedagogy and wider experiences. Make sure staff and governors understand this process so that they share decision making with learners.
- Make sure **learners have training** to develop knowledge and skills to participate. For example, if you are a secondary setting make sure your pupil associate governors have training to understand what your governing body does and develop their skills to take part.
- As a **staff team, share ideas, learning and resources** about how you empower children in your setting: how far do you feel your learners are empowered in their education, in their family life, in their wider community and as citizens? Do they have the skills and knowledge to speak out if they are not getting their human rights? What more can you do to enable this?
- Provide children with opportunities, resources and education to take **collective action as ethical, informed citizens in your wider community**. The Children's Commissioner has a toolkit to support this: [Make a difference – a young person's guide to taking action](#).

- **Link pupil voice to children's human rights.** Make sure everyone in your setting understands how your school council and pupil voice groups enable children's human right to take part in decision making that affects their lives. Use the language of rights and the conventions to do this.
- Use **accessible language.** Review your communications to make sure children, young people and families have simple information about your setting and about their own learning. For all communications use simple plain language. Support text with pictures, symbols and phrases in community languages if appropriate. Make sure children and families can understand your marking and reporting.
- Use **person-centred planning** to ensure children with Additional Learning Needs are enabled to take part in developing their Individual Development Plan. Make sure children **understand the information** in their Individual Development Plan by customising the plan so it uses language, pictures or symbols that support understanding. Children can also create and design their own [one page profile](#).
- Make **data gathered about children available** to them in an appropriate way. This can include external data, such as the [Student Health and Wellbeing Survey](#). Make sure children have opportunities to share in decision making about school priorities and strategies based on this data.
- Use the language of rights when **supporting children through restorative practice.** Help children understand how this is supporting their rights to express their opinions and be listened to (Article 12), to be safe (Article 19), to join groups (Article 15) and to learn (Articles 28 and 29).
- Support learning in the Humanities and Health and Wellbeing AoLEs by ensuring children have information and opportunities to **develop their understanding of their human rights.** Use the [Children's Commissioner's resources](#) to support this.
- Sign up to the [Commissioner's free, accessible, bilingual Ambassador schemes](#) to ensure children have **accessible information about the Children's Commissioner** and opportunities to explore their rights.
- Link learning to the [Wellbeing Goals for Wales](#) and the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) and support children to see how their learning supports them to take actions as citizens of Wales and the world. Resources to support this are available [here](#).

### Case Study: **Cynon Valley Organic Adventures: empowering young people in alternative settings.**

Cynon Valley Organic Adventures (CVOA) is a social enterprise in Rhondda Cynon Taff. It is an Accredited College, offering learning and accredited qualifications to meet a range of needs and age groups. The organisation also supports volunteer placements, social prescribing activities and regular community events.

At the outset of the pandemic the organisation provided food parcels and support to the community, and this gave professionals first-hand knowledge of some of the serious challenges individuals and families were facing. The organisation identified young people who were struggling to engage with any education and who were at increased risk of harm during lockdowns due to support systems not operating in the same way.

As a result, CVOA worked in partnership with Ysgol Nantgwyn and Careers Wales to pilot alternative education provision for young people aged 14-16. Empowerment of young people was at the heart of the aims of placements, which involved mix of nature-based wellbeing and accredited learning. Key to achieving empowerment was building young people's skills and confidence through a peer-mentoring scheme. Staff gave young people a consistent message that they were valued and accepted for where they were in their development and supported young people to take Level 1 through to Level 3 qualifications in youth mentoring. Supporting young people to develop as peer mentors, enabled young people to build the language and confidence to describe and explain their own experiences, it enabled them to understand that their experiences are valuable to others, and can help create positive change.

The setting also ran group sessions to listen to young people's priorities, and to support them to create policies that both peers and staff needed to follow. These policies have included a gender equality policy which requires all staff ensure young people have the same opportunities to engage in tasks and use equipment and tools. Any staff member using gender stereotypes when allocating tasks needs to put £1 in a charity box as a consequence.

### Case Study: Heronsbridge School: children's rights across curriculum design.

Heronsbridge School is a residential special school in the local authority of Bridgend. The school provides education for children and young people aged 3-19 years old.

As a pioneer school for the new curriculum in Wales, staff and pupils at the school have integrated children's rights across their curriculum design. Children at the school chose articles of the UNCRC that are particularly important to them, and staff linked these directly to the values of the school, and to the purposes of the curriculum. This is reflected in their communication with families, and through teaching and learning. Staff have also mapped each of the Areas of Learning and Experience to children's rights articles, and have linked each of their schemes of work to rights, ensuring that children develop understanding of these rights through their learning. The school has also included the Children's Commissioner's accessible series of ten lessons into planning, and children have learnt about and explored their rights using these classroom activities and resources.

Lisa James-Smith, Deputy Head at the school, explains why this is so important, **"We are a special school and lots of our children can find communication difficult. Children's rights have focused all of us on how we can enable children to have a voice. We're constantly striving to listen to our children in the way that they need us to, and it's made us understand our role in amplifying their voice, and ensuring they have choices and their needs are met."**

**"It's powerful for our children to know they have rights. And this knowledge is for their life outside school too. We're giving them the skills to tell us if they don't feel listened to. They genuinely realise they have a say. We've also developed their understanding of children around the world through links with international schools. This has supported them to understand that all children have rights."**



## Participation

Participation means listening to children and taking their views into account. All children should be supported to freely express their opinions; they should be both heard and listened to. This means that children need opportunities to speak out, but also that their views should be taken seriously when decisions or actions are taken that affect their lives. Children should participate in decisions that relate to them individually and collectively. Effective participation means that every child's voice is understood as equally important, and every child has opportunities to choose to take part in decisions.



Participation is a cross-cutting principle of both of the UN Conventions. This means that participation needs to be realised for all the other rights of the UNCRC and UNCPRD to be realised. [Participation is also a key principle of how settings](#) should design their own curriculum and assessment arrangements.

The concept of full and effective participation means that all children, including disabled children, are recognised as equal participants in processes related to decisions that affect their lives. Children's views will need to be taken into account and given due weight in light of their age and maturity, but young age or relative immaturity is no reason for discounting children's opinions or for giving them less attention in decision-making processes.

Participation goes beyond consultation and includes fully informing children, enabling involvement in decision making processes, and creating the possibility to voice opinions and to complain when participation is denied.

For participation to be effective, resources need to be identified and sufficient time needs to be enabled in decision-making processes. Full and meaningful participation of disabled children and young people requires an accessible, barrier-free physical and social environment. Barriers to participation, including attitudinal barriers, should be identified and removed.



It should be clear how children have influenced decisions and how their views have been taken into account, with feedback always given to the children who are involved in the process. Participation should not be understood as an end in itself, but as a process, which is safe, enabling and inclusive, and which supports dialogue between children and professionals.

In order to put the principle into practice, settings should aim to:

- Include a **clear commitment to inclusive participation** of children in key policies and statements.
- Adopt the seven [National Participation Standards](#) and develop awareness of these with all staff and governors.
- Make sure your participation is **inclusive**. Everyone should have a chance to participate. If you identify that some groups of children are missing from your participation opportunities then consult with children to understand the barriers and remove them. Children with Additional Learning Needs must have equal opportunities to have a say.
- Recognise that there are different levels of participation, relevant to different circumstances. A **participation model**, like the examples included in [our explanation of participation for teachers](#), can help clarify the different types of participation you can use.
- Make sure children can take part in **designing and reviewing your curriculum**. Enable children to share views and ideas on themes, and respond to children's interests and needs when planning provision. Enable children to provide feedback after completion of a topic, and ensure this is part of the continuous process of refining your curriculum.
- Involve children directly in the monitoring and evaluation of **pedagogy, teaching and learning**. Ensure children can feedback about how they like to learn, and the experiences they have learning, as well as the content that they learn.
- Make sure children can participate in developing and reviewing **assessment arrangements**. This will help make sure that children experience assessment that supports their learning and wellbeing.
- Involve children in the **recruitment** of staff and governors.
- Involve children in making decisions about your **school budget**. Consider how your school council can participate in this.
- Create **choice** about the contents and methods of learning.
- Provide **feedback** to children and staff on the outcomes of children's involvement, highlighting any changes brought about by their participation, and any reasons why their ideas weren't taken on board.



**Case Study: Our Lady's: enabling pupils to have an active role in decisions across the whole school community.**

Our Lady's is a primary school in Mountain Ash. They became a UNICEF Rights Respecting School in June 2019 having embedded children's rights in school policies, planning and practice. In consultation with their school Senedd, Rights Knights Steering Group and Super Ambassadors, they began sharing their knowledge of rights with the wider school community, including parents/carers, governors, parish and local authority representatives.

Some highlights of this work include:

- 'Rights mascots' were created by pupils who were sent home so that pupils could share their rights knowledge with their families. Both went home with a different pupil every week with examples of rights they might enjoy during their stay.
- The pupil-led Rights Steering Group led consultations with the whole school community regarding wellbeing as part of their work on the Children's Commissioner's Special Mission in autumn 2021. They sought views of all pupils, staff and governors, evaluated the responses and identified improvements. Results were then shared by pupils with the head teacher and wellbeing governor who spoke about how ideas could be incorporated into the school improvement plan.
- Pupil consultation indicated children wanted to use their rights to participate more fully in the local community. The leader of the local council and the local Member of the Senedd were invited to meet with the Rights Steering Group. After the meeting, pupils wrote to the leader of the council to voice concerns about the destruction of equipment in the local play areas. In response, he arranged a visit from the RCT Parks Co-ordinator who asked pupils to design posters discouraging anti-social behaviour which would be displayed in local parks. Older pupils were consulted by the authority's finance team enabling them to express their opinions on what they felt should be the financial priorities of the Local Authority for 2019/20.
- At the pupils' request, the whole school focused on UNICEF's Paddington Postcard Scheme to compare and contrast children's rights in Wales with children's rights in other countries and cultures around the world. It also became the theme for the Rights Knights After-school club. The work has now led to a new focus on the Global Goals and how these impact children's rights in Wales.

**Case Study: Llanishen High School: governors enabling young people to lead change.**

Llanishen High School is an 11-18 school in Cardiff. Students in the school wrote to the Chair of the Governors explaining their view that the choice of English Literature texts was not in keeping with the inclusive ethos of the school. In response, the Chair supported staff in the school to set up a task group for students and teachers to collaboratively design the Key Stage 3 scheme of work A Celebration of Voices within Literature.

This approach both increased diversity in the curriculum and enabled participation in curriculum design. Enabling students to participate in planning increased their understanding of learning objectives and assessment processes. Young people were able to take more leadership in their learning, and presented their work to their peers through the school council. Young people could also see that Governors and staff had acted on their concerns. The school is building on this participation model by enabling students to shape planning across all Areas of Learning and Experience, and in addition is establishing a Post-16 Task Force which will actively involve young people, governors, parents and the local

community to bring about changes that young people want to see. The aim of this is that young people will be central to problem solving in relation to the physical environment, the school facilities, and the curriculum.

Building on the success of the initial project, staff have also explored effective pedagogy in building a non-racist curriculum, and developed more diverse reading across the whole school. An Equalities Forum has been established, with representatives from governors, school leaders, staff and learners. The forum have had presentations from and discussions with Race Council Wales, and are exploring becoming an Anti-Racist school.

The structure of the Governing Body has been a key element in enabling the development rights-based approaches. Student Voice Link Governors, The School Council and the Senior Leadership Team meet half-termly and Governing Body agendas include these updates. There are also student representatives on every committee.

## Accountability

Education settings need to be accountable as to how they have considered children's human rights. Settings should be accountable to children for decisions and actions which affect their lives, and provide reasons for these decisions and actions.

Children should be provided with information and given access to procedures which enable them to question and challenge decisions in their setting. To obtain any human right a child must know they are entitled to it and be able to actively claim their human rights, including when making a complaint or challenging decisions and actions.

Accountability requires monitoring to what extent children, including disabled children, are experiencing their human rights and identifying how this can be improved. It also requires putting in place urgent and effective remedies if the education setting is failing to ensure children's human rights, for example, their right to education, play, or non-discrimination.

Authorities, and all staff with responsibilities that impact on children, must understand that children have human rights and that they have an obligation to respect, protect and fulfil children's rights. All those involved should understand that they are accountable to children for meeting this obligation.

To put this principle into practice education settings should aim to:

- Assess your children's rights approach using this **self-assessment tool**, and use this to identify key areas for improvement. Involve children in this assessment, and in identifying areas to develop.
- Enable children to **participate in monitoring** the targets on your **School Development Plan**; you could use pupil voice groups to support this.
- Your governing body (or equivalent governance structure) could carry out a [Children's Rights Impact Assessment](#) to inform key decisions. This will support them to use the five principles of The Right Way framework to **guide their governor challenges and scrutiny**. You could publish your assessments online to explain your decision making.
- **Staff supervision and performance management** could include performance indicators relating to children's rights. For example, you might consider lead roles for each of the Right Way principles. You should link these indicators to your children's rights action plan (as suggested in the Embedding section).
- Your governing body (or equivalent) can scrutinise the **delivery of actions** in your children's rights action plan.

- Enable children to participate in your **self-evaluation using our self-assessment tool** and share information about your evaluation with children.
- Create a child-friendly version of the **annual report from governors**.
- You could **structure your Annual Report using the five principles of The Right Way**. This will show your whole community how a children's rights approach supports your work.
- Establish key governors or a sub-committee of governors to **promote children's rights** and to scrutinise your children's rights approach.
- Provide accessible information about processes for **making complaints**.
- Clearly signpost how children and families can **access external advice** and support, for example, the Children's Commissioner's [Investigation and Advice Service](#).

Ensure that children and young people are not given the message either that they bear responsibility for the rights of others or that their own rights can be removed. Children's human rights are inalienable, this means they cannot be taken away. It is the duty of adults to uphold their rights. For this reason, we recommend that education settings do not pair 'rights and responsibilities' together in displays and communications, but instead discuss them separately with children. With knowledge of rights, children and young people can be encouraged to support and respect the rights of others, and can understand that their actions can affect the rights of others. Children can also explore how they balance their own rights with other people's rights in their school setting or community.





### Case Study: Ysgol Uwchradd Aberteifi: accountability to the school council.

Ysgol Uwchradd Aberteifi is a bilingual school for pupils aged between 11 and 18 years in Ceredigion.

Accountability to children and young people is a key outcome of participation in the school, with the school council an integral part of making changes. The school council are consulted on all aspects of school life, including teaching and learning and marking and assessment. The council collected pupils' views on the effectiveness of the marking and assessment policy and presented findings and recommendations for improvements to the senior leadership team. Recommendations of the pupils were accepted and fed back to faculty leaders, and pupils were included in monitoring of learning and reviewing the school development plan.

In addition to the review of marking and assessment, pupils complete a whole-school survey on teaching and learning twice a year. The outcomes inform the faculty reviews, faculty self-evaluation and improvement plans. The school council conducts online surveys to gather pupil opinions. For example, it developed the 'Quality Teacher 10 code' by collecting pupils' views on teaching strategies and approaches. As a result, the school refined its teaching and learning model. Pupils and staff developed this work to include a 'Quality learner Code'.

The school council works closely with the governing body. Associate pupil governors attend termly governing body meetings and every agenda includes an item dedicated to the school council. They take an active part in the recruitment of new staff. They are involved in lesson observations when appointing new staff, conduct their own interview panel and feed back to the appointing panel of governors and senior leaders.

### Case Study: Bridgend College: "You Said...We Did..."

Bridgend College is a Further Education College based in Bridgend. The College has developed participation through a learner voice structure that ensures the college is accountable to students for how their views and experience have affected change.

At a strategic level, students can provide manifestos and enter a democratic process to secure their position as a Student Governor. They sit on the Board of Governors and are supported by the Student Engagement Leads and the Clerk to the Governing Body. Linked to this there are course representatives, student academic representatives and college ambassadors, who enable the student governor to link into views from across the student body. The students involved in the Learner Voice structure are supported by training to develop skills to participate in meetings, summarise the points of others and to share thoughts and experiences in a constructive way.

A termly Learner Voice meeting enables students to share thoughts and experiences with senior leadership of the college, and for all to be updated as to actions that are underway. There is always feedback as to what action has been taken as a result of previous meetings and a rationale given if no action has yet been taken. Feedback is also shared across each campus through sharing 'You Said ... We Did' infographics over social media and within social spaces.

Through this structure students have brought about real changes across the college, including:

- Ensuring eco-friendly sanitary products are available for all who need them, whatever their gender identity;
- Creating partnerships with external organisations to support young people;
- Influencing the delivery of their online curriculum;
- Contributing to decision making in response to the pandemic.

# HOW CAN THE CHILDREN'S COMMISSIONER FOR WALES SUPPORT YOU?

Developing a children's human rights approach requires clear leadership in your setting and the commitment of the whole staff team. The Children's Commissioner for Wales is here to support your rights journey. Find out how below.

## Ambassador Programmes

The Children's Commissioner's Ambassador programmes for education settings and community groups help your setting promote children's human rights and the UNCRC. The Ambassador programme is completely free and includes annual events and a package of free, bilingual and accessible rights resources, with a brand new topical rights-resource provided each term. Ambassadors programmes are suitable for all types of education setting: accessible resources are included and we have dedicated staff to support children with additional learning needs at events. Find out more and sign up [here](#).

## Participation Visits

The Children's Commissioner's participation team have an annual programme of online and offline visits to settings that work with children and young people across Wales. Visits can be an opportunity for staff and learners to share your work on children's rights, to get advice about developing your children's rights approach, or to experience interactive workshops on a rights issue. We do our best to accommodate requests for visits, and if we're not able to come in person we'll let you know about other ways to get involved with the Children's Commissioner's work. To request a visit contact us at [post@childcomwales.org.uk](mailto:post@childcomwales.org.uk)

## Investigations and Advice

Our Investigation and Advice service is free and confidential. It's there to advise and support children and young people or those who care for or work with them if they feel that a child has been treated unfairly. Find out more or contact one of our friendly case workers [here](#).

## Resources

The Children's Commissioner has an extensive range of free and bilingual teaching and learning resources for education settings. These include resources for Early Years, Foundation Phase, Primary, Secondary and Accessible teaching. Learning resources develop knowledge and understanding of the UNCRC and children's rights and also focus on a range of children's rights issues, including:

- [Anti-bullying](#);
- [Celebrating identity](#);
- [Child Poverty](#);
- [Challenging negative media reporting of the LGBT community](#);
- [Challenging negative media reporting of Gypsies and Travellers](#);
- [Effective School Councils](#);
- [Healthy Relationships](#);
- [Intergenerational Clubs](#);
- [National and local elections](#);
- [Online safety and preventing cyberbullying](#);
- [Refugees and Asylum Seekers](#);
- [Tackling Islamophobia](#);
- [Taking ethical and informed action](#);
- [Uniform swap-shops](#);
- [Welsh Bacc Community Challenge](#)

## Advisory Panels

The Children's Commissioner has a Young People's Advisory Panel made up of around 40 young people from diverse backgrounds across Wales. Every year we recruit new members to join this fantastic panel of young people who hold the Commissioner to account on the delivery of her three year and annual work plans. You can find out more about the panel and how young people can apply [here](#).

The Commissioner also has an Advisory Panel of adults, and an Audit and Risk Committee. You can find out more about these, including opportunities to get involved, [here](#).

## Whistleblowing

The Prescribed Persons Order 2014 sets out a list of over 60 organisations and individuals that a worker may approach outside their workplace to report suspected or known wrongdoing. The Children's Commissioner for Wales is one of those organisations listed. You can find out more about how the Children's Commissioner can support whistleblowing [here](#).

<sup>i</sup> Find an explanation of the Conventions and the Right Way principles in The Additional Learning Needs Code for Wales 2021: [the-additional-learning-needs-code-for-wales-2021.pdf](#) (gov.wales)

<sup>ii</sup> Find the full text of General Comment no. 1 (2001) Article 29 (1): The Aims of Education [here](#). This framework is also aligned to other relevant General Comments, including:

- [UNCRPD General Comment No. 4 \(2016\) on the right to inclusive education](#);
- [UNCRC General Comment No. 9 \(2006\) The rights of children with disabilities](#);
- [UNCRC General comment No. 5 \(2003\) - General measures of implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child \(Articles 4, 42 and 44\)](#)

<sup>iii</sup> Find the core international human rights texts [here](#)

<sup>iv</sup> The principles of a human rights approach for children are not intended to be used in any particular order. Instead they should be thought about and used together to inform decision-making and service delivery. Inevitably there are some overlaps. For example, empowering children to take decisions and make choices is very close to providing opportunities for children to participate in decisions that affect their lives, and participation will only realise rights for children if it is carried out based on the principle of non-discrimination and equality. However, the overlapping principles are mutually re-enforcing and contribute to a holistic, coherent and comprehensive approach to realising children's rights under both the UN Conventions.

<sup>v</sup> An explanation of non-discrimination and inclusion in the UNCRPD, on which this text is based, is available in the comprehensive OHCHR Training Package on the UNCRPD [here](#).

<sup>vi</sup> UN General Assembly (2012) United Nations Declaration of Human Rights Education and Training: Resolution 66/137 adopted by the General Assembly on 19 December 2011, available [here](#).

## Contact us

We would welcome your questions about how you can develop a children's human rights approach and we'd love to know how this framework is making a difference in your setting. Let us know through tagging us on Twitter or Facebook @childcomwales or emailing us at [post@childcomwales.org.uk](mailto:post@childcomwales.org.uk)



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