

SCCYP!

Scotland's  
Commissioner  
for Children and  
Young People



# Closing the Case

Detective Kit reports on  
What children told scryp about  
'things to do'

SO WHY IS SHE SO INTERESTED IN FINDING DETECTIVES?



SHE SAYS SHE WANTS TO KNOW MORE ABOUT WHAT CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN SCOTLAND LIKE TO DO IN THEIR SPARE TIME - AND ALSO WANTS TO KNOW ABOUT WHAT MAKES IT DIFFICULT TO FIND THINGS TO DO.



AND SHE THINKS WE ARE THE BEST PEOPLE TO FIND THIS OUT?



YES, WE CAN START BY GETTING A DETECTIVE KIT ONLINE OR BY ASKING SOMEONE AT SCHOOL.



COOL! I CAN'T WAIT FOR SCHOOL TOMORROW SO WE CAN GET STARTED.



THE NEXT DAY...

Scottish  
Commissioner  
Children  
Young  
People



IS ANYONE INTERESTED IN DOING THIS?

**YES!**





## THE FACTS OF THE CASE

### Why Detective Kit began the investigation

There were two key aims of the Detective Kit resource activity. The first was Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People's (SCCYP) wish to help children find out more about the work of SCCYP and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). The Detective Kit resource was also about giving children the opportunity to find out about 'things to do' in their local area. In the national consultation undertaken by SCCYP from October 2005–January 2006, children and young people identified 'things to do' as a top priority.

### What were the tasks for the trainee detectives?

A cartoon detective character (also called Detective Kit) was in charge of the case. The children (trainee detectives) completed a workbook which was designed for use within classroom settings in the upper stages of primary schools (aged 10-11).

The main tasks were:

- mapping out what activities were accessible in their local area;
- listing what 'things to do' were free in their local area;
- listing their top 'things to do' in their local area;
- finding out what things stopped them from taking part in activities;
- thinking about a wish list of 'things to do';
- asking others what they used to do for fun in the past; and
- finding out about SCCYP and the UNCRC through interactive activities in the workbook and online.



#### Who did what - some facts and figures

The Detective Kit resource was focussed on providing interaction and feedback from children rather than a formal research study. The option of returning responses to the Commissioner was voluntary.

**Number of trainee detectives: 2364**

**Number of girls: 1197**

**Number of boys: 1167**

**Number of schools returning responses: 104**



The geographical coverage and pattern of responses was variable with 27 of the 32 local authority areas represented, and coverage was very sparse in some of these areas. However, many more children took part with over 400 schools ordering the resource in 2008. Certificates were sent to the schools that sent back returns. The contributions of all the trainee detectives in the schools were highly valued. Three schools were chosen as prize winners based on their effort and engagement, their individuality and insight, and overall quality.

## THE MAPPING EXERCISE

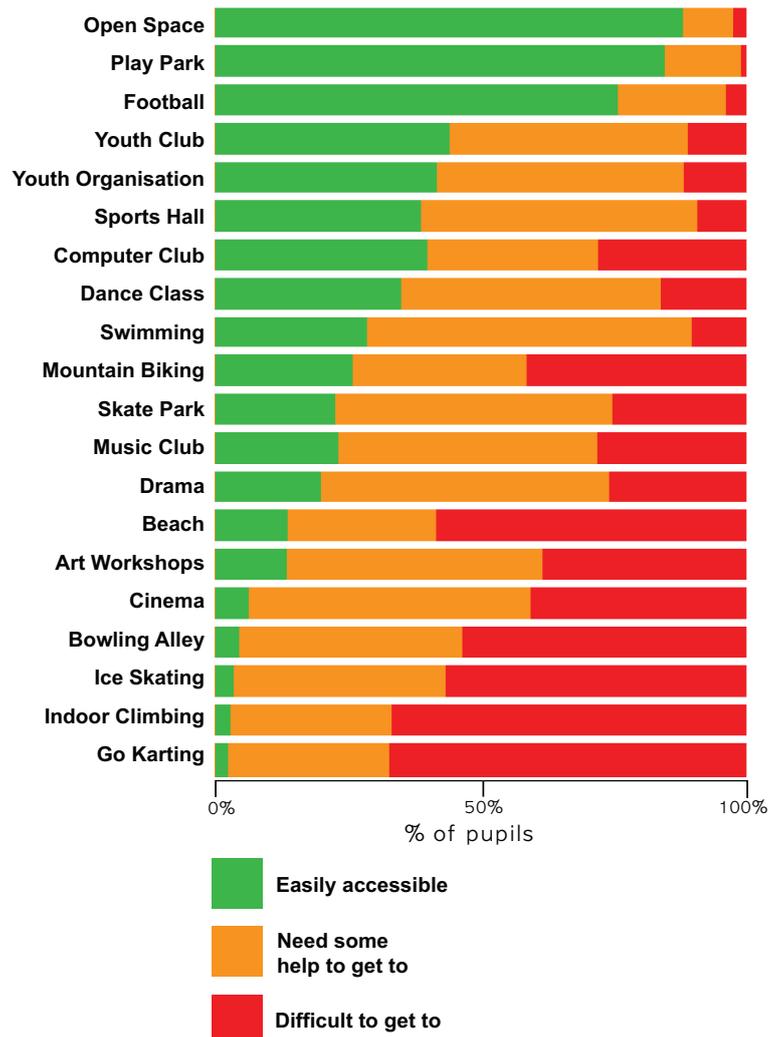
The mapping task involved the trainee detectives placing stickers on a map to indicate the proximity of different activities to their local area. This exercise used a traffic light colour scheme with **green areas** being activities children could get to on their own, **amber areas** which were not far but required adult help and **red areas** which were difficult to get to. Overall, the responses show that the 'easy to get to' activities were

- open spaces, play parks, football, youth clubs and youth organisations

The activities that were difficult to get to were those which tended to be more specialised or more likely to be found in larger urban areas or remote areas.

- go karting, indoor climbing, the beach, ice-skating, and bowling alleys

### ACTIVITY ACCESSIBILITY





“Most of the favourite things to do were outdoor activities.”

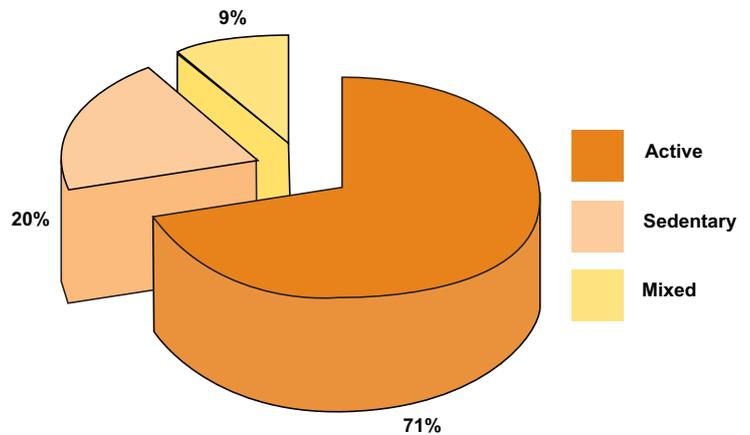
## THE TOP THINGS TO DO

The trainee detectives ranked their top five favourite things to do as:

- Swimming
- Football
- Park
- Cycling
- Playing with friends

Once again when the Detective Kit team re-examined all the clues they found that most of the ‘things to do’ were outside activities, followed by sports based team activities, water based activities (such as swimming, sailing, canoeing), screen based activities (e.g. PC games consoles, TV, cinema) and being with family and friends. As the chart below shows, the Detective Kit team also found out that ‘things to do’ were mostly ‘active’ activities involving some form of exercise.

HOW ‘ACTIVE’ WERE THE TOP THINGS TO DO?





“When finding out about what things there were to do for free, the trainee detectives gathered evidence by using the local library, the internet and by speaking to other children.”

## THINGS TO DO FOR FREE

The investigation involved the trainee detectives in local research in their community, local library, internet and speaking to other children. Here are the top free activities, the park being the clear favourite:

- Park/play park
- Football
- Cycling/mountain biking
- Open space and beaches

Some other top activities were the library, skate park, walking, and swimming. The Detective Kit team re-examined all the clues and found that overall the majority (66%) of free activities were either outside activities (e.g., open spaces, cycling, parks, horse-riding, walking, go-karting) or sports based team activities (such as football, basketball, rugby, netball, cricket, hockey, shinty).

## THE TOP BARRIERS

The trainee detectives were directed to think about some of the things that could stop them doing fun things and activities. The trainee detectives told the Commissioner the top five barriers were:

- Cost
- Distance
- Age limit
- Transport
- Opening times

The Detective Kit team found some issues hidden in other clues, grouped together as ‘perceived dangers and risks’ (e.g. vandals, scary people, fear of strangers, dangerous areas, vicious dogs), These clues serve as a useful reminder of the anxieties of children and they also relay a message to adults to remain alert to their concerns.



**“Some witnesses recounted tales going back to the Second World War and early post war years.”**

## THE TRAINEE DETECTIVES' WISH LISTS

Although the trainee detectives were encouraged to be imaginative about the top five things they would like to be able to do in their areas, most of their wish lists were realistic and indeed achievable with the top ones being:

- Ice skating rink
- Cinema
- Go-kart track
- Bowling alley
- Swimming pool

## THEN AND NOW – WITNESS STATEMENTS

The trainee detectives were tasked with finding out what children used to do for fun in the past by conducting interviews with ‘witnesses’. In some of the witness statements, the class teacher was the subject of the interview. In others it was a neighbour, a relative, a parent, a carer or a family friend. The statements contain a wealth of stories and recollections.

The recollections range across the generations as well as across the geographical landscape of Scotland and beyond. Some recounted tales going back to the Second World War and early post war years. Others talked about things they used to do which were more familiar to the trainee detectives’ experiences. The statements also contain sketches and photographs of their subjects. The witness statements from the three prize winning schools provide a flavour of some of the things witnesses used to do:

- Making up your own entertainment, ball games, skipping, hopscotch, board games, time with friends; (School A)
- Kicking the can, hopscotch, go-karting, fishing, playing in the field, ‘telling scary stories in an old abandoned shed’; (School B)
- Playing in the street and playing imaginary games, going to the brownies or scouts and swimming, playing in the street without supervision. (School C)



“Children gave the Commissioner some clues about the kinds of activities they can do in their local area and how easy it is to get to them, their choices of top things to do, and information about the ‘things to do’ which are free.”

## FINAL BRIEFING

These findings represent the views of 2364 children from areas across Scotland.

- Children gave the Commissioner some clues about the kinds of activities they can do in their local area and how easy it is to get to them, their choices of top things to do, and information about the ‘things to do’ which are free.
- Children also told the Commissioner that many of the ‘things to do’ were active pursuits, and outside activities.
- They also told the Commissioner that cost was a big factor in stopping them from doing activities.
- They also gave clear messages to the Commissioner about wishing for more ‘things to do’ with suggestions centred around having more facilities for activities.
- The trainee detectives also found out about the work of SCCYP and the UNCRC through their engagement with the tasks and activities.

The trainee detectives have investigated what they can do in their local area and provided many clues for others to explore further. These clues may encourage future investigations at local and national level into children’s views on the types of activities they can do and want to do.

## FINDING OUT MORE

**Q. How can I find out more about the results in my area?**

**A.** Visit the children’s web page and see their clues about local areas.  
[www.detectivekit.co.uk](http://www.detectivekit.co.uk)

**Q. Will we see Detective Kit again?**

**A.** We are asking the participating schools for their views of the Detective Kit resource. This feedback will enable SCCYP to plan any possible future development of Detective Kit’s work. Because the Commissioner, Kathleen Marshall’s term of office ends, a new Commissioner will be appointed in Spring 2009.



BEING A  
DETECTIVE IS GREAT!  
WE FOUND OUT LOADS  
OF STUFF.



WE FOUND  
OUT HOW ADULTS  
PLAYED WHEN THEY  
WERE OUR AGE.



AND HOW  
TO GET OUR  
VOICES HEARD.



WELL DONE!



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