



ANNUAL REPORT
2014-2015

Notice anything different?

We've turned things upside down, to make it the right way up.

There's been a simple but important change to how we talk about the office. Rights-holders, children and young people, are first. They always have been for us, and now the message is clear to everyone.

This is the annual report for the Children and Young People's Commissioner and we work to promote and protect the rights of all children and young people in Scotland.

We love to hear from children and young people.

Please contact us...

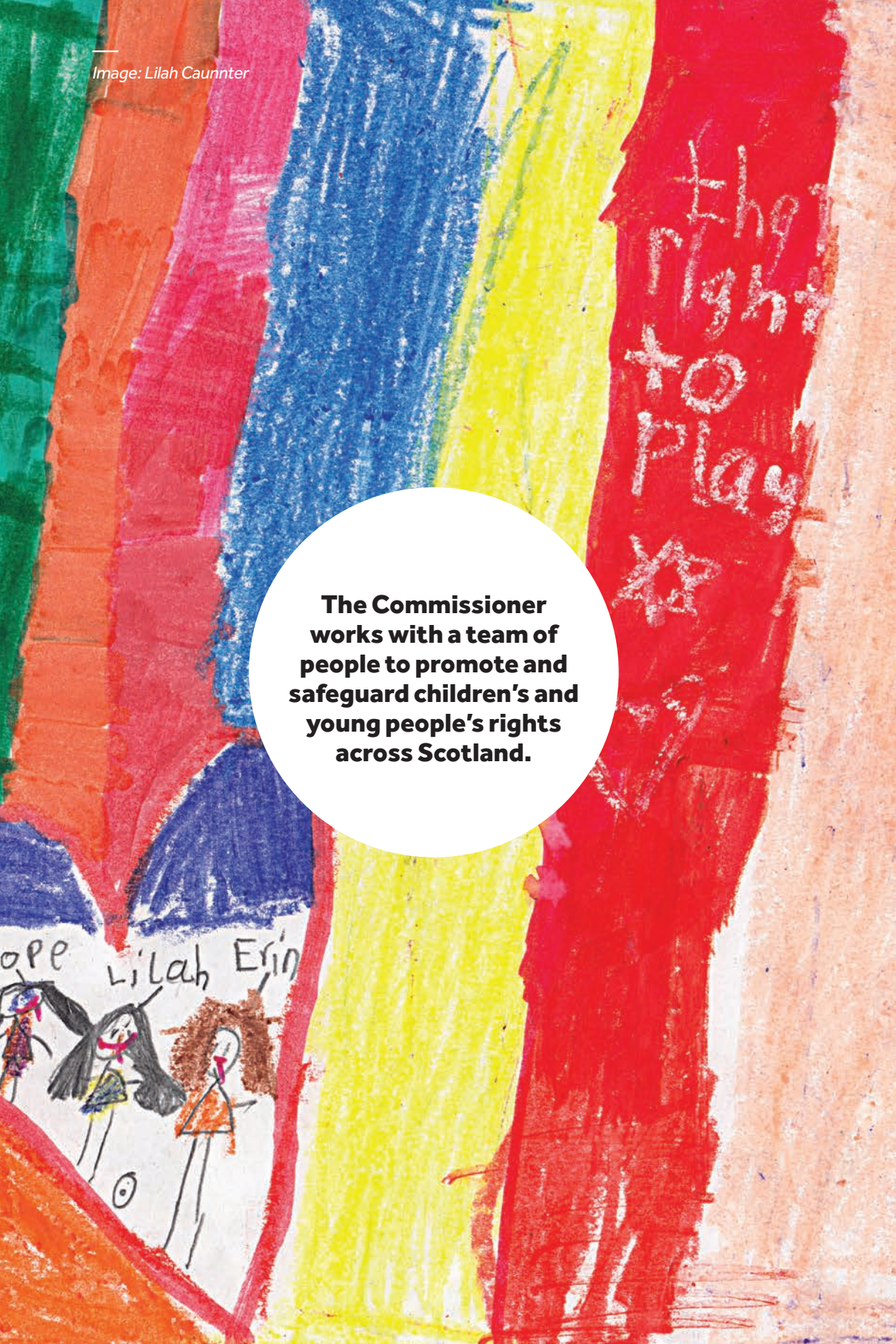
0800 019 1179

**Or send us an email,
Facebook message or tweet...**

**e: info@cypcs.org.uk
f: [facebook.com/cypcs](https://www.facebook.com/cypcs)
t: [@cypcs](https://twitter.com/cypcs)**

**RIGHTS exist to help you
live a happy life. They
keep you safe and make
sure you are treated fairly
and cared for properly.**





The Commissioner works with a team of people to promote and safeguard children's and young people's rights across Scotland.

What does the Commissioner do?

And who is the Commissioner?

The Children and Young People's Commissioner promotes and safeguards children's rights in Scotland. Children's rights are enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), an international law which the UK signed up to in 1991.

The Commissioner's job includes:

- Raising awareness of children's rights
- Considering law, policy and practice that concern children's rights
- Communicating best practice about children's rights
- Involving children and young people in the work of the office

The Commissioner works for all children and young people under the age of 18, or up to 21 if they are care experienced.

The current Commissioner is Tam Baillie, and he started the job in 2009. With each Commissioner working to an eight year term he will finish in 2017, when a new Commissioner will continue the work.

The Commissioner works with a team of people who support the work across policy, participation and education, communications and corporate services.

Rights are for both children and young people – the same rights protect everyone under the age of 18.

Tam Baillie,
Children & Young People's
Commissioner Scotland



The Commissioner and his team listen to the views and experiences of Scotland's children and young people and this influences our work.

The Commissioner has four strategic aims for 2012-2016, they are:

1

To maximise the impact of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in Scotland.

2

To influence and promote the effective and sustainable involvement and widespread participation of children and young people in Scotland's society.

3

To promote and safeguard the rights of children and young people, particularly the rights of vulnerable groups, through policy scrutiny and by supporting good practice.

4

To ensure that the office is efficient, effective and fit for purpose.

**Welcome
to our report**

**Tam Baillie
Commissioner**

There is no doubt that it has been a significant year for children and young people's rights in Scotland.

The independence referendum in September 2014 was an empowering and energising experience for most children and young people, not only for the 16 and 17 year olds who were able to vote. The referendum gave young people parity with adult voters and they were regarded as active citizens, able to make considered decisions about their country's future. As such, young people were listened to, and their opinions and views were taken seriously.

Those young people and children not able to vote were certainly not excluded from discussions about what was important to them and how they saw the future. Up and down the country, we saw schools and youth clubs holding their own debates and mini referendums and again, views were shared, debated and listened to. The active participation of children and young people is their right and

as a society we must continue to be energised and committed to listening and actively including children and young people in decision-making.

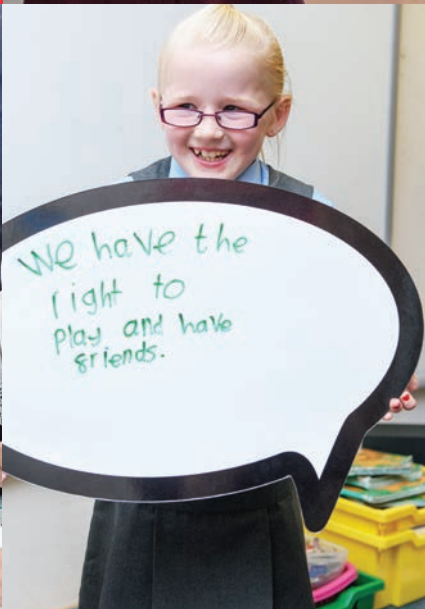
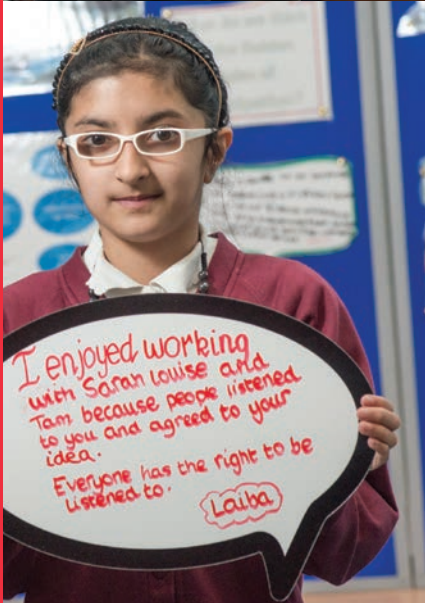
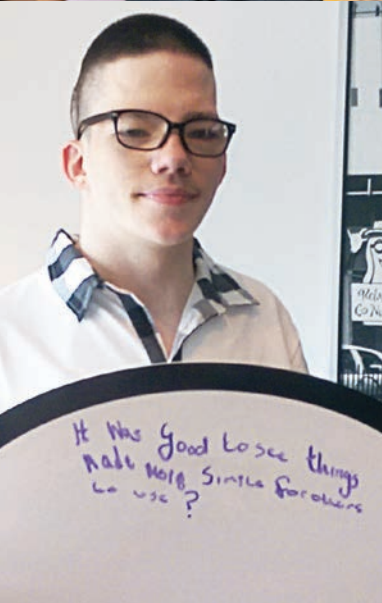
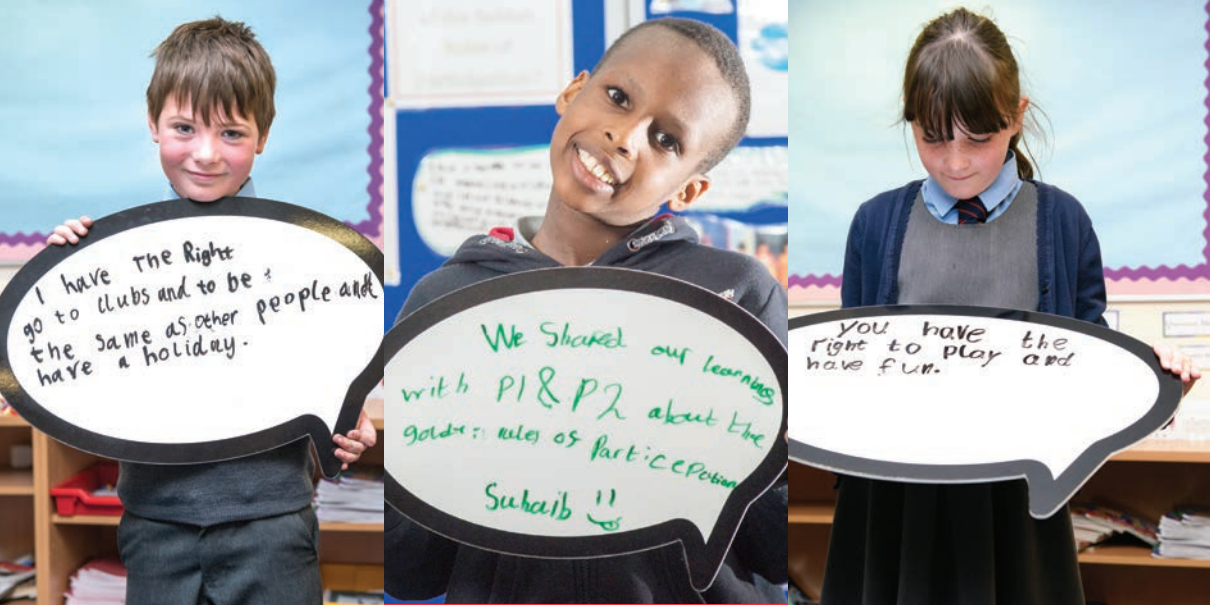
We also now have the Children and Young People Act (Scotland) Act 2014 which places duties on Scottish Government and public bodies in respect of children's rights. I have been encouraged by the government response to the legislation in preparation for the enactment in 2016 and will continue to support efforts to maximise the impact of the Act.

As an office, we continue to involve many children and young people and work with partners and organisations across the country to further promote and protect children's rights in Scotland.

This report is a reflection of our collaborative and co-operative approach, one that we need to continue if children's rights are to be fully promoted and protected in Scotland.

Our successful **7 Golden Rules for Participation** resource reminds adults about what children and young people want from participation.





Sharing thoughts with us can be in whatever way a child or young person wants. This year we have been grateful to read the words, look at the pictures, watch the plays, listen to the raps and songs and see the photographs of children and young people giving us their perspective to help us tell the story of children's rights in Scotland.

The photos you see here are from schools and projects with whom we have worked with in the past year. The art you see throughout is creative work that has been generously shared with us and each is a reflection of a thought or an experience. Some words now...

"Rights belong to all children and young people, and this means that we all deserve to be treated fairly and cared for by virtue of being human. No one can take rights away from us."

The right to have a say about issues that affect our everyday lives is a right that extends to all children and young

people in Scotland. It's simple. That very basic principle is the core reason the Scottish Youth Parliament exists - to provide a national platform for young people to discuss the issues that are important to them and affect the changes they wish to see.

I know many of the most important issues we at SYP identified as facing children and young people over the past year were similar to those identified by the Commissioner and his team, for example: democracy, participation, awareness of rights, fairness and equality, and child and youth poverty.

There is always more to achieve, and every achievement is a stepping stone to bigger and better things."

—
Jordan Linden MSYP,
Chair of the
Scottish Youth Parliament



PARTICIPATION allows children and young people to express themselves and offers the chance to have issues listened to.

Participation and Education

What does the word 'participation' mean?

There are lots of different ways to talk about 'participation'. Participation rights are about children and young people having a voice. It's about involving children and young people: their right to express themselves, share their opinions and have them valued and listened to.

The Participation and Education team work to ensure that Scotland's children and young people have a chance to communicate with the Commissioner and talk about the issues that matter to them.

The team goes out and about across the country to speak directly with children and young people and also find out their views through schools, organisations and clubs.

Adults have a lot more power than children and young people. It's easy to forget this in our busy daily lives as parents, carers, professionals and decision-makers.

But if we don't slow down and learn how to listen to the experiences and views of children and young people, how can we ever create the right conditions in which they can flourish?

Katie Brown,
Head of Participation
and Education

7 Golden Rules for Participation Symbols Resource

This year we developed a companion resource to the successful 7 Golden Rules for Participation resource. The symbols resource was designed in partnership with Glasgow City Council through a series of workshops with children and young people and professionals and with the expertise of Wigit Software.

Who is it for?

It is a communication tool for children and young people who are non-verbal, have speech and language difficulties or additional support needs.

The resource can also be used:

- To help communicate ideas and information about participation for children and young people with English as an additional language
- To help communication with very young children

The Golden Rules Symbol resource has been designed to improve children and young people's understanding of what participation means to them, and to encourage them to explore how they are supported to participate in different situations.

A series of 'Pass it On' training sessions will be delivered to professionals that are interested in using the symbols resource in their settings.

It was a privilege to be involved and the outcome achieved is a highlight of my professional practice.

Ruth Barr,
Quality Improvement Officer,
Education Improvement Services,
Glasgow City Council



Understand my rights



Question



Work together



Yes



Help



Bad



Value me



A chance to be involved



Explain



Don't know



No



Don't understand

They aid children and young people who are non-verbal, have speech and language difficulties or additional support needs.



Remember it's my choice



Repeat



Keep in touch



Work together



Understand



Support me



Good



Understand my rights

Flushed With Success?

Flushed with Success? is the Commissioner's campaign for the Scottish Government to introduce new guidance on school toilets. We're delighted to say that this has been achieved this year, with the government now committing to new qualities and standards guidance.

The campaign aims to make sure that the quality of school facilities for children is monitored and guaranteed, in the same way as for adults in the workplace. In this way, it looks to protect children and young people's rights to health, dignity, privacy and safety.

It was informed by research commissioned by the office which found that from the children and young people surveyed by Ipsos MORI, 56 percent of pupils in Scotland surveyed never used the school toilets or only used them 'if they really had to'.

And what did we do this year?

Flushed With Success? Roundtable and Learning Exchange

In June 2014, we organised for adults from a range of national organisations to come together to meet with pupils from four primary and four secondary schools. All of the schools had undertaken a Flushed With Success? Active Enquiry and they presented the evidence they had gathered to inform their own school's toilet improvement action plans.

During the event the participating young people were asked to share their own progress through an exhibition where the young people spoke directly with the adults about what they believed was working well in their school toilets, what needed to be improved and their ideas for achieving change. Then everyone worked together to identify what needed to happen next. They also worked to identify the one most important change that adults should focus on to improve school toilets standards. The most popular issue to focus on was chosen - **children and young people in Scotland should feel safe and respected in their school toilets.**

Each school was also awarded the Commissioner's Flushed With Success? Award for the quality of the participative work undertaken across the school community. This award recognises their commitment to ensuring that children's rights to health, respect, privacy and safety in their school toilets was being upheld and informed children and young people's views.

It was at this roundtable event that the Scottish Government made their commitment to new guidance.

The international perspective

In September 2014, the Commissioner's office was invited to attend a World Health Organisation (WHO) Meeting on Advancing Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in Schools (WASH).

We were asked to present on the Flushed With Success? campaign's approach to children and young people's participation in improving school toilet standards. The campaign was shared with the international WASH programme partners with the view to informing the redevelopment of the programme's guidance.

The Scottish Government's Head of School Building, Andrew Dailly, responsible for the Government's school building programme also attended to offer the international group insight into innovative school toilet design within newly built schools – informed through consultation with pupils and the wider school community.

Case Study – wider impact of Flushed With Success?

North Ayrshire Council undertook a survey of secondary aged pupils, asking their views on their school toilets. The results showed that young people felt that the council could improve the condition, cleanliness and accessibility of their school toilets. The council, in partnership with children and young people, have made some significant changes to improve their school toilets including:

- Introducing a day cleaner in secondary schools, where things like soap and toilet paper are checked and restocked
- Working with a pupil reference group to agree a general specification for refurbishment
- Committing to spending more money on upgrading school toilets

The quality of school toilets affects children's and young people's right to health, dignity, privacy and safety.

Austerity Bites

Austerity Bites was a participative project created and co-ordinated by our office on behalf of the **European Network of Ombudspersons for Children (ENOC)** and the **Council of Europe**.

The project was made up of 32 short films created by young people from eight different countries across Europe. The young film makers were supported by a Scottish arts organisation, **Caged Beastie**.

Through a mixture of live film, animation and other techniques, the shorts give an insight into what austerity policies mean for the young people involved.

A major theme of the films made by young people is crisis. For example, one film concerns a disabled boy struggling to communicate who feels he is being cruelly silenced by funding cuts to vital speech therapy support. Another is made by a boy from Marseille who believes his 'city has two faces': the glamorous one for tourists and the grim reality of deprivation experienced by him and his peers. In Preston, England a girl no longer receives the transport cost to visit her birth family, due to funding cuts, so is unable see them as often

as before and misses them. In Italy a boy is forced to sell his treasured guitar, to buy school books.

The films can be used individually or as a set as an education and advocacy resource. Austerity Bites: Children's Voices has now been exhibited in cities across Europe including Athens, Belfast, Barcelona, Strasbourg, Brussels and Rome.

18th Annual Conference and General Assembly

Becoming the Chair of ENOC in 2014, the Commissioner hosted the 18th Annual Conference and General Assembly in Edinburgh in October where the Austerity Bites films were shown to Children's Commissioners and Ombudspersons from across Europe and to professionals in Scotland.

The conference included the creative contribution of many children and young people. Several young people from BigShoutER, the youth project in East Renfrewshire, were involved in making films presented to the conference and members of the Scottish Youth Parliament skilfully facilitated workshops.

Austerity Bites was made up of 32 short films created by young people from eight different countries across Europe.

Emma Alford (19) said "My film focuses on education but I wanted to add hope, because all it takes is a small opportunity to unlock potential in anyone."

Jade Bourne, (19) said "In the world we live in today we are so technologically advanced and so well connected yet some people are still forgotten about and left behind, opportunities for young people are being taken away and cut when every young person should be given the chance to reach their full potential not matter what country, religion or background they come from."

I am proud to have been part of this process and I'm very pleased with the films. I'm excited to see where this all leads. Austerity affects us all.

Kat Ormerod, 17
England

Following the conference and General Assembly, ENOC published a Position Statement on the impact of poverty and austerity on children's and young people's rights in order raise awareness and use as advocacy tools in each member's country.



Children and young people from the Big Noise orchestra from Sistema Scotland shared with the conference the positive impact that their participation in playing music has had on their lives.

Participation and doing well at school

In February 2014, the Commissioner published a report "How young people's participation supports education and attainment". We found that young people at schools that encourage them to participate in how the school is run, do well regardless of money or other factors.

The research, conducted by **University of Stirling** aimed to find out if these schools were addressing pupils' participation and rights in ways that were distinctively supportive of pupil achievement and attainment.

The research found that in the seven schools, across all areas of school life, pupils had substantial opportunities to formally and informally take part in a variety of meaningful activities, to take responsibility for events, make contributions to school life, and have their views considered in matters that affected them.

Young people told us:

- Participation in school life is important
- Relationships are key
- They want to be more involved

I feel there's a high level of mutual respect, that pupils listen to teachers but the teachers listen – and value – the pupils' point of view and things to say so it makes you more confident and you're open with your ideas.

Pupil participant

This report provides welcome evidence – significantly from young people themselves – that children's rights should not be an add on in any school, but embedded throughout."

We organised a seminar for adults working with children and young people to discuss the findings and to share ideas about how the information can be used in schools across Scotland.

You have a right to an education and a key part of that is to be listened to and included – that is, to participate.

Youth Sports Strategy

We worked with the Scottish Government to make sure the views of children and young people were represented in the government's consultation on its draft Youth Sports Strategy.

Activity packs designed by us asked three to 11-year olds their views on sport. These were sent to a number of nurseries, schools and youth groups.

The consultation's four key themes were:

- Great opportunities
- Great people
- Great places
- Higher profile – hearing more about children and sports

This year we worked with children and young people involved in the consultation to produce a film on the results. The animation was collaborative with children and young people's art work telling the story, with young people voicing the film and signing in BSL.

Tennis and ice-skating were two sports we all wanted to try out the most – but not at the same time obviously!

Youth Sports Strategy Film

Training

We also go far and wide across the country to provide training on children's rights and participation with a focus on the children and young people's right to have a voice and have a say in the decisions that affect them. Please contact us for more information.



Activity packs were sent out to three to 11-year olds to ask their views on sport.

Image: Josh Murdoch

Communications

We work to get people talking and thinking about children's rights.

Communication is a two way conversation and we work to help the Commissioner hear from the views of children and young people and also to inform people about children's rights and the work of the Commissioner. We communicate in lots of ways:

- Policy briefings
- Producing films
- Leaflets
- Website
- Infographics
- Monthly E-newsletter
- Social media like Facebook and Twitter
- Media statements and interviews

When it comes to communications, children and young people are always our most creative collaborators.

Ezmie McCutcheon,
Communications Manager

Happy birthday UNCRC

In November 2014, we celebrated the 25th birthday of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). We aimed to raise awareness of children's rights via a social media campaign.

We encouraged children and young people across the country to write a birthday message to the UNCRC and to tell us about what rights mean to them. We curated a Pinterest board populating it with these and other messages we received from people working with or on behalf of children and young people, including from other Children's Commissioners and Ombudspersons from across Europe.

We used Twitter as a means of communicating positive children's rights developments in Scotland with a range of people including the Minister for Children and Young People, Aileen Campbell contributing their thoughts.

We spent the morning with children from Pollokshields Primary School, Glasgow where we enjoyed being a part of a Rights Assembly and birthday party including expressive dance on children's rights, a UNCRC rap, and an unforgettable film called 'We're going on a rights hunt'. In the afternoon, the Commissioner answered questions about rights from young people on Twitter before meeting with Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament to discuss raising awareness of rights. In the evening, he took part in a roundtable event at the Scottish parliament to discuss key issues, solutions and improvements needed within the education sector for transgender young people.

Next year young people from Fife Youth Arts Hub are going to be working with us on digital rights resources.



The Brightest
Right In my
Life is...
Article 32
Child Labour

Governments must protect children from dangerous work that might harm their health or Education!

Young people from Notre Dame High School in Glasgow told us their 'brightest' right for UNCRC's 25th birthday.

Access

We are always looking at ways in which we can make our own communications clear, understandable and available to as many audiences as possible. We produce infographics, easy read text summaries, audio clips and BSL and subtitled films. We translate our publications on request, most recently providing key parts of our 7 Golden Rules for Participation in Arabic and Vietnamese.

This year we also commissioned an accessible communications review to take an independent look at how we do things, where we particularly do well and at areas for improvement. We are taking forward the key recommendations.



POLICY ensures that issues that affect children's and young people's rights are included in political debate and legislation creation.

Policy

What does the word 'policy' mean?

Our work is all about making sure that the rights, interests and views of children and young people are at the forefront of people's minds when creating new legislation and policy. We are there to represent all children and young people in Scotland, but have a particular focus on those who would otherwise find it difficult to make their views known.

What we do is diverse and we often raise issues that would not at first glance appear to affect children and young people. That is where we make most difference, where without our input, the needs of children and young people simply wouldn't factor. We are independent of the Scottish Government and have the freedom to be critical where others cannot. We work proactively, by bringing people together to discuss issues of importance to children and young people. We also work in partnership with other children's sector colleagues, contribute to working groups and we provide evidence to the Scottish Parliament.

This year has been a liberating one for many young people in Scotland for whom being involved in the political process of campaigning and voting in the referendum has been a time of great energy and empowerment.

Máire McCormack,
Head of Policy

Age Discrimination in Housing

In April 2014, alongside **Shelter**, we campaigned at Stage 1 for Section 5 of the Housing (Scotland) Bill to be removed, stating that it risked breaching a range of rights under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). This section would have allowed housing providers to zone particular types of housing for certain age groups (e.g. ground floor flats primarily for older people).

Policy allows children and young people's concerns to be protected by law.



We believed that this section had the potential to discriminate against all young people, and some groups of young people in particular. We raised concerns about whether this might lead to care experienced young people being placed together in unsuitable housing in unpopular areas.

We also suggested that Section 5 could make it more difficult for families of disabled children and young people to find suitable housing. As a result of our intervention, Section 5 was removed in its entirety from the Bill.

There is a dual aspect about children and young people knowing more about their rights and their ability to enforce them and the other side, which is helping adults understand that so that they can be more open to engaging with children and young people.

Pauline McIntyre,
Parliamentary and Policy Officer

Victim Notification Scheme

We worked with the **Scottish Prison Service (SPS)** to help improve the victim notification scheme (VNS). The scheme alerts victims to changes to perpetrators circumstances, such as when a prisoner becomes eligible for parole or early release.

Changes introduced by the Victims and Witnesses (Scotland) Act 2014 meant that children and young people from the age of 12 (previously 14) were now eligible to register for the scheme and receive information in their own right.

The Scottish Prison Service contacted us to ask for our help in ensuring that any correspondence being sent out to children and young people was age appropriate. We also worked to ensure that safeguards were put in place to support those children and young people receiving potentially upsetting information.

Information for children and young people needs to be age appropriate and safeguards must be in place to support young victims and witnesses.

This piece of work led on from previous work with the Scottish Prison Service's (SPS) legal team and the Crown Office Procurator Fiscal Service Equality Advisory Group's Victims & Witnesses Subgroup, which we chaired until July 2014. This subgroup provided advice on the implementation of the Victims and Witnesses (Scotland) Act 2014.

Human Trafficking and Exploitation

This year, working with a range of partners, we have worked to ensure the specific needs of trafficked children and young people were highlighted in the consideration of the Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Scotland) Bill.

In our written evidence, we expressed concern at the lack of reference to the rights and vulnerability of trafficked, exploited and separated children on the face of the Bill. In our written evidence, we stressed the need for better identification of victims and the need to ensure that existing legislation affecting children and young people and child protection systems were clearly signposted to through the Bill. There should not be an assumption that those children would automatically be identified through existing systems.

We also recommended that the Bill should include a clear duty on local authorities to act in the best interests of trafficked, exploited and separated children, in accordance with Article 3 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

We also gave oral evidence to the Justice Committee on the 3rd of March, 2015. Alongside this work, we have had regular meetings with the Legal Services Agency and contributed to the Anti Trafficking Group in order to advocate for a human rights approach towards tackling child trafficking in Scotland.

Trafficked children must never be punished, prosecuted or detained for any crime committed as a direct consequence of being trafficked.

We expressed concern at the lack of reference to the rights and vulnerability of trafficked, exploited and separated children.

National Care Standards Review

We played a key role in ensuring the new **National Care Standards** had a strong children's rights focus.

In order to develop a better understanding of the important issues to children and young people, the Commissioner and team met with individuals at health care settings including the Royal Aberdeen Children's Hospital and the Royal Hospital for Sick Children in Edinburgh.

Resources such as the 7 Golden Rules for Participation seen in action here at Oaklands School are beneficial to the development of policies and standards.



We contributed to the Scottish Government's National Care Standards Working Group and provided a written submission to the National Care Standards consultation.

This work reflects our wider commitment to ensuring all policy, legislation and practice throughout Scotland has children's rights as its starting point

A rights-based approach, underpinned by an overarching vision, which is integrated across the whole standards will ensure that people – including children and young people – know and claim the rights to which they are entitled and are part of decision-making processes.

Tam Baillie
Commissioner

Inequalities for Young Carers

We supported the **Scottish Youth Parliament's** Care. Fair. Share campaign, highlighting inequalities for young carers. We assisted in drafting an online survey which was distributed to young carers across Scotland, to help find out more about their experiences.

I've had such a great time working with you. Your advice about survey writing and research will stay with me for a long time, and I really appreciate all the advice and support.

Member of staff
Scottish Youth Parliament

In April 2014, we responded to a Scottish Government consultation on Proposals for Carers' Legislation.

In our response, we highlighted the specific needs of young carers, including those aged 16 and 17, who often find there is a lack of suitable support once they reach 18. We called for young carers to be fully

involved in decisions being taken about the people they are caring for, as young carers often felt excluded.

We welcomed a commitment by the Scottish Government to improve the provision of information and advice to carers, but urged caution in assuming all young carers would easily be identified or supported under the Named Person provisions of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

Art Trail created by Edinburgh Young Carers Project to celebrate Carers Week.





British Sign Language (Scotland) Bill



In January, 2015 we responded to the consultation on a proposed British Sign Language (Scotland) Bill. We welcomed the Bill and its recognition of BSL as a first language of many Deaf children and young people in Scotland. We stated that the Bill would help raise and increase awareness of BSL across the wider hearing population, dispel long standing myths and preconceptions and lead to a better understanding and appreciation of BSL.

We highlighted that there is an insufficient pool of proficient teachers and interpreters and this has the potential to threaten Deaf children's education, as teachers can be less fluent in BSL than their pupils.

We also highlighted that Deaf young people often rely on family members to help out in doctor's surgeries, job centres and hospitals due to the limited number of interpreters available. This can have implications for a young person's rights to privacy and confidentiality.

Finally, we gave the example of a Deaf parent attending a parents' evening for the first time in eight years, because no interpreter had been previously available.

We will continue to monitor the progress of the Bill to ensure that the rights of Deaf children and young people are promoted and safeguarded.

This Bill has symbolic importance and practical benefits and will send out an important message to those who use BSL as their sole means of communication that their language is valued and their rights to linguistic access recognised.



Stop and Search



Children and Complaints



This year, we have continued to raise concerns about the use of non-statutory Stop and Search on children and young people.

In November 2014, we spoke at the cross party group for children and young people at the Scottish Parliament. We were later disappointed to hear that a commitment to cease the use of non-statutory Stop and Search on under-12s did not appear to have been met by Police Scotland.

In response, we wrote to the Scottish Police Authority to call for non-statutory Stop and Search of children to be abolished, ahead of a special board meeting that had been convened in February, 2015.

In April 2015, we were asked to participate in an Independent Advisory Group, convened by the Cabinet Secretary for Justice. The group is due to report back in August 2015.



From April 2016, we will be able to investigate complaints on behalf of individual children and young people.

In preparation for this, we commissioned the **Children's Parliament** to undertake a consultation exercise with children and young people (9- 14 yrs). We wanted to hear their thoughts and experiences of making complaints and how current complaints systems work for them, including identifying any barriers to them complaining. We also held a roundtable event with practitioners from a range of organisations to get their views on which factors prevent children and young people from making a complaint. The resulting report, **'Together We Can Fix It'** provided a clear insight into why children and young people find it more difficult to make a complaint.

We also carried out a wider mapping exercise, which involved speaking to practitioners, complaints bodies, regulators and ombudspersons about their own remit and interaction with children and young people. We will continue to engage with all stakeholders as we prepare for the powers to come into force in 2016.



The Policy team's work influences the day-to-day rights experienced by Scotland's children and young people.

We are committed to ensuring that children and young people enjoy the same protection from assault as adults. This year, we have been working with the **NSPCC**, **Barnardo's Scotland** and **Children 1st** on a piece of commissioned research which updates an earlier literature review from Northern Ireland.

The research will look at the impact of physical punishment on child health and development, as well as later life well-being, the link between physical punishment and child maltreatment and changes in prevalence and attitudes over time, especially in countries which have implemented a complete ban. The research will be published in autumn 2015.

We are committed to ensuring that children and young people enjoy the same protection from assault as adults.

The status of youth football in Scotland has been the subject of a public petition at the Scottish Parliament since 2010. We have previously provided evidence to the Public Petitions Committee, having been particularly concerned about the extent to which some professional clubs appear to exert power and control over the children and young people who play for them.

In September 2014 the Commissioner and the Scottish Parliament Public Petitions Committee agreed that the Commissioner would undertake a review of the current registration process for youth football in Scotland. As part of this review, research was commissioned to explore what children and young people as young football players thought about youth registration, and what impact it had on their lives.

The research was complemented by a child rights impact assessment on the registration process and the implications it has in terms of children and young people's rights. Interest in this area will be ongoing following the report submission to the Public Petitions Committee in May 2015.



Enquiries Service

We give help and information to people about children's rights issues.

In the year to end of March 2015 the enquiries service received 356 enquiries from the public. They came from every local authority area in Scotland, as well as from the rest of the UK and internationally, including the Netherlands and Pakistan.

Enquiries came from a wide range of individuals and organisations: parents, grandparents, carers and children and young people, with a significant number from professionals, including child protection officers, teachers, social workers, MSPs and third sector organisations.

Issues around contact for children and young people continue to dominate, particularly in regard to failures to adequately obtain or reflect children's views in court contact decisions. The impact of austerity measures has not eased. We have been alerted to concerns about problems for young people leaving care accessing appropriate support; budget cutbacks affecting the provision of additional support

for learning services in several local authorities and difficulties obtaining mental health treatment for children and young people – particularly for those with complex conditions who require residential placements.

April 2016 will see additional powers of investigation under Part 2 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act come into effect. These changes will have a significant impact on the Enquiries Services, giving children and young people in Scotland a relevant, child-friendly form of redress when their voices go unheard and their rights are breached.

The enquiries we receive are wide-ranging and cover a spectrum of individuals and organisations.

All our consultation responses, parliamentary evidence and policy briefings can be found on our website.

Consultation responses

The Antisocial Behaviour etc. (Scotland) Act 2004. June 2014.

Carers legislation: consultation on proposals. April 2014.

Consultation on draft statutory guidance for part 9 (Corporate Parenting) of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. February 2015.

Consultation on draft secondary legislation for parts 9, 10 and 11 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. December 2014.

Draft regulations relating to the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014: Set 1. August 2014

'Equally safe': Scotland's strategy for preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls: a joint response with Aberlour, Barnardo's Scotland and Children 1st. August 2014.

Legal assistance in Scotland: fit for the 21st Century: Law Society of Scotland Discussion Paper. February 2015.

National Care Standards review: public consultation. September 2014.

Scottish Government proposals for a Human Trafficking Bill and outline strategy. August 2014.

The Smith Commission. October 2014

Parliamentary evidence

Age and social isolation: oral evidence to the Scottish Parliament Equal Opportunities Committee. 5 March 2015.

British Sign Language (Scotland) Bill: written evidence to the Scottish Parliament Education and Culture Committee. January 2015.

Enforcement of child court orders (PE1319): written evidence to the Scottish Parliament Public Petitions Committee. November 2014.

Equal rights for unmarried fathers (PE1513): written evidence to the Scottish Parliament Public Petitions Committee. July 2014.

Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Scotland) Bill: written evidence to the Scottish Parliament Justice Committee. February 2015.

Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Scotland) Bill: oral evidence to the Scottish Parliament Justice Committee. 3 March 2015.

Improving youth football in Scotland (PE1319): letter to the Scottish Parliament Public Petitions Committee. May 2014.

Inquiry into the UK's compliance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child: written submission to the Joint Committee on Human Rights. March 2015.

Scottish Parliament Education and Culture Committee, 24th Meeting, 2014 (Session 4) Tuesday 28 October 2014: oral evidence on the Commissioner's Annual Report 2013-2014.

Corporate Services

We make sure that the office works efficiently.

The Corporate Services team work to make sure that the office works efficiently. We are responsible for financial operation of the office, administration, information and communications.

The team were busy this year planning and implementing an office move when in November 2014, the whole team moved in to a shared office building resulting in more space with a cost saving.

Information

Fourteen freedom of information requests and one environmental information request were received and responded to in 2014-15. Whilst most sought information in relation to how the Commissioner's office delivers its functions and manages its resources, some were interested in information we held on specific children's rights issues such as austerity, child poverty and fracking.

Equalities

We have been working on an Equalities report which aims to assess our progress over the last two years in mainstreaming equality, working towards the outcomes we laid out in our 2013 action plan.

This year, the office became a member of Happy to Translate, the accessible language initiative which aims to bridge gaps in communication between organisations and service users who experience problems communicating in English. Key members of the team have been on training to make sure that we can respond quickly to requests for translated documents and to calls and visits from people who do not have English as a first language.

Us (as at 31/03/2015) The Commissioner's Team

Commissioner
Tam Baillie

Corporate Services

Heather Belmonte
Assistant to the Commissioner

Stephen Grounds
Head of Corporate Services

Ezmie McCutcheon
Communications Manager

Robert Shepherd
Digital Media Officer

Temporary Staff Member
Administrative Assistant

Participation and Education

Cathy Begley
Participation and Education Officer

Katie Brown
Head of Participation and Education

Sarah-Louise Davies
Participation and Education Officer

Policy

Sheila Hamilton
Research Manager

Linda Ellis Macdonald
Enquiries Officer

Máire McCormack
Head of Policy

Pauline McIntyre
Parliamentary and Policy Officer

Chloe Swift
Policy Officer

The Year Ahead

Extending our powers and planning for the future.

The extension of the office's powers of investigation under Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 is expected to come into force in April 2016. At this point children and young people will be able to bring individual complaints of alleged rights violations directly to my office. We are preparing for this significant change to the work of the office and will continue to liaise with other partners and regulatory bodies in Scotland to ensure that the service we provide is one which children and young people feel they can utilise.

A four-year Strategic Plan for the office must be laid before the Scottish Parliament by 31 March 2016. The Strategic Plan will be informed by the views of children and young people both from existing evidence from consultations and also potentially by the commission of new work where we feel there are gaps in our knowledge. This is to ensure that vulnerable or harder to reach children and young people are included.

Stakeholders will be asked for their input into the draft Plan, and I hope as many as possible will do so. I am mindful that this Strategic Plan spans the first few years of a new Commissioner as I demit office in 2017, and as such I must prepare a document that is both focussed and robust with some flexibility built in.

This year is also significant as we join forces with the other UK Children's Commissioners to inform the UN Committee on the Convention on the Rights of Child's examination of the UK's Fifth Periodic report under the UNCRC. Our joint report highlights the main issues of concern for children and young people in all parts of the UK. I have consistently expressed concern on the impact of child poverty and austerity measures and this is the key message to the UN Committee from our offices. Other concerns are the lack of recognition of the views of children and young people, safeguarding, access to child and adolescent mental health services, and limited access

to justice. The UN Committee will be sending a taskforce to the UK and we will create and co-ordinate a programme so that the representative can see with their own eyes the reality of life in Scotland for children and young people. This is to inform the Committee's examination of the UK Government in spring 2016.

Whilst I am pleased at the progress made in realising children's rights in Scotland this year, the main message is we still have much more to do to protect our children and young people from the full effects of UK austerity measures and the harsh bite of economic policies that do little to consider families.

I look forward to continuing to work hard to ensure that children's rights are realised in Scotland; owned and shared by everyone.

Tam Baillie
Commissioner

A four-year Strategic Plan for the office must be laid before the Scottish Parliament by 31 March 2016.

The Strategic Plan will be informed by the views of children and young people.

The Financial Position

The Scottish Parliament allocated the Commissioner a budget of £1,235,000 for the financial year 2014-15 (2013-14: £1,226,000). The Commissioner drew down £1,235,000 (2013-14: £1,224,000), resulting in a £nil underspend (2013-14: £2,000).

Net Expenditure 2014-15

The annual accounts are prepared on an accruals basis meaning that expenses are recognised in the period in which they were incurred rather than when the cash payment is made. On this basis, the Commissioner's expenditure on operating activities for the year ended 31 March 2015 totalled £1,267,000 (2013-2014: £1,188,000). This was on staffing costs £747,000 (2013-2014: £711,000), other operating expenditure £496,000 (2013-2014: £448,000) and depreciation £24,000 (2013-2014: £29,000). Income for the year was £0 (2013-2014: £0).

A further £42,000 (2013-2014: £2,000) was spent on capital additions during the financial year as detailed in note 6 to the Accounts. Excluding notional expenditure (Depreciation £24,000) total expenditure was £1,285,000.

Operating Activities 2014-15

Excluding staffing costs of £747,000 and depreciation of £24,000, other operating expenditure amounted to £496,000, of which Property (27%) includes all rent, rates, energy costs, property insurance, repairs, maintenance and cleaning. Administration (10%) includes all normal office running costs, for example, stationery, postage, telephones, photocopying, printing, equipment maintenance etc. Recruitment and Training (2%) includes costs for advertising and venue hire and investment in both the individual and staff teams.

Travel, expenses & hospitality (4%) includes costs incurred both by the Commissioner and the staff team. Promotion and Participation (24%) includes all activities, for example, publicity, promotion and participation, undertaken in fulfilment of the general function of the Commissioner. Research (13%) includes a number of projects related to the work stream of the National Consultation exercise undertaken in 2010 entitled "a RIGHT blether". IT (4%) includes the cost of support and maintenance for the office. Website development

and maintenance (3%) includes continued development of the website as a major interactive tool for raising awareness of children's rights. Professional fees (13%) include the costs of payroll support, legal, audit and accountancy.

Source: *Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland Accounts 2014-15*

A full copy of the Annual Accounts 2014-15 is on our website, or can be requested from the office.

The accounts are subject to approval by external auditors.

The Scottish Parliament Corporate Body (SPCB) scrutinise and approve the Commissioner's annual budgetary proposal prior to forwarding it to the Finance Committee for consideration as part of the SPCB's overall budget.

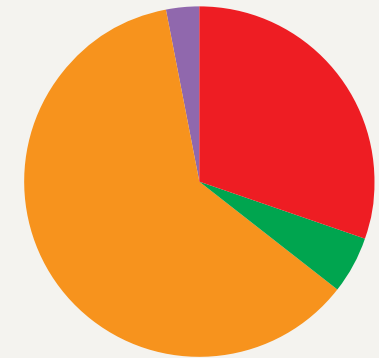


Chart 1:
Net Expenditure 2014-15

Staffing Costs: £747,000
Capital Expenditure: £42,000
Operating Costs: £496,000
Depreciation: £24,000

Total: £1,309,000

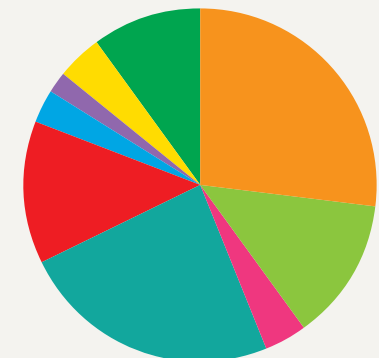
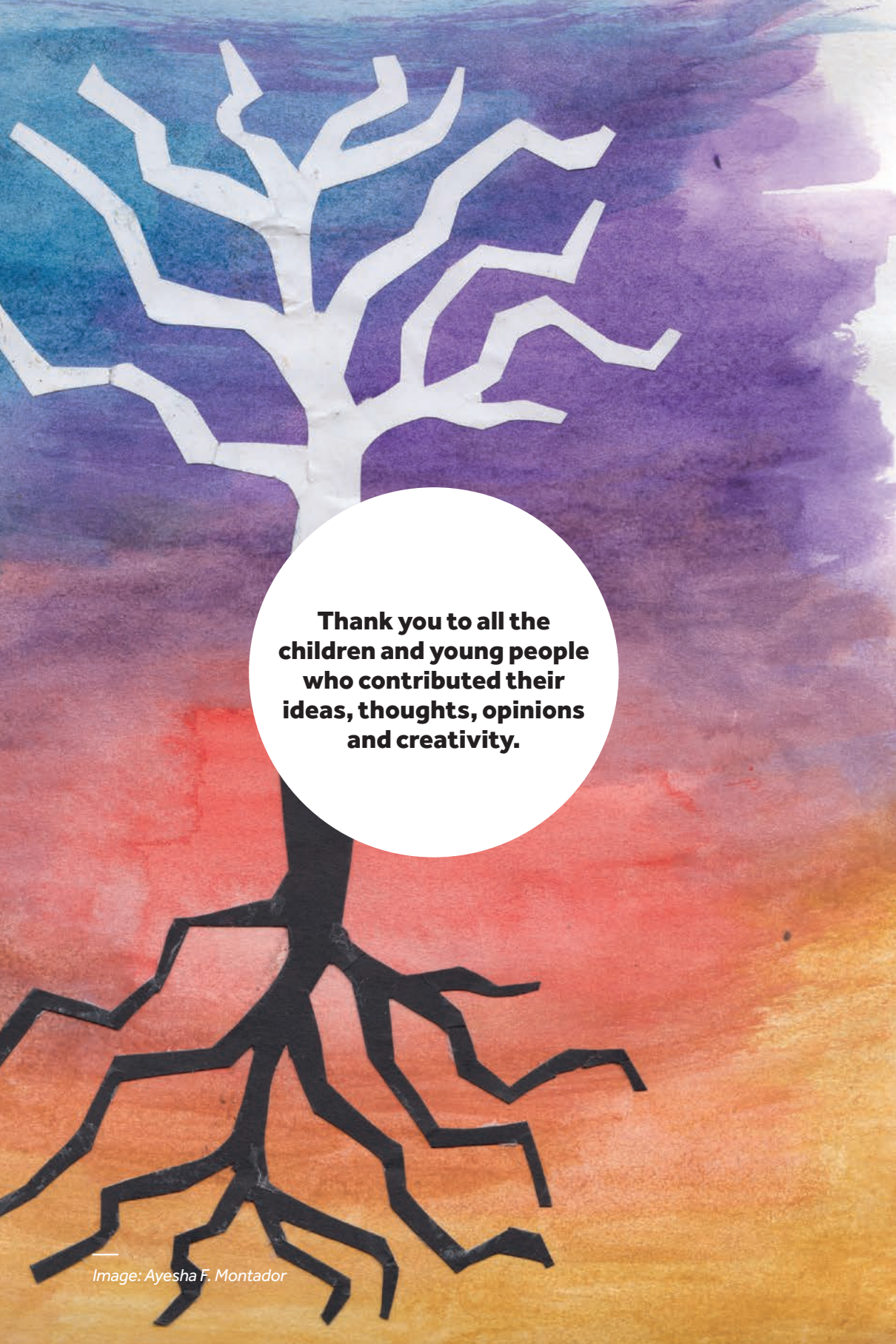


Chart 2:
Operating Activities 2014-15

Property Costs: £135,000 (27%)
Professional Fees: £63,000 (13%)
Travel Expenses & Hospitality: £22,000 (4%)
Promotion & Participation: £117,000 (24%)
Research: £63,000 (13%)
Website: £16,000 (3%)
Recruitment & Training: £11,000 (2%)
IT: £20,000 (4%)
Administration Costs: £49,000 (10%)

Total: £496,000 (100%)



**Thank you to all the
children and young people
who contributed their
ideas, thoughts, opinions
and creativity.**

Image: Ayesha F. Montador

Thank you

The Commissioner and his team would like to thank all children and young people who contributed their thoughts, opinions, creativity and ideas to our work this year.

And a big thank you to the children and young people who participated in photography for this report...

The Mallard
CrossReach Children and
Families Services, Glasgow

Pollokshields
Primary School, Glasgow

St John the Baptist
Primary School, Glasgow

(CCYP/2015/2) Laid before the Scottish
Parliament by the Commissioner for Children
and Young People in pursuance of Section 10
(1) of the Commissioner for Children and Young
People (Scotland) Act 2003 on 06/10/2015.

Artwork

Joshua Ford
Young Arts Leader programme
Youth Theatre Arts Scotland

Ayesha F. Montador
Fife Youth Arts Hub

space2face Girls Group
Shetland

Young People's
Participation Group
Shetland

Jessie Grace
Dunfermline High School

And the children from
St John the Baptist
Primary School, Glasgow...

Evan Anderson

Hannah McCrory

Olivia Wilson

Kiara Hottmann

Kat Sweeney

Megan O'Neill

Niamh Kierann

Lilah Caunnter

Leon Sherlock

and the children from
Room 10 – P6/7

Credits

Design:

Owen | O'Shea
owenoshea.com

Photography:

Angus Bremner
angusbremner.com

John Linton
johnlintonphotography.com

Carol McCabe
cmcpictures.co.uk

Michael McGurk
michaelmcgurkphoto.com



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**We want to celebrate
children's and young
people's expressions of
creativity. Get in touch
to share your art.**



**We protect and
promote the rights of
Scotland's children and
young people.**

