

Workplan 2024-2025

Introduction

As an organisation we live our values by being inclusive, collaborative, child-centred, trustworthy and compassionate. We display these values in all that we do, and we will act with integrity, always challenge inequalities and bias in the system, encourage system led change and development, and enable creativity and innovation by championing the needs of children and young people.

Background

Children and Young People's Centre for Justice (CYCJ) works to ensure that Scotland's approach to children and young people in conflict with the law is rights-respecting, contributing to better outcomes for our children, young people and communities. We produce robust, internationally ground-breaking work, bringing together children and young people's contributions, research evidence, practice wisdom and system know-how to operate as a leader for child and youth justice thinking in Scotland and beyond.

Our work centres on **three key activities:**

Participation and engagement: amplifying the voices of children and young people

Practice and policy development: developing, supporting and improving justice for children and young people

Research: Improving our understanding of justice for children and young people

These activities are underpinned and connected by communication and knowledge exchange work, which is focused on improving awareness of evidence in different forms, and supporting dialogue between different perspectives, types of knowledge and viewpoints.

Our focus for 2020-2025 is supporting Scotland to comply with its international commitments for children and young people in conflict with the law in relation to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). For further information, please see our 2020-2025 strategy.

CYCJ is primarily funded through a grant from the Scottish Government, and this workplan details the work we will deliver funded by this grant. We also sometimes charge for some of the training listed here to encourage attendance and cover costs. CYCJ also generates additional funding for specific pieces of work and research which is not covered by the Scottish Government grant, and is not included within this workplan. A brief list is included at the end of this document.

Themes:

- a. Supporting and promoting children's rights and active participation and engagement in all aspects of our work, and wider Government policy
- b. Supporting the implementation of Scottish Government priorities, including Youth Justice Vision and Action Plan, Scotland's Youth Justice Standards, data, The Promise, the Age of Criminal Responsibility, Children's Hearings System Working Group recommendations, the Children (Care and Justice) Bill, Secure Care, Child Criminal Exploitation, Anti-Social Behaviour Group; Bairns' Hoose, GIRFEC (Getting it right for every child), the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and wider human rights treaties
- c. Developing best possible practice for children in conflict with the law
- d. Supporting the Youth Justice workforce
- e. Sharing best practice and up to date research through various Knowledge Exchange forums

Our focus this year is to support the Scottish Government's rights-based vision, focusing on the initial priorities and action plan for 2023-2025

Key outcomes we are working towards this year include:

1. Consistently use/implement effective, child-friendly justice language, processes and practices for children in conflict with the law across Scotland
2. Improve awareness of children's rights and promote rights respecting practice across justice contexts and journeys
3. Support incorporation and implementation of human rights legislation and policy
4. Support implementation of Youth Justice Action Plan, Scotland's Youth Justice Standards and other relevant Government policies
5. Support children under 18 to be removed from adult justice processes as part of reimagining secure care
6. Successfully implement Secure Care Pathway and Standards
7. Improve individual and collective participation and representation of children, young people and families in justice policy and practice
8. Improve participation of and support for child victims in justice processes
9. Ensure greater availability of high-quality Restorative Justice services and approaches for children and young people
10. Help to improve provision to address mental health, speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) and neurodevelopmental needs for children in conflict with the law
11. Ensure greater access to the data and evidence needed to support system improvements
12. Improve partnership working and learning across Scottish care and justice stakeholders and services
13. Improve professional awareness and response to Child Criminal Exploitation
14. Challenge structural and societal inequality experienced by children and young people in conflict with the law, including reframing the language used nationally to be more inclusive and avoid compounding stigma
15. Promote an ecological understanding of children and young people in conflict with the law

Workplan 2024/25

The table below specifies the projects and activities we will undertake in 2024/25 funded by the Scottish Government's Youth Justice 'CYCJ grant', and the outcomes they contribute towards achieving. We report on activities, progress and performance to the Scottish Government and CYCJ's Executive Governance Group on a quarterly basis. Most of our activities make some contribution to the outcomes specified above, but the key outcomes for each activity are noted here. Each year we leave some capacity to respond to emerging priorities from the three youth justice implementation groups.

Project plans will be produced for each significant piece of work and kept up to date as the work progresses. These plans will specify the approach, remit, timescales and outcome in greater depth, and will be available on request. The secure care work has a separate plan, with actions to meet this included below.

Supporting and promoting Children's Rights and participation				
Projects and outputs	Outcome	Scottish Government priority	CYCJ project team and partners	Timescales
<p>Encourage children and young people's active participation and engagement in all aspects of our work and wider government policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide opportunities for a diverse group of children and young people to engage in, and influence, discussions relating to youth justice policy and research - Support children and young people to co-produce the next iteration of Youth Justice Standards alongside families and professionals - Provide support to embed participation in wider CYCJ projects - Provide participation knowledge, guidance and support to CYCJ projects e.g. PGCert Children and Young People in Conflict with the Law and Youth Justice Practice Chapters - Support partners and stakeholders to promote and embed participation - Support STARR and Youth Justice Voices groups - Promote the use of the Journey Through 	<p>Improved participation of children, young people and families in justice policy and practice</p> <p>Participation is embedded through CYCJ's youth justice network</p>	<p>Rights and Understanding</p> <p>Participation and Engagement</p> <p>Victims</p> <p>Whole System Approach</p> <p>Data and Evidence</p> <p>Early Intervention and Support</p> <p>Other areas of action</p>	<p>Lead: Carly Elliott-Scott</p> <p>Project support team: Participation team, Practice team</p>	<p>Q1-Q4</p>

Justice resource				
<p>Improve neurodiversity and Speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) support and understanding for all children in conflict with the law:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support practitioner understanding through training and Youth Justice Practice Chapters - Support Speech and Language Therapists (SLT) leads to better understand children in conflict with the law - Support Whole System Approach and SLCN leads to work together to improve local provision - Collaborate with SLT and other partners to improve SLCN provision 	Improved awareness and understanding of what is required to support the SLCN and neurodiversity of children in conflict with the law	Rights and Understanding Participation and Engagement Victims Whole System Approach Data and Evidence Early Intervention and Support	Lead: Maureen Roberts Project Support: Karen Suszek, Donna McEwen	Q1-Q4
<p>Support the mental health and social and emotional wellbeing of children and young people who are in conflict with the law:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support the development of national mental health through Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) advisory group and National Secure Adolescent Inpatient Service (NSAIS) National Stakeholder group involvement - Develop approaches to increase the confidence of the workforce to respond to the mental health needs of children in conflict with the law - Link in with existing work on the development of CAMHS neurodevelopmental pathways to improve outcomes for children through distinct, more efficient referral processes - Support the work of the Trauma Responsive Social Work Services Partnership Delivery Group. 	Improved awareness and understanding of what is required to support the mental health and wellbeing of children in conflict with the law	Rights and Understanding Participation and Engagement Victims Whole System Approach Data and Evidence Early Intervention and Support	Lead: Karen Suszek Project support: Practice and Participation team	Q1-Q4

Supporting Implementation of Scottish Government Priorities				
<p>Contribute to, support, and deliver the Youth Justice Vision, Standards and action plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support the delivery of the priorities of the Youth Justice Vision through the action plan and implementation groups - Participate in the Youth Justice Improvement Board, project managing the Implementation Groups and sub-groups to deliver the action plan - Make links and support the work of the Children's Hearings Improvement Partnership (CHIP) - Attend the GIRFEC working group, providing advice and support to policy colleagues - Promote and support implementation of Youth Justice Standards embedding them within well-established processes - Support the co-production of the next iteration of Youth Justice Standards, involving children, young people, families and professionals - Support corporate parents to review and develop their corporate parenting plans and strategies, prioritising Scottish Prison Service, Crown Office Procurator Fiscal Service, Police Scotland and Disclosure Scotland, ensuring that they are aligned with children's rights and the Scottish Government's vision and priorities 	<p>Effective implementation of the Youth Justice Vision, Standards and action plan</p>	<p>Rights and Understanding</p> <p>Participation and Engagement</p> <p>Victims</p> <p>Whole System Approach</p> <p>Data and Evidence</p> <p>Early Intervention and Support</p>	<p>Lead: Ross Gibson</p> <p>Project support: Practice team, Participation team</p>	<p>Q1-Q4</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support implementation of the Children (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Bill: - Produce evidence, research and data to help influence the final stages of the Bill - Contribute to future implementation group(s) for the Bill - Develop practice guidance relating to elements of the Act and wider national policy developments (Children's Hearings Scotland redesign, The Promise, UNCRC, Age of Criminal Responsibility) in collaboration with relevant stakeholders 	<p>Across Scotland we have effective child-friendly legislation, policy and practice for children in conflict with the law</p>	<p>Rights and Understanding</p> <p>Participation and Engagement</p> <p>Victims</p> <p>Whole System Approach</p> <p>Data and Evidence</p>	<p>Lead: Debbie Nolan</p> <p>Support: Ross Gibson</p>	<p>Q1-Q4</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify practice support required, and develop strategy to address this - Raise awareness and understanding of the contents of the Act to encourage practice and culture change through information sheets, and delivering webinars, roadshows, workforce training and other means - Support stakeholders to adapt policy to respond to the contents of the Act - Support the monitoring and evaluation of the Act, and capture and respond to any unintended consequences 		Early Intervention and Support		
<p>Support implementation of the Age of Criminal Responsibility (Scotland) Act and consideration for the potential age increasing beyond 12:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support the work of the Advisory Group, assisting with engagement sessions - Attend (and chair) sub-groups including data and research, operational implications, victims and community confidence - Develop evidence papers to support a future decision for the age of criminal responsibility in Scotland. - Produce evidence briefings and research analysis as required that best inform decision making of implementation groups, civic society and Scottish Parliament - Support work to promote a culture shift in line with the introduction and implementation of new legislation and guidance. 	Across Scotland we have effective child-friendly legislation, policy and practice for children in conflict with the law	Participation and Engagement Data and Evidence	Lead: Gill McCallum Project support: Practice Team, participation team	Q1-Q4

<p>Support Incorporation of human rights treaties and promote a human rights based approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support development of the Scottish Human Rights Bill - Support the Scottish Government with areas of suggested UNCRC incompatibility in order to reach resolutions - Attend and contribute to partner groups to support UNCRC incorporation - Collate examples of practice where rights are upheld for children in conflict with the law - Deliver and attend Children’s Rights Implementation Group 	<p>Across Scotland we have effective child-friendly legislation, policy and practice for children in conflict with the law and their rights are upheld</p>	<p>Rights and Understanding</p> <p>Participation and Engagement</p> <p>Data and Evidence</p>	<p>Lead: Carly Elliott-Scott</p> <p>Project support team: Karen Suszek, participation team</p>	<p>Q1-Q4</p>
<p>Support the development of Scottish Government policy which links to children in conflict with the law:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support the work of the Anti-social Behaviour Group and future policy direction - Make links to The Promise and children’s hearings redesign work, and support pre-legislation public consultation in Q2 and Q3 2024 - Contribute to the national agenda on throughcare, aftercare and continuing care - Support the work of the Harmful Sexual Behaviour Delivery Group and Assessment and Intervention subgroup - Support the work of the Contextual Safeguarding Core Group - Support Police Scotland, and links to children in conflict with the law <p>Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE):</p>	<p>Across Scotland we have effective child-friendly legislation, policy and practice for children in conflict</p>	<p>Rights and understanding</p> <p>Victims</p> <p>Data and evidence</p> <p>Early intervention and support</p> <p>Whole System Approach</p>	<p>Lead: Donna McEwen</p> <p>Project support: Practice and Participation team</p>	<p>Q1-Q4</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure recognition of CCE in wider exploitation and trafficking, and child protection national positions - Develop child protection responses to CCE bringing together Care and Risk Management, child protection and contextual safeguarding approaching. - Support work of Divert 3 sub-group under Serious Organised Crime Taskforce. 				
<p>Contribute to the development of policy and law:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitor forthcoming policy and legislative developments, ensuring staff, stakeholders and children/young people can contribute in a proactive way and are kept up to date on developments - Coordinate the response to consultations relevant to children in conflict with the law, reflective of practice, research and participation learning - Support children and young people to participate in policy development - Ensure the rights of children in conflict with the law are central to all new proposed policies/legislation - Highlight the range of adversities and societal factors that contribute to children coming into conflict with the law 	<p>Across Scotland we have effective child-friendly legislation, policy and practice for children in conflict</p>	<p>Rights and Understanding</p> <p>Participation and Engagement</p> <p>Data and Evidence</p>	<p>Lead: Carly Elliott-Scott</p> <p>Project Support: Practice team, participation team</p>	<p>Q1-Q4</p>
<p>Develop best practice for children in conflict with the law</p>				

<p>Participation of, and support for, child victims in justice processes (including Early Effective Intervention, Diversion, CHS and Court):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engage with key stakeholders in this area - Explore creative and developmentally appropriate ways to engage with child victims - Co-produce materials for child victims - Link with the development of Bairns' Hoose Delivery Plan - Link with Children (Care and Justice) Bill and the provisions relating to victims (youth court and Children's Hearings Scotland) 	<p>Improved participation of and support for child victims in justice processes</p>	<p>Participation and Engagement Victims</p>	<p>Lead: Pamela Morrison</p> <p>Project Support: Practice and Participation teams</p>	<p>Q1-Q4</p>
<p>Reduce the criminalisation of children in care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support Cyrenians to build on the Keeping Families Together project - Chair Cyrenians Keep Families Together and Promise Partnership Project (Youth Justice and Rights) groups - Contribute to the national restrictive practice agenda, promoting inclusion and information sharing in forums such as Restraint Reduction Scotland, Scottish Physical Restraint Action Group (SPRAG) and Reflection and Action Learning Forum (RALF) - Ensure wide dissemination, training and support for residential care staff 	<p>Children with experience of care will be less likely to be criminalised by an informed and supported workforce</p>	<p>Rights and understanding Early Intervention and Support</p>	<p>Lead: Ruby Whitelaw</p> <p>Project support: Practice and Participation teams</p>	<p>Q1-Q4</p>
<p>Support Secure Care and implementation of Phase 3 of the Secure Care Pathway and Standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fulfil the action plan set out within the Secure Care project plan 2024-25 - Support developments and promote best practice for children in or on the edges of secure care - Support the preparation of secure care 	<p>Successful integration of the Secure Care Pathway and Standards</p>	<p>Rights and Understanding Participation and Engagement Data and Evidence Victims</p>	<p>Lead: Ruby Whitelaw</p> <p>Project support: Practice and participation team</p>	<p>Q1-Q4</p>

<p>services in preparation of children no longer being placed in Young Offender Institutions (YOIs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to develop the Secure Care Transport for Children work - Upgrade the Secure Care Standards website - Develop child and family responsive secure care pathway and standards resources - Continue to build on the work of Secure Care Champions group and Practitioners Forum - Continue to offer local authorities and other stakeholders opportunities to review practice - Promote research on secure care and alternatives to secure care - Undertake secure care census in 2024/2025 		Whole System Approach		
<p>Implement Whole System Approach by:</p> <p>EEI:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Undertake mapping of EEI in Scotland - Support advances in practice, and EEI for all children <p>Diversion from Prosecution (DfP):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support the review of DfP guidance - Contribute to the Scottish Government response to thematic inspection - Contribute to the Prevention and Early Intervention subgroup - Support planning for DfP showcase event and guidance launch - Contribute to research and literature relating to DfP in Scotland <p>Alternatives to deprivation of liberty:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote examples of successful alternatives to secure care - Work with relevant stakeholders to develop widest range of alternatives <p>Places of safety (PoS):</p>	<p>Scottish policy and practice relation to children in conflict with the law will fully implement a Whole System Approach</p>	<p>Whole System Approach</p> <p>Early Intervention and Support</p> <p>Data and Evidence</p>	<p>Lead: Ross Gibson</p> <p>Project support: Practice team</p>	<p>Q1-Q4</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support national annual events on PoS with partners and stakeholders - Support local practitioner events - Attend relevant short-life working groups <p>Youth Courts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support the creation of youth courts - Share learning from existing courts <p>Risk Management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Offer practice support where requested - Deliver CARM and START-AV training (Short Term Assessment of Risk and Treatability: Adolescent Version) 				
Workforce Development				
<p>Workforce Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Run the PG Certificate on Children and Young People in Conflict with the Law - Deliver training and the Train the Trainers package for FRAME and CARM - Deliver Child Interview Rights Practitioner (ChiRPs) Training - Deliver START:AV training - Deliver SLCN training - Deliver co-production training - Deliver lectures across Scotland on issues facing children and young people in conflict with the law - Offer placements to students; Scottish Prison Service and partner organisations - Children (Care and Justice) Bill training 	<p>Across Scotland we have an effective and informed child-friendly justice workforce for children in conflict with the law</p>	<p>Early Intervention and Support</p> <p>Rights and Understanding</p> <p>Whole System Approach</p> <p>Participation and Engagement</p>	<p>Lead: Carole Murphy</p> <p>Project support team: Practice team</p>	<p>Q1-Q4</p>

<p>Practitioner support service:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide a practitioner support and information service, and more detailed bespoke work with localities and organisations through regular contact with all 32 local authorities and partners, including delivering roadshows and developing/updating resources to meet local priorities/need and develop consistent practice - Support the work of NYJAG and NYJAG executive - Support SPS partners meeting and wider SPS agenda - Run regular forums on: Risk Formulation; EEI; Diversion; Participation and Secure Care and make sure practice is nationally consistent - Make links with Restorative Justice forum - Attend Social Work Scotland Standing Committees for Children & Families and Justice 	<p>Across Scotland we have an effective and informed child-friendly justice workforce for children in conflict with the law who understand legislation policy and best practice</p>	<p>Rights and Understanding</p> <p>Participation and Engagement</p> <p>Victims</p> <p>Whole System Approach</p> <p>Data and Evidence</p> <p>Early Intervention and Support</p>	<p>Lead: Ruby Whitelaw</p> <p>Project support: Practice Team</p>	<p>Q1-Q4</p>
<p>Development of Restorative Approaches:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to engage with key stakeholders to support the development of restorative approaches, including for victims and witnesses - Engage with children and young people in order to develop restorative approaches - Link to the separately funded Restorative Justice work as funded by the Scottish Government Victims and Witness team 	<p>A greater understanding of restorative approaches across services working with children and young people in conflict with the law</p>	<p>Rights and Understanding</p> <p>Participation and Engagement</p> <p>Victims</p> <p>Whole System Approach</p> <p>Data and Evidence</p> <p>Early Intervention and Support</p>	<p>Lead: Pamela Morrison</p> <p>Project Support Team: Participation</p>	<p>Q1-Q4</p>

<p>Support the collection and collation of data and research on children in conflict with the law to aid service redesign:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Update CYCJ children’s data paper - Progress implementation of minimum data sets - Feed the recommendations from the children’s rights data paper into the Scottish Government’s implementation groups for action and provide support where appropriate - Support the work of the data sub-group under the Youth Justice Implementation Board 	<p>Greater access to the data and evidence needed to support the national network of those working with children and young people in conflict with the law</p>	<p>Data and Evidence Rights and Understanding</p>	<p>Lead: Gill McCallum Project Support Team: Practice team</p>	<p>Q1-Q4</p>
<p>Knowledge Exchange</p>				
<p>Maintain and improve dissemination of CYCJ materials.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Produce and disseminate Information Sheets, blog posts, and annually updated Youth Justice Guide - Manage an active CYCJ Associates scheme - Boost CYCJ’s audience reach and mailing list sign-ups - Manage regular webinar series - Commission, script and edit podcast series - Ensure CYCJ website is fit for purpose for all audiences, including targeted web content for harder to reach groups - Develop and promote Just the Right Space Website 	<p>CYCJ is viewed as the expert organisation, sharing knowledge and learning for those working with children and young people in conflict with the law</p>	<p>Data and Evidence Rights and Understanding</p>	<p>Lead: Policy and Public Affairs lead Project support: Sally Howard and Digital Support Advisor</p>	<p>Q1-Q4</p>
<p>Deliver a National Youth Justice Conference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deliver a two day in-person conference 	<p>The national practitioner network of those working with children and young people in conflict with the law is brought together to celebrate, learn, develop and plan, linked to Scottish Government’s Youth Justice Vision and Standards</p>	<p>Participation and Engagement</p>	<p>Lead: Head of Practice Project support: Business Support/Admin</p>	<p>Q1 and 2</p>

Work not funded by the Scottish Government Youth Justice Team: For Executive Governance Group

Projects and outputs	CYCJ Lead and funder	Quarterly up-date
Youth Justice Voices	Project Lead: Carly Elliott-Scott (Staf partnership) Funder: National Lottery	
Scottish Government Restorative Justice Action plan	Project Lead: Head of Practice Funder: Scottish Government Victims Team	
Reimagining Justice	Project Lead: Donna McEwen Funder: The Promise Partnership	
National Leadership Network	Project Lead: Carly Elliott-Scott Funder: Life Changes Trust	
Child Criminal Exploitation	Project Lead: Donna McEwen Funder: The Promise Partnership	
PhD Studentship - How and to what extent does research on youth violence prevention influence policy responses?	Project Lead: Nina Vaswani Funder: Strathclyde / Student	
Men-Minds Project	Project Lead: Nina Vaswani Funder: MRC/AHRC/ESRC	
Children's Hearings System Pilot	Project Lead: Marianiki Vlachou Funder: North/South Lanarkshire	
Child Criminal Exploitation research and evaluation (Inverclyde)	Project Lead: Nina Vaswani Funder: Action for Children	
The Promise: A Supportive Workforce	Project Lead: Carole Murphy Funder: The Promise	
The Promise: Young Scot project	Project Lead: Erin Hastings (Young Scot partnership)	

	Funder: The Promise	
Activate course in Polmont	Project Lead: Iain Corbett (University of Glasgow partnership) Funder: National Leadership Network	
Scottish Child Interview Model	Project Lead: Lucy Holland Funder: SG Bairn's Hoose	
Bairns' Hoose	Project Lead: Viktoria Sebhelyi Funder: SG, Bairn's Hoose	
Nuffield research	Project Lead: Nina Vaswani Funder: Nuffield	