

UNCRC Report

2026 to 2029

Our Commitment

We are pleased to introduce our first UNCRC Report and action plan, which sets out the actions we will take during the 2026 to 2029 reporting period.

This document provides information on ILF Scotland and the work we do. It focuses on how we support, engage with and listen to young people. It sets out our commitment to the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024, the work that we have already done to promote children's rights prior to 2026 and what we are doing now.

We aim to review our progress and planning relating to the UNCRC regularly and will formally appraise our progress in achieving our objectives on an annual basis and publish this on our website.

Human rights and equality are at the heart of what we do as an organisation and they run through all our everyday activities, thoughts, behaviours and plans. Our core principle is that disabled people have the same rights, freedoms, and abilities to lead the fullest lives they can, free from discrimination and on an equal basis as others. We strive to continuously improve on our commitment to human rights and children's rights across the organisation.

We developed this report using the national UNCRC Implementation Framework to guide our self-evaluation. We have also published a child friendly version of the report on our website that is appropriate to the age range and accessibility requirements of the Recipients of ILF Scotland.

Our Board members and our staff are committed to ensuring the policies we work to, the services we provide, the decisions we make and the way in which we communicate with young people are as appropriate as they possibly can be. We will review this on an ongoing basis and include the young people we support in this process.



Anne Marie Monaghan

ILF Scotland Chair of Board



Peter Scott OBE

ILF Scotland CEO

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About Us

Introduction

ILF Scotland is a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB), governed by a Board of Directors appointed by, and accountable to, Scottish Ministers. We provide discretionary funding to disabled people in Scotland and Northern Ireland to help them live independently with choice, control and dignity in their own homes and communities.

Our [Strategy 2025 to 2028: Realising Ambition - Re-Opening and Beyond](#) is focused on enabling more disabled people to access our funds, supporting cultural change and capability across the sector, and delivering a high-quality, inclusive and sustainable service. ILF Scotland is aligned with **Article 19 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** and operates in line with the **PANEL** principles of Participation, Accountability, Non-Discrimination, Empowerment and Legality. We also seek to embed the principles of Co-operation, Dignity, Informed Choice, Involvement and Participation in the delivery of our services.

ILF Scotland is also a Corporate Parent. Find out more on our website: <https://ilf.scot/go/corporate-parenting-plan>

UNCRC - Children's Rights

ILF Scotland became a listed authority under the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024 in June 2024. We have been working with the Scottish Government and other colleagues since then to understand our commitments under the Act and prepare for the development of our first active plan from 2026 to 2029.

ILF Scotland must consider how its policies, decisions and services affect children and young people's rights. This includes gathering evidence on impact, involving children and young people in a meaningful and inclusive way, publishing a Children's Rights Report and a child-friendly version of that report, and ensuring that Board members, senior leaders and staff understand and fulfil their responsibilities in relation to children's rights.

For ILF Scotland, this means considering the rights and experiences of disabled children and young people wherever they may be affected by our funding, policies, services, communications and decision-making, and reporting on the actions we have taken and plan to take to advance children's rights.



UNCRC

UNCRC

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is an international human rights treaty that sets out the rights of all children and young people and explains how governments and adults should work together to ensure children can enjoy those rights.

The Convention, signed by 196 countries, is the most widely ratified international human rights treaty in history. It contains 54 articles that cover all aspects of a child's life and set out their civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. The convention is universal – these rights apply to every child, and the convention entitles every child to claim them. It also explains how adults and governments must work together to make sure all children can enjoy all their rights.

The UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill was passed unanimously by the Scottish Parliament in December 2023 and came into effect on 16 July 2024. The Scottish Government affirmed that the UNCRC is at the heart of the Scottish Government's commitment to ensuring that all children and young people have the best possible start in life, regardless of their circumstances.

Under the UNCRC, a child means "every human being below the age of 18". A child has all the rights in the UNCRC until they are 18 years old.

The UNCRC Act followed over a decade of legislation and policy that protects and promotes children's rights, including the Human Rights Act 1998, Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC), the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, and the Children (Scotland) Act 2020. Children's rights, within the broader context of human rights, are also embedded in Scotland's National Performance Framework (NPF).



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HOW THE
CONVENTION
WORKS

Convention on the Rights of the Child

Children must be registered when they are born and given a name which is officially recognized by the government. Children must have a nationality (belong to a country). Whenever possible, children should know their parents and be looked after by them.	7	Every child has the right to be alive. Governments must make sure that children survive and develop in the best possible way.	6	Governments should let families and communities guide their children so that, as they grow up, they learn to use their rights in the best way. The more children grow, the less guidance they will need.	5	Governments must do all they can to make sure that every child in their countries can enjoy all the rights in this Convention.	4	When adults make decisions, they should think about how their decisions will affect children. All adults should do what is best for children. Governments should make sure children are protected and looked after by their parents, or by other people when this is needed. Governments should make sure that people and places responsible for looking after children are doing a good job.	3	All children have all these rights, no matter who they are, where they live, what language they speak, what their religion is, what they think, what they look like, if they are a boy or girl, if they have a disability, if they are rich or poor, or no matter who their parents or families are or what their parents or families believe or do. No child should be treated unfairly for any reason.	2	A child is any person under the age of 18.	1
Children can choose their own thoughts, opinions and religion, but this should not stop other people from enjoying their rights. Parents can guide children so that as they grow up, they learn to properly use this right.	14	Children have the right to share freely with others what they learn, think and feel, by talking, drawing, writing or in any other way unless it harms other people.	13	Children have the right to give their opinions freely on issues that affect them. Adults should listen and take children seriously.	12	Governments must stop children being taken out of the country when this is against the law – for example, being kidnapped by someone or held abroad by a parent when the other parent does not agree.	11	If a child lives in a different country than their parents, governments must let the child and parents travel so that they can stay in contact and be together.	10	Children should not be separated from their parents unless they are not being properly looked after – for example, if a parent hurts or does not take care of a child. Children whose parents don't live together should stay in contact with both parents unless this might harm the child.	9	Children have the right to their own identity – an official record of who they are which includes their name, nationality and family relations. No one should take this away from them, but if this happens, governments must help children to quickly get their identity back.	8
When children are adopted, the most important thing is to do what is best for them. If a child cannot be properly looked after in their own country – for example by living with another family – then they might be adopted in another country.	21	Every child who cannot be looked after by their own family has the right to be looked after properly by people who respect the child's religion, culture, language and other aspects of their life.	20	Governments must protect children from violence, abuse and being neglected by anyone who looks after them.	19	Parents are the main people responsible for bringing up a child. When the child does not have any parents, another adult will have this responsibility and they are called a "guardian". Parents and guardians should always consider what is best for that child. Governments should help them. Where a child has both parents, both of them should be responsible for bringing up the child.	18	Children have the right to get information from the Internet, radio, television, newspapers, books and other sources. Adults should make sure the information they are getting is not harmful. Governments should encourage the media to share information from lots of different sources, in languages that all children can understand.	17	Every child has the right to privacy. The law must protect children's privacy, family, home, communications and reputation for good name from any attack.	16	Children can join or set up groups or organisations, and they can meet with others, as long as this does not harm other people.	15
Every child has the right to an education. Primary education should be free. Secondary and higher education should be available to every child. Children should be encouraged to go to school to the highest level possible. Discipline in schools should respect children's rights and never use violence.	28	Children have the right to food, clothing and a safe place to live so they can develop in the best possible way. The government should help families and children who cannot afford this.	27	Governments should provide money or other support to help children from poor families.	26	Every child who has been placed somewhere away from home – for their care, protection or health – should have their situation checked regularly to see if everything is going well and if this is still the best place for the child to be.	25	Children have the best health care possible, clean water to drink, healthy food and a clean and safe environment to live in. All adults and children should have information about how to stay safe and healthy.	24	Every child with a disability should enjoy the best possible life in society. Governments should remove all obstacles for children with disabilities to become independent and to participate actively in the community.	23	Children who move from their home country to another country as refugees because it was not safe for them to stay there should get help and protection and have the same rights as children born in that country.	22
Governments must make sure that children are not kidnapped or sold, or taken to other countries or places to be exploited (taken advantage of).	35	The government should protect children from sexual exploitation (being taken advantage of) and sexual abuse, including by people forcing children to have sex for money, or making sexual pictures or films of them.	34	Governments must protect children from taking, making, carrying or selling harmful drugs.	33	Children have the right to be protected from doing work that is dangerous or bad for their education, health or development. If children work, they have the right to be safe and paid fairly.	32	Every child has the right to rest, relax, play and to take part in cultural and creative activities.	31	Children have the right to use their own language, culture and religion – even if these are not shared by most people in the country where they live.	30	Children's education should help them fully develop their personalities, talents and abilities. It should teach them to understand their own rights, and to respect other people's rights, cultures and differences. It should help them to live peacefully and protect the environment.	29
Governments should actively tell children and adults about this Convention so that everyone knows about children's rights.	42	If the laws of a country protect children's rights better than this Convention, then those laws should be used.	41	Children accused of breaking the law have the right to legal help and fair treatment. There should be lots of solutions to help these children become good members of their communities. Prison should only be the last choice.	40	Children have the right to get help if they have been hurt, neglected, treated badly or affected by war, so they can get back their health and dignity.	39	Children have the right to be protected during war. No child under 15 can join the army or take part in war.	38	Children who are accused of breaking the law should not be killed, tortured, treated cruelly, put in prison forever, or put in prison with adults. Prison should always be the last choice and only for the shortest possible time. Children in prison should have legal help and be able to stay in contact with their family.	37	Children have the right to be protected from all other kinds of exploitation (being taken advantage of), even if these are not specifically mentioned in this Convention.	36

CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD – THE CHILDREN'S VERSION

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is an important agreement by countries who have promised to protect children's rights.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child explains who children are, all their rights, and the responsibilities of governments. All the rights are connected, they are all equally important and they cannot be taken away from children.

This text is supported by the Committee on the Rights of the Child.



unicef
for every child

These articles explain how governments, the United Nations – including the Committee on the Rights of the Child and UNICEF – and other organisations work to make sure all children enjoy all their rights.

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ILF Scotland Duties

Duties under UNCRC

As a listed authority under section 18 of Part 3 of the Act, ILF Scotland must report on actions we have taken and intend to take for the purpose of ensuring compliance with the UNCRC requirements under section 6(1) of the Act.

We must also report on actions we take and intend to take to secure better or further effect of the rights of children – referred to as Children's Right's Reports.

We have used a Children's Rights Based approach to develop our implementation plan. This approach, developed by the Children's Commissioner for Wales, provides a practical framework for working with children, grounded in the UNCRC. It ensures that children's human rights are at the core of every aspect of decision making, policy and practice. It breaks this down into five key areas:

Embedding: Putting children's human rights at the core of planning and the delivery of services that affect children and young people.

Equality and non-discrimination: Ensuring that every child or young person has an equal opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents.

Empowerment: Giving children the knowledge and confidence to use their rights and hold organisations and individuals that affect their lives to account.

Participation: Listening to children and taking their views seriously.

Accountability: Organisations and individuals should be accountable to children for the decisions and actions which affect their lives.

Each of the rights enshrined within the Convention is interlinked and no right is more important than another. Notwithstanding this, those UNCRC requirements most relevant to our work and where we can make the most impact include:

2 Article 2: Non-Discrimination

3 Article 3: Best Interests of the Child

23 Article 23: Children with Disabilities

ILF Scotland and Young People

Transition Fund

The Transition Fund was opened in December 2017 to provide one-off grants to young disabled people in Scotland aged 16 to 21 to help them increase their independence and participate in their communities. The upper age limit was increased to 25 in November 2019.

The primary aims of the Fund are to help young people:

- try new things
- become more engaged and active in their community
- enhance their independence and confidence
- spend more time with other people

Since the Transition Fund opened, we have provided grants of over £29 million to over 14,500 young disabled people. Of these Recipients, 6,425 were aged 18 and under.

Find out more about the [Transition Fund](#) on our website.



Independent Living Fund

The Independent Living Fund re-opened in April 2024 to new applications in Scotland. This Fund enables disabled people in Scotland with the most complex needs to access the support they need and deserve. Awards are paid on an ongoing, long-term basis.

Since re-opening, we have received over 1,500 applications and provided funding of around £16 million enabling many more disabled people to live independent lives within their chosen communities.

The re-opened Fund is available to people aged 16 and over and since April 2024, we have received more than 50 applications on behalf of Recipients aged under 18.

Find out more about the [Independent Living Fund](#) on our website.



Career Ready

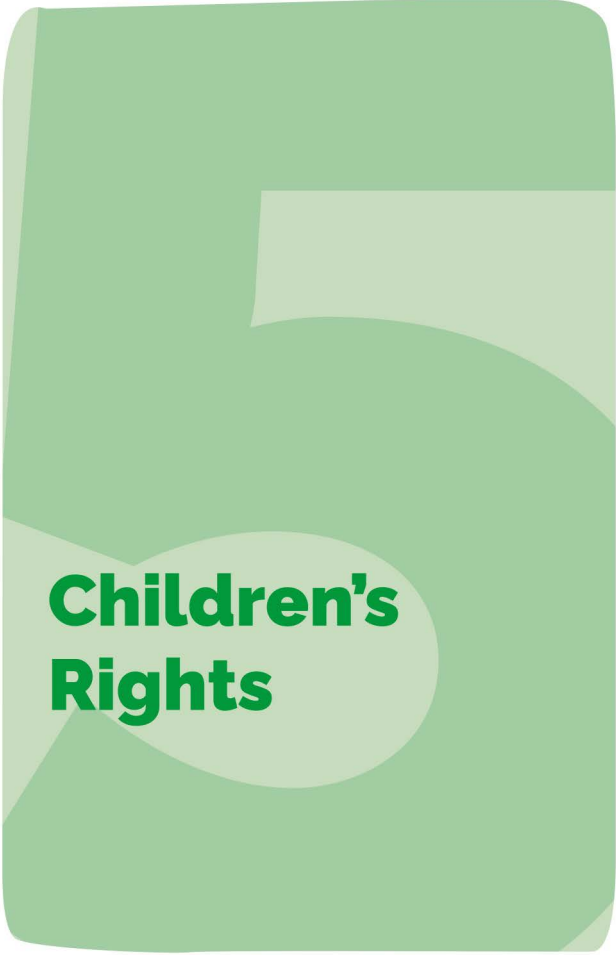
As well as our Fund Recipients, ILF Scotland has supported young people through the [Career Ready Scotland intern programme](#). Over the past three years, a number of interns aged 16 to 17 from local high schools have spent 4 weeks immersed within ILF Scotland, working with their allocated mentors in a variety of departments to experience the workplace, before delivering a presentation of their experiences to ILF Scotland staff, Career Ready representatives, teachers and their family members.

As well as being a learning opportunity for the interns, ILF Scotland members of staff have found the experience to be valuable and have received positive and helpful feedback from the young people.

We are delighted that one of the previous interns is now a full-time employee at ILF Scotland as a Modern Apprentice, having been successful after applying for an externally advertised post.



"I did my Career Ready internship at ILF Scotland when I was still at school. A year later, when I saw a Modern Apprentice position advertised, I immediately applied and was delighted to get the job. They are a really supportive employer and I am looking forward to progressing my career here."



Children's Rights

ILF Scotland's work and Children's Rights

ILF Scotland is committed to equality, as outlined in our [Mainstreaming and Equality Report](#).

"Equality is at the heart of what we do as an organisation and runs through all our everyday activities, thoughts, behaviours and plans. We strive to continuously improve on our commitment to mainstreaming equality across the organisation."

As well as embedding equality within our culture, ILF Scotland must comply with the [Equality Act 2010 \(Specific Duties\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2012](#) and the specific duties designed to help Scottish public authorities meet the general duty. Regulation 4 of the specific equality duties requires that we base our Equality Outcomes on evidence and involvement of equality groups.

Our Board and staff group are diverse with regards to their own lived experience, and they are also well-informed about equality, diversity and inclusion more broadly. More specifically, we ensure that a programme of training and awareness is in place so that our staff have a high level of knowledge about the needs of young disabled people. Our employees are well qualified in health and social care and we regularly provide updated training.

Since July 2024, our work in this area has included:

- delivery of Neurodiversity Training by The Donaldson Trust to all ILF staff
- introduction of the internal staff Neurodiversity Group and Charter
- provision of Trauma Informed training across frontline staff
- provision of training on the Experience of Services for care experienced young people
- introduction of a guaranteed interview scheme for care experienced applicants to ILF Scotland vacancies, provided the candidate meets the essential criteria for the role
- provision of an ongoing programme of child and adult protection training delivered by Who Cares? Scotland

How We Ensure Participation with Young People

Engagement and Young Ambassadors

ILF Scotland has a programme of engagement activity, with a focus on increasing awareness of the Transition Fund among priority groups. This helps in strengthening relationships with partner organisations and providing direct support to young people, their families and professionals involved in supporting young people through transition from children's to adult services.

In our engagement activity, we have tried to place particular focus on:

- young people living in areas of multiple deprivation
- care experienced young people, school leavers and young people preparing for transition into adulthood
- young people attending Additional Support Needs (ASN) schools and those schools with provision for deaf pupils

Through this engagement we have provided practical application support to increase access to funding.

Activity has included attendance at:

- Social Work Circle meetings
- presenting to local organisations and charities
- engagement with Skills Development Scotland and Jobcentre Plus events
- local schools and meetings with parents and carers

ILF Scotland has a group of Transition Fund Recipients who are Young Ambassadors. These young Recipients aged 16 to 25 meet a few times each year to discuss common issues and provide feedback on their experiences with the Transition Fund.

The Young Ambassadors have previously discussed and provided feedback on publications and initiatives relevant to young people including:

- ILF Scotland communications and promotional materials
- the Scottish Government Learning Disability, Autism and Neurodivergence Bill and wider transitions work
- accessibility improvements to application processes and digital engagement
- website and social media development
- providing case studies for ILF Scotland's website
- raising awareness within deaf and disabled communities
- sharing lived experiences of navigating transitions from childhood into adulthood
- participating in ILF Scotland PR and Communications campaigns

The Young Ambassadors have had opportunities to attend events and engagement activities. This included a presentation by one of our Young Ambassadors at the ILF Scotland 10th Anniversary Celebration in June 2025, to an audience of over 100 guests, where they shared their experiences of the Transition Fund and what it had enabled them to achieve.

Corporate Parenting

As previously mentioned, ILF Scotland is a Corporate Parent, and our plan can be found on our website, [Corporate Parenting Plan - 2024 to 2027](#).

As part of our Corporate Parenting role, ILF Scotland works collaboratively with partner agencies including the Centre for Excellence for Looked after Children in Scotland (CELCLIS), the Office of the Children's Commissioner for Scotland and Who Cares? Scotland.

A key area of our Corporate Parenting plan is to ensure that all ILF Scotland staff receive training in adult and child protection. All ILF Scotland staff are considered to have a safeguarding role with a duty to report any concerns of harm. We will continue to provide regular training on an ongoing basis.

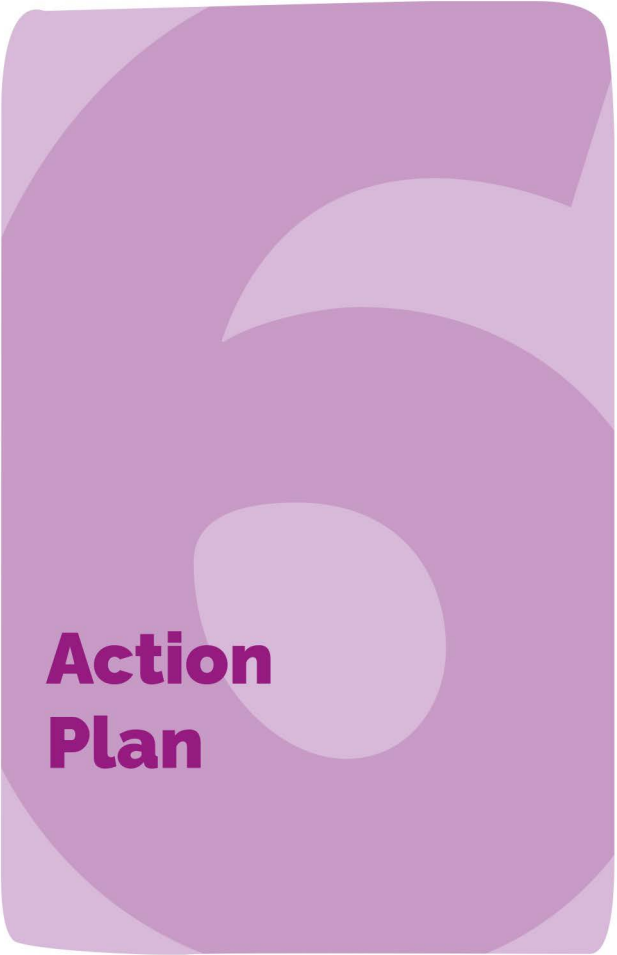
What we've done

Since July 2024, we have:

- Launched ILF Scotland's Feedback Strategy, which includes a commitment to a human rights approach to decision making and seeks the views of young people.
- Updated our Complaints Process to incorporate Child Friendly Complaints into our existing procedures and revised our internal procedures. We have based our approach on the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) Child Friendly Complaints process guidance and are incorporating this update within our ongoing programme of complaints training, which is delivered to all ILF Scotland staff.
- Implemented support calls for new Recipients of the re-opened ILF Scotland Fund which includes Recipients aged under 18 years old.
- Published articles on UNCRC in our internal and external newsletters and on our website.
- Presented on UNCRC implementation to both our Scotland and Northern Ireland Advisory Groups.

What we've done continued

- Worked collaboratively with partner agencies to reach more care experienced young people. Through this work and our engagement programme we have seen an increase in the number of care experienced young people access the Transition Fund, increasing from 13 percent in 2024 to 25 to 15.5 percent in 2025 to 2026.
- Reviewed feedback from Transition Fund Recipients and identified a need for greater support of young people through the application and end of grant process. ILF Scotland has now recruited and appointed two Grant Support Officers to assist further in these areas.
- Provided additional support to any applicant to the Transition Fund who notes that they are care experienced by allocating a specialist caseworker.
- Secured agreement and funding to conduct an independent evaluation of the Transition Fund, including a Peer Research element and a Social Return on Investment analysis.
- Attended the UNCRC Listed Authorities Peer Support Network, facilitated by the Scottish Government, which provides a supportive space where listed authorities can come together to share, learn and collaborate on joint priorities to embed a children's human rights approach and support UNCRC implementation.



Action Plan

Action Plan

2026 to 2029

We will refresh, review and relaunch our Young Ambassadors programme. We have contacted all existing members to gauge their ongoing interest and establish how they would like to see the Group developed. Our Scotland Advisory Group has agreed that a representative of the Young Ambassadors Group would be welcome to attend their quarterly meetings. We intend to implement this from December 2026. We would like to expand the membership of this Group to include Recipients of the re-opened ILF.

UNCRC Articles: **3** **23**

We will roll out UNCRC training across ILF Scotland with a commitment for all staff to have completed the online course provided by NHS Scotland by end of December 2026.

UNCRC Articles: **2** **3**

We are working with Together Scotland to develop bespoke UNCRC and children's rights training for frontline staff with the aim to have the initial training completed by end of March 2027.

UNCRC Articles: **2** **3**

We aim to produce at least one case study of a new Recipient to the re-opened Independent Living Fund who is aged under 18 within the next 12 months.

UNCRC Articles: **23**

Action Plan continued

Our feedback strategy will assist in planning engagement with new Recipients of the re-opened fund who are aged under 18.

UNCRC Articles: **2** **3** **23**

We are integrating Children's Rights Welfare Impact Assessments (CRWIAs) within our existing Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) framework. We will include training on CRWIAs in our EQIA training programme that we will deliver to ILF Scotland staff (in quarter 3 and quarter 4 of 2026 to 2027).

UNCRC Articles: **2** **3** **23**

We will continue to expand our Accessibility initiative using mechanisms such as Easy Read to ensure that our publications are easily accessible by young disabled people.

UNCRC Articles: **2** **3** **23**

We will continue to attend the UNCRC Peer group facilitated by Scottish Government where we meet other public bodies to share best practice.

UNCRC Articles: **2** **3** **23**

We will continue to ensure that we reference and include UNCRC in ongoing ILF Scotland Strategy and Business Plan updates and within our Mainstreaming and Equality planning and reporting.

UNCRC Articles: **2** **3** **23**

Monitoring and Reporting

Monitoring and Reporting

In addition to our action plan, we anticipate there will be additional areas identified through our ongoing improvement work and policy reviews that we will add to our UNCRC planning process.

We will monitor the progress of this plan and action points on a regular basis and report to our Senior Leadership Team. We will also provide updates to our Board and our Advisory and Ambassador Groups to provide members with assurance on our approach to meeting our UNCRC duties.

In addition, we will publish a report on progress on our website on an annual basis.

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