



# Child Friendly Cardiff

## Evaluation Report



In 2018, we published our Child Friendly Cardiff Strategy clearly laying out our goals that put children's rights at the heart of decision making.

Over the course of the last 4 years, wide ranging actions have been taken to ensure that children and young people are able to claim their rights, thrive and reach their potential.

We have achieved great things in very challenging circumstances, and it is clear it is more important than ever before to adopt a child's rights approach across services, policy and programmes.

We have had a key focus on children and young people who are particularly vulnerable, developing solutions that seek to improve education and health outcomes and provide families with the right support at the right time.

The important foundational work to develop a rights respecting culture across the council has made significant progress with staff more knowledgeable and confident regarding rights and their practice. Supported by policy which respect, protect and fulfil children's rights.

Empowering children and young people to take advantage of their rights, to be meaningfully involved in decisions that matter to them has enabled services to meet their need and adults to be more accountable for the way children and young people's rights are respected, protected and fulfilled through policy and action.

We have improved our understanding of the lived experiences of a wider range of children and young people contributing to our goal that every child has an equal opportunity to making the most of their lives and talents, through the full enjoyment of their rights which promote their dignity, safety, full participation and development.

The work to make a city where the voices, needs, priorities and rights of children and young people are at the heart of policies, programmes and decisions has significantly progressed but there is still work to done.

We are committed to the work to make rights a reality for all and look forward to working with children and young people to further develop our rights approach.

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# What did we set out to do?

We want Cardiff to be ‘a great place to grow up’.

We want to live in a city with children and young people at its heart, where the voices, needs and rights of every child and young people are respected.

A city where all children and young people, regardless of belief, ethnicity, background or wealth are safe, healthy, happy and able to share in the city’s success.



Original strategy

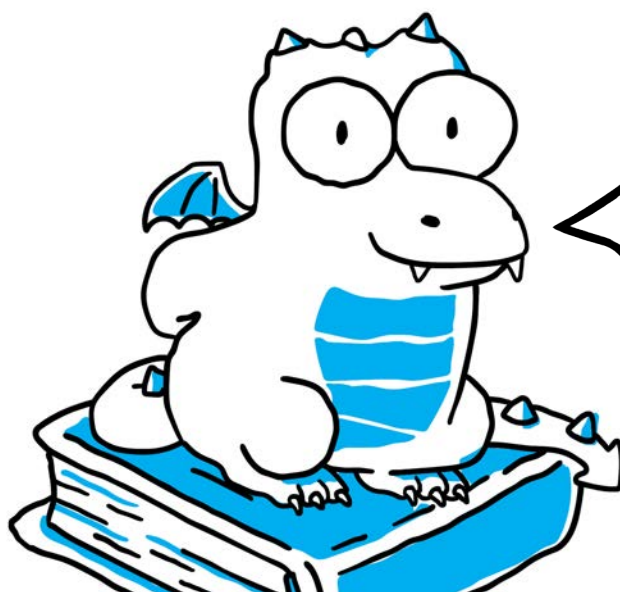


## What are children’s rights?

Children and young people have the same general human rights as adults and also specific rights that recognise their special needs.

Children are neither the property of their parents nor are they helpless objects of charity. They are human beings and are the subject of their own rights.

Children and young people have 42 rights under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). These 42 rights give children and young people what they need to grow up happily, healthily and safely.



Children’s Rights are so important that 10 years ago Wales put them at the heart of their laws. All Welsh ministers, public services and large national organisations have to pay attention to children’s rights in everything they do.

# What is the UNICEF UK 'Child Friendly Cities' Initiative?

The child friendly cities and communities' initiative is run by UNICEF across over 50 countries around the world. The aim is to support local authorities in making children's rights integral to policy and practice which transform services, leading to improved outcomes in all aspects of children and young people's lives.

Taking a Children's Rights Approach helps us make sure that children and young people have meaningful opportunities to influence decisions about their lives.

## Interdependence and Indivisibility.

All children and young people enjoy all of their rights all of the time because all rights are equally important.

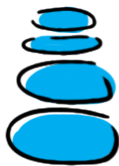


**Dignity.** All children and young people are valued and respected citizens, treated with care and respect in all circumstances.



## Best interests.

The best interests of children and young people are a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect them.



We are committed to a Children's Rights Approach in Cardiff grounded in UNICEF UK's

## 7 principles

**Participation.** All children and young people are supported to freely express their opinion; they are both heard and listened to.



## Life, survival and development.

Children and young people are supported by adults to enjoy opportunities, to be safe, healthy, grow and flourish.



## Transparency and accountability.

Strong relationships and meaningful and open dialogue between children and young people, professionals and local politicians make rights a reality.



**Non-discrimination.** Every child and young person has an equal opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents, and none have to endure poor life chances because of discrimination.

# What things did we focus on?

Any local authority taking part in the UNICEF UK 'Child Friendly Cities and Communities Initiative' must focus their work on six key areas, we call these areas "badges".

Three of the badges are mandatory **foundational badges** chosen by UNICEF, which every city must focus on - they underpin everything a local authority does.

The other three are **thematic badges** which were chosen from multiple options during our discovery phase through workshops and discussions with children and young people.



## Culture

- People value and respect children and young people.
- People know about and respect children's rights.



## Cooperation and Leadership

- People work together to make the city better for children and young people.
- Decisions are made involving children and young people.



## Communication

- Information about children's rights is shared with children, young people and adults in different ways.
- People know when important decisions affecting children, young people and families are being made.



## Family & Belonging

- Families of all shapes and sizes are supported to be together
- They can get help if they are struggling
- They can enjoy activities and have fun around the city



## Education & Learning

- Children and young people can learn about the world around them in a safe, welcoming and respectful place (This includes children and young people who aren't able to attend school).



## Healthy

- Children and young people have good physical, mental and emotional health
- They are supported if they have any additional needs
- They know how to stay healthy

# Our Journey

## Discovery

2017

Through Workshops and discussions, children and young people helped us set our priorities as a city.



## Development

2018

We published a strategy which set out our goals and success measures under each of our goals.



## Delivery

2018-2022

The council, local partners, children & young people work together to deliver actions within the 4-year CFC action plan.

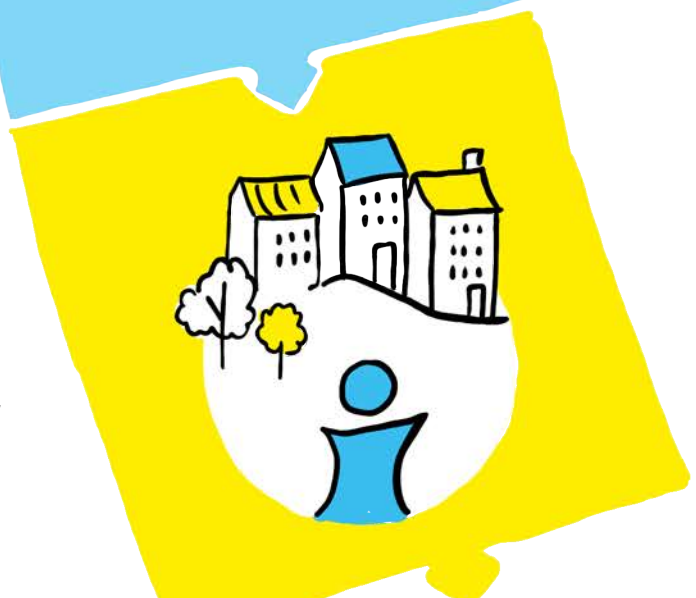


## Recognition

2022 (lasts 3 years)

Council services and wider partners have evaluated the impact throughout the programme, including work directly with children and young people.

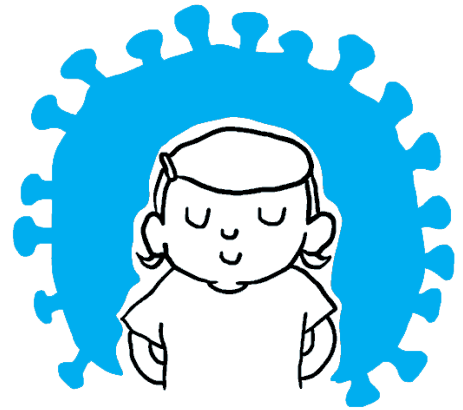
Detailed action plans and evaluation reports will be submitted to UNICEF UK to assess progress against our Child Friendly Cardiff Strategy.



# COVID19 Impact

The Covid-19 pandemic has been an extremely challenging time for children, young people, and their families. Schools and businesses were closed for long periods, with bereavement and serious health concerns a reality for many.

C&YP have been without close friends and family members and have had limited access to support from people such as youth workers, mentors, and social workers. Access to play and cultural activities have been reduced, whilst getting help with health and wellbeing issues have been extremely challenging for many.



Throughout the post-COVID recovery period it has been important to apply a child rights approach, to make sure that the interests and needs of children and young people have been at the heart of our response.

Examples include:

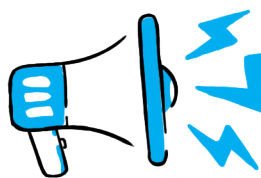
**Empowering children by distributing public health and response information in a variety of community languages through schools.**

**Establishing a Pupil Task Group to work with Cabinet Member and Director of Education during school closures.**

**Involving over 250 pupils in workshops to feed in their views to the development of the City Recovery and Renewal Strategy.**

**Distributing over 10,000 devices to children and young people experiencing digital deprivation while home schooling.**

Worries brought up more often by children and young people during and after the COVID period include their future, education, and relationships<sup>EV7</sup>



**We must acknowledge and respond to the concerns of children and young people as the impact of the pandemic will be felt for some time to come.**



# Culture

## Challenge

We believe Council employees and others working in public services should have a good knowledge and understanding of children's rights. Where their work has a direct impact on the lives of children and young people, adults should be equipped with the appropriate level of knowledge and understanding of children's rights so that these are respected, protected and fulfilled through Council, and other public services, policies and actions.

We also believe that children and young people are empowered to take advantage of their rights, and to hold adult decision-makers accountable for the ways in which children's rights are implemented in practice.

## Approach

We spent a lot of time looking at the council's workforce and thinking about which teams needed children's rights training and what level of training they would need.

This approach enabled us to provide the right training to the right people which is specific to their needs and appropriate for the different environments of each team to develop and embed a culture of close attention to children's rights in specific areas of policy and service delivery.

Our training resources have been developed with the help of children and young people and are now available for council and external partners to use.

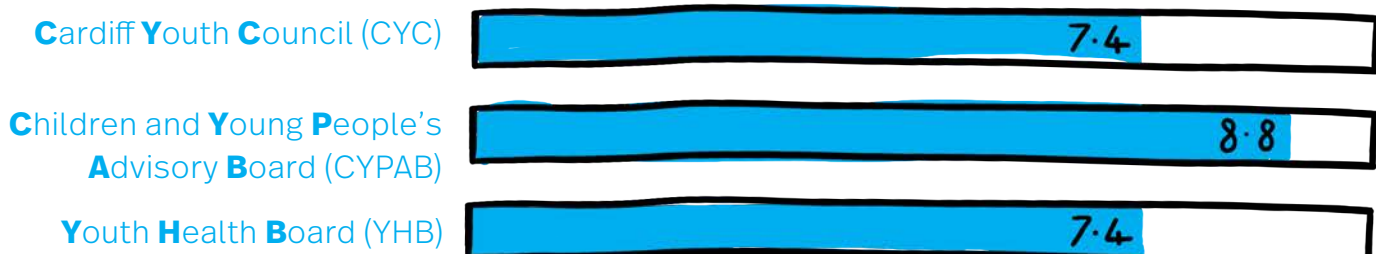
Children and young people have also been empowered by receiving children's rights training, so that they can make a difference by being involved in service design, policy development and quality assurance processes. This will help ensure that there is full accountability to children for the way in which services are designed and delivered.

Service providers and the council are supported in adopting a child right's approach by the children's rights team, children's rights training and an external partner network who have all pledged to adopt child friendly values!

## Impact

Senior leaders, elected members, and youth advisory boards have a very good knowledge and understanding of children's rights. This knowledge and understanding has helped shape and influence decision-making amongst senior staff and elected member as demonstrated by recent survey and focus group findings.

How much do you feel you know about children's rights?<sup>EV1,2,3</sup> (out of 10, 10 being the most)





# 91% of children and young people

who engage in formal participatory mechanisms feel like they have the necessary skills and opportunities to be able to influence CCC policy and actions at least sometimes<sup>EV1,2,3</sup>.

[Elected Member, Senior Leader & Staff Surveys](#)

## We have a Workforce that is knowledgeable and confident!



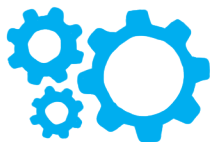
**94%** of **senior leaders** reported having adequate to very good knowledge of children's rights relating to their work<sup>EV6</sup>



**94%** of **staff** report feeling comfortable talking to the children they work with about their rights, rising from 87% in 2018 <sup>EV88,89,90</sup>



**59%** of **staff** have heard local authority leaders talking about children's rights - rising from 51% in 2018 and falling from 67% in 2020. Consideration around current work arrangements mean that the vast majority of council officers now work from home and have less exposure to senior leaders which may have impacted on the 2022 data <sup>EV88,89,90</sup>



**88%** of **senior leaders** have taken steps to help staff in their service area to understand children's rights <sup>EV6</sup>



**56%** of **senior leaders** reported that developing capacity (raising staff awareness and understanding) was the biggest challenge encountered when seeking to give effect to children's rights through policy or service delivery <sup>EV6</sup>



**85%** of **elected members** reported that they think about how policy could affect different groups of children and their families when making decisions <sup>EV4</sup>

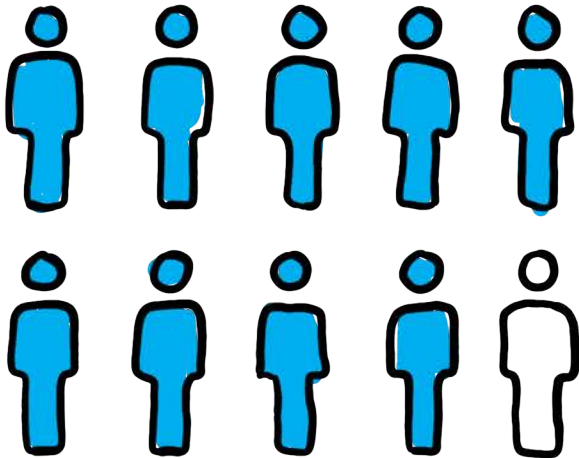
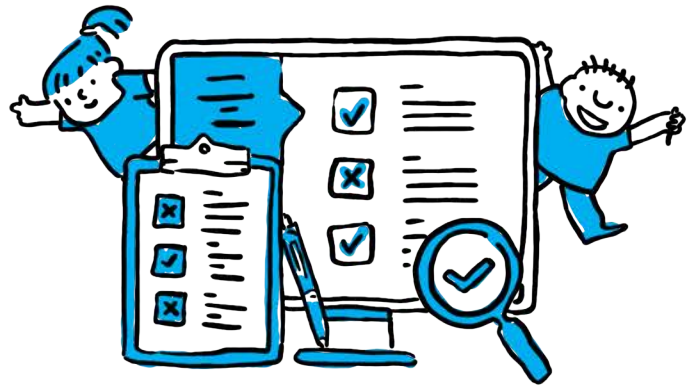
**92%** of **elected members** who responded said they feel they have adequate to very good knowledge for their role<sup>EV4</sup>

## What are children telling us?

(CFC pupil survey results) <sup>EV7</sup>

Base: 5,471 in 2019 and 7,660 in 2022

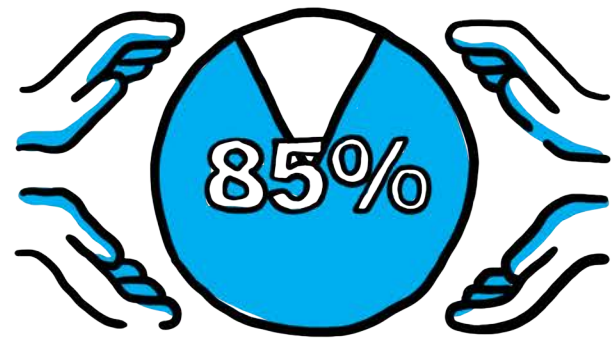
Almost **nine in every ten pupils** (89%) felt that people from different backgrounds get on well together at least most of the time, reflecting the findings of the 2019 survey. <sup>EV7</sup>



**More than nine out of ten pupils** (93%) felt they were treated with respect by adults at least most of the time, reflecting the findings of the 2019 survey <sup>EV7</sup>.



of children said that they felt 'safe' in their neighbourhood <sup>EV7</sup>.



of pupils agreed that at school they learn about treating each other with respect and kindness. <sup>EV7</sup>

### Child Rights Training

During the period of 2018 - 2022:



**4,807** staff members have completed our mandatory online child rights module <sup>EV28</sup>



**712** staff members from the council and partners have completed further rights training delivered by UNICEF <sup>EV29</sup>



**3,595** children and young people received participation and rights training <sup>EV24</sup>

# Cooperation & Leadership

## Enhanced Cooperation & Participation

### Challenge

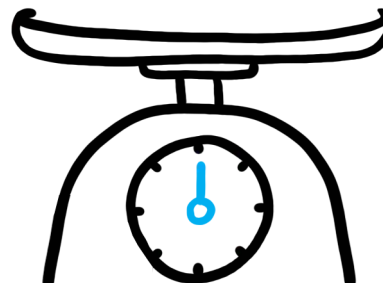
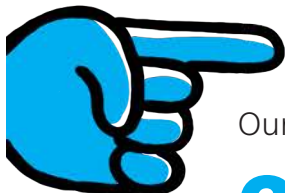
During our discovery phase, the way in which we empowered children and young people to participate in decision-making was identified as a strength.



However, we needed to ensure we did this consistently across the council and have a focus on those who may not have an opportunity to have their voice heard and listened to.

### Approach

Our [Child Friendly Cardiff Strategy](#) was published in **2018** and set out our strategic goals within the Child Friendly City Programme.



A **participation framework** was developed to clearly set out the opportunities to empower children and young people to have an active role in decision-making on matters that affect them.

Alongside this a **network of professionals** was developed to enable them to work together, share ideas and resources that improved participatory activity across the city.



A **permanent children's rights team** was established to work with both adults and C&YP providing training, advice and support on a wide range of rights-based programmes.

**Resources and staff are provided to regularly support children and young people to come together** to contribute to strategic developments taking place in the city. These included face to face activity and virtual events alongside children and young people directly sitting on committees and strategic boards.

**Children and young people are empowered, through training**, to participate in the "Young Programme" which includes meaningful involvement in interviews, inspections and commissioning of services.

**Political leaders** have embedded children's rights into their visions for the city meaning that city and departmental plans reflect children and their rights.

**Detailed data on children and young peoples' views is available and used consistently** to shape and design services that meet their needs including those who are **particularly vulnerable** including Young Carers, those with a disability and care experienced children.

## Impact

Our approach has helped children realise right to participate in decision-making and to have their views heard and listened to and taken into account. Children have been empowered to influence the design, monitoring and evaluation of CCC decision-making, including through enhanced knowledge of their rights. Our approach has embedded children's rights in decision-making processes, including through the introduction and use of CRIA (as recommended by the Committee on the Rights of the Child). This is confirmed by the following data.



### Strategic participation and Decision Making

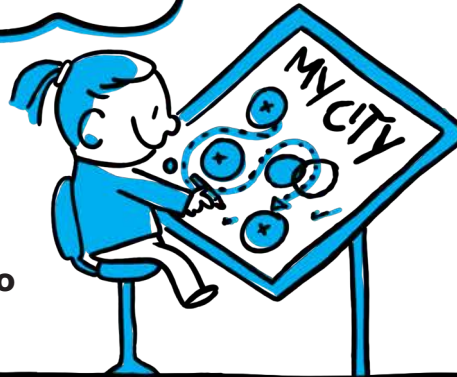
There have been over **700 opportunities** available to children & young people to meaningfully participate in Cardiff Council decision-making 2018-2022.<sup>EV24</sup>

**2,785 children** have participated in design, monitoring and evaluation of services.

Over **13,697 hours** of active citizenship were logged by CYC members from 2018-2022.<sup>EV24</sup>

Children and young people sit on **3 scrutiny committees and 5 strategic boards!**<sup>EV11</sup>

On average **84%** of young people who are involved in participation mechanisms (CYC, CYPAB and YHB) **feel that their views are taken into account.**<sup>EV1,2,3</sup>



This is compared to **55%** of those who are not regularly involved in participatory processes, who **feel that they are listened to.**<sup>EV7</sup>

Elected Members, staff and citizens **understand the goals** of Child Friendly Cardiff and can contribute to the ambition to embed children's rights across the city.

**19 staff** have been trained to use a new child rights impact assessment tool that measures the impact of decisions being made taking in consideration child rights.

**14 plans** and strategies have now been identified for CRIA as part of Cardiff Council forward plan. The CFC Team have permanent staff members to support the assessment process.

An example of a CRIA helping to shape policy and planning is the newly launched of "Building Safer Futures Together": the **Cardiff Youth Justice Strategy 2022-24** which was informed by a CRIA supported by UNICEF UK

## Areas for development include:

- Establishment of a Welsh medium Youth Forum
- Deliver an annual Public Services Board engagement event with young representatives from public service organisations to influence the city's Wellbeing Plan
- CFC Pupil Survey will be embedded into the corporate policy processes alongside the adult residents data set.
- Development of a data dashboard that enables council officers to view and analyse disaggregated data.

# Cooperation & Leadership

## Part 2 - Leadership

### Challenge

It is important to make staff more accountable by supporting Elected Members and Senior Leaders to understand and value the importance of child rights, needs and views into their work.

### Approach

Accountability has been improved through staff training and the development of a Child Rights Impact Assessment (CRIA) which is integrated in council processes. This enables Elected Members and senior leaders to consider how children's rights may be affected when developing policy guidance and work plans.

### Impact



2018-2022 budget increase to services for children. <sup>EV93</sup>



Programmes have been introduced to reduce discrimination against children, and policies have been reviewed to identify barriers to children's access, taking account of the views of children and young people.

### **32 senior leaders completed a CFC Evaluation Survey in July 2022.**

**Over a third** of senior leaders have reported utilising the Cardiff Council CFC team for advice around incorporating children's rights when delivering services. <sup>EV6</sup>

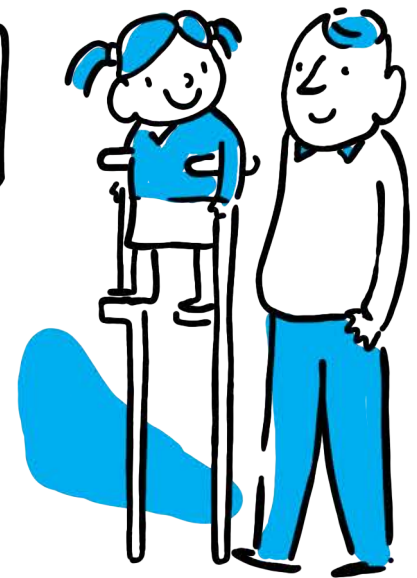
**97%** said they will ensure children's rights are prioritised through policy and service delivery in the future. <sup>EV6</sup>

**88%** of senior leaders have reported that they have ensured children's rights are taken into account when policy is developed. <sup>EV6</sup>

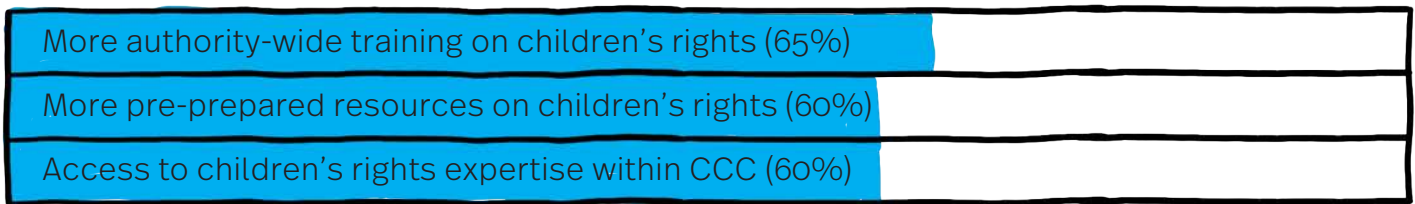
Senior leaders reported how they take into account the needs of different groups of children when policy is being developed and services delivered:

- 87% said they would develop programmes of work to reduce discrimination <sup>EV6</sup>
- 47% will regularly review services and resources (that impact C&YP) to identify barriers to children's access. <sup>EV7</sup>

When asked, 87% of senior leaders who responded said that they take account of the views of children in policy/guidance development or service delivery, while 85% signpost mechanisms for C&YP to raise concerns about policy and service delivery. <sup>EV6</sup>



The most popular resources that senior leaders requested to help in policy and services were: <sup>EV6</sup>



- Rights based examples taken from senior leader survey 2022 <sup>EV6</sup>

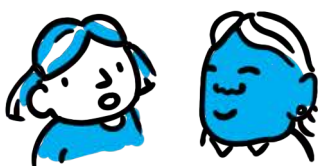
**Quote 1:** 'Work undertaken to strengthen and enhance the Child Rights Impact Assessment process at a corporate level ensuring advice and guidance is available to inform policy development with support from Child Rights Team'

**Quote 2:** 'When considering the future new bus station, we engaged a group of young people within the planning process to fully understand things that were both important and desirable'

**Quote 3:** 'Master planning of new communities includes good placemaking principles including safe access to facilities for children and young people, deliver of new schools through the planning system, deliver of parks, green spaces and children's play areas through the planning system, direct engagement with hundreds of children through the current Local Development Plan Review'

**Elected Members Survey 2022**

39 Elected Members took part in a CFC Evaluation in July 2022



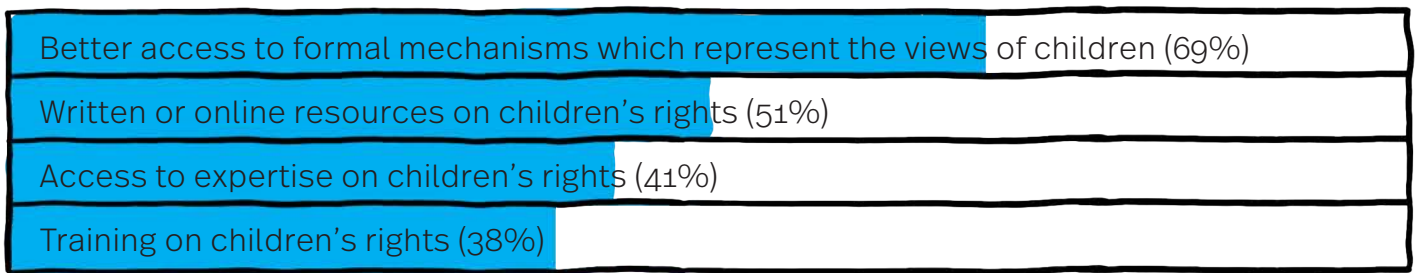
**77%** of elected members reported that they use the views they have received from children to inform their work as an elected member. <sup>EV4</sup>



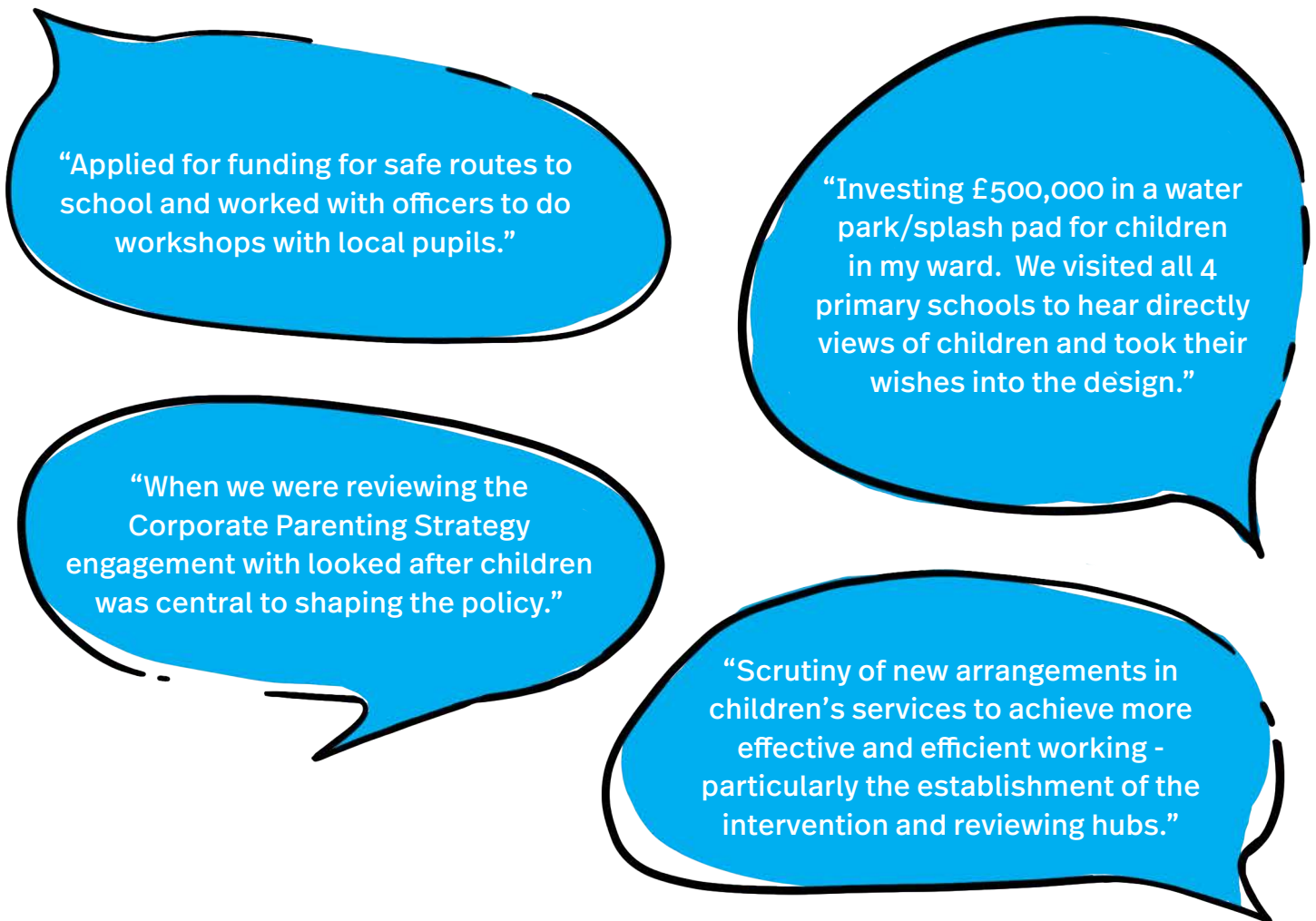
**87%** said they are willing to speak directly to children about council policies (e.g. on invitation from schools). <sup>EV4</sup>



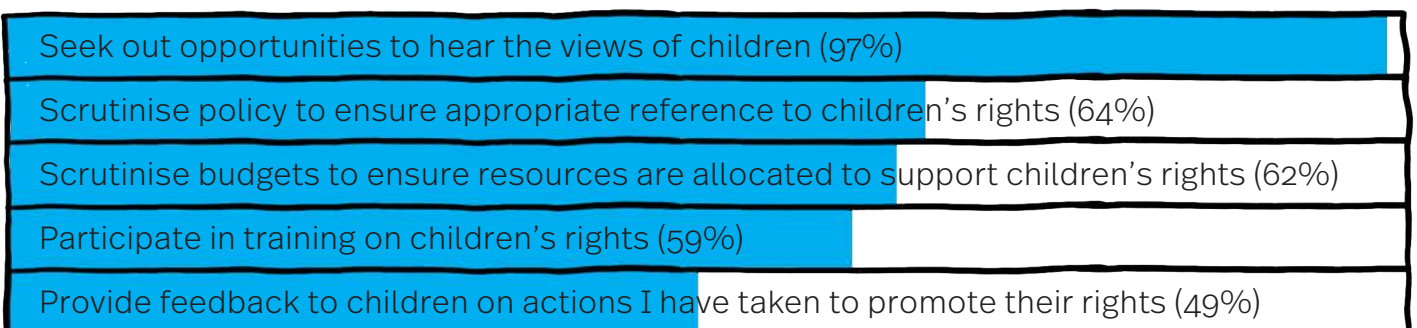
When asked **what support they might need to help them take account of children’s rights when exercising their function as an elected member** they responded as below: <sup>EV4</sup>



Examples of elected member decisions influenced by children’s rights can be found below: <sup>EV4</sup>



When asked **what steps they intend to take in the future to ensure they take account of children’s rights**, they said: <sup>EV4</sup>



# Communication

## Part 1 - Rights

### Challenge

At the very beginning of our journey children & young people told us they wanted to find out about rights in a wide variety of ways both in community, in school and online.

### Approach

We work to provide information about rights to children and young people, their parents and carers, as well as professionals in a variety of accessible formats, making use of different mechanisms for dissemination to ensure awareness, knowledge and understanding of children's rights.

### Impact

As a consequence of the above children, young people, families, and professionals can now access information about children's rights in a variety of formats, across various settings.

These include online through local authority social media channels, Cardiff Youth Service website, the CFC website and a commissioned service called Sprout, which works with young people to develop information and content on key campaigns related to the needs of C&YP. <sup>EV104,103</sup>



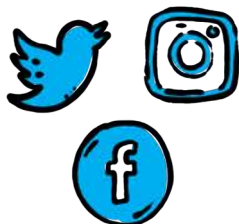
All state-maintained schools now have full access to the fully funded UNICEF 'Rights Respecting Schools programme' which teaches about rights and through rights. <sup>EV95</sup>



All hubs and libraries use and distribute children's rights information throughout the year.

# 67

CFC partners promote rights across the city and have aligned their work to the principles and values of the CFC programme, as do our children & young people festivals/events throughout the year.





# 86%

## of children have heard of children's rights

according to our 2022 Child Friendly Cardiff pupil survey, which is a 9% increase since 2019.<sup>EV7</sup>

A child rights approach to producing 3 festivals for children, young people and their families resulted in

# 59,467+

## experiences

being delivered with vulnerable groups identified for priority access and partners signing up to the values and principles of the CFC programme.<sup>EV105</sup>



## At the request of CYPAB

# ~4000

parents and guardians will now receive children's rights information on registration of a child's birth each year.

# Communication

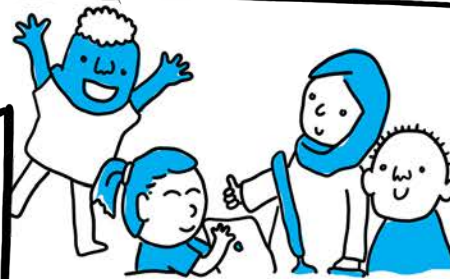
## Part 2 - Information

### Challenge:

During the discovery phase it was highlighted that accessing child friendly information was a challenge. The statement 'Can children and young people access child-friendly information about the council, their rights and entitlements' scored medium to low during our discovery activities.

### Approach:

A series of opportunities for children & young people have been scheduled, including engagement events and advisory panels. They have been able to directly inform Cardiff Council's communication practices to reflect their needs more.



"The Sprout" have been commissioned to co-produce child-friendly information with and for children & young people including campaigns for social action and promotion of child centred services. <sup>EV46,103</sup>

Council communications staff have been upskilled through UNICEF UK training, to better understand their responsibility as duty-bearers.

### Impact:

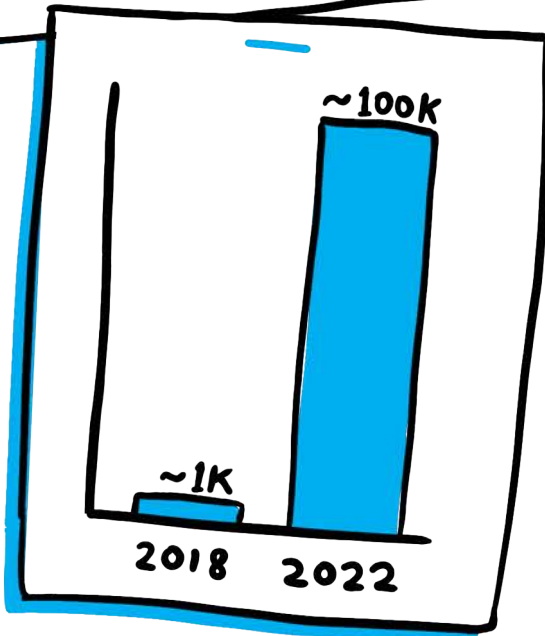
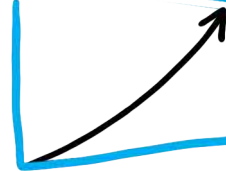
The impact of this work has seen an increase in children reporting they have heard of rights and an increase in the number of children & young people accessing information through a commissioned service.



**Impact:**

The CFC website is packed with rights-based content and signposting for children and young people to resources, activities and support. Page views have jumped from 1385 (2019) to 104,157 (2022) <sup>EV104</sup>

Since commissioning The Sprout to produce information and campaigns for C&YP, site visits have risen dramatically, from 836 (2018) to 290,104 (2022) <sup>EV96</sup>



In the same period there has been an average increase 687% increase in followers across CFC social media pages (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram 2019-2022). <sup>EV104</sup>



**Example: Child Rights in Cardiff Council Communication Plan**

“Communication Team received UNICEF training to enable the development of Child Rights Communication Plan which included working with C&YP at an intergenerational event focused on rights and media. The event report contained clear actions for recommendations that are now being considered by partners.” (Comms team, Cardiff Council).

# Family & Belonging

## Challenge

During our discovery phase, C&YP told us that families needed to get help quicker and it should be easier for them. They told us that it was difficult to get the right help, at the right time and this put pressure on families staying together.

It was also clear that care experienced children and young people needed improvements with education, being heard in decision making and improved opportunities to have fun.

## Approach:

### FAMILY HELP AND SUPPORT

A significant achievement within the Family and Belonging badge was the development of one email or phone number for children, young people, and their families in Cardiff Family Advice and Support (CFAS).

By doing this, we are removing barriers to accessing information or resources that enable them to understand and exercise their rights. This means that children & young people are supported to make choices which affect outcomes for themselves and their families.



### CORPORATE PARENTING

The Corporate Parenting Committee has developed work to embed a child rights approach across their strategic responsibilities, to empower children and young people whilst maintaining clear lines of accountability.



## Impact:

### FAMILY HELP AND SUPPORT

Awareness of advice and support services has increased, which empowers CYP to access their rights and hold duty-bearers to account.

Cardiff Family Advice and Support (CFAS) offers a range of information, advice and assistance for children, young people and their families in Cardiff and are the initial contact point for any professional, parent, child, or young person in Cardiff where there are no safeguarding concerns.

Information from EV51	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022 (Jan- Aug)
Number of people supported through the Family Gateway	8,205	7,058	10,340	5,006
Number of people supported by the Family Help Team	1,582	1,912	2,407	1,196
The percentage of families referred to Family Help, showing evidence of positive distance travelled	N/A	71%	77%	80%
The number of individuals completing 75% or more of a parenting intervention/programme with Cardiff Parenting Service	825	518	699	349
The percentage of individuals with evidence of distance travelled following a parenting intervention/programme with Cardiff Parenting Service	N/A	95%	95%	99%
The total # of Parent & Carer contacts made by Cardiff Parenting Service	14,558	17,197	22,300	9,163
<b>Total Number of infants, children &amp; young people supported through Early Help Services</b>	<b>16,729</b>	<b>15,969</b>	<b>19,837</b>	<b>11,099</b>

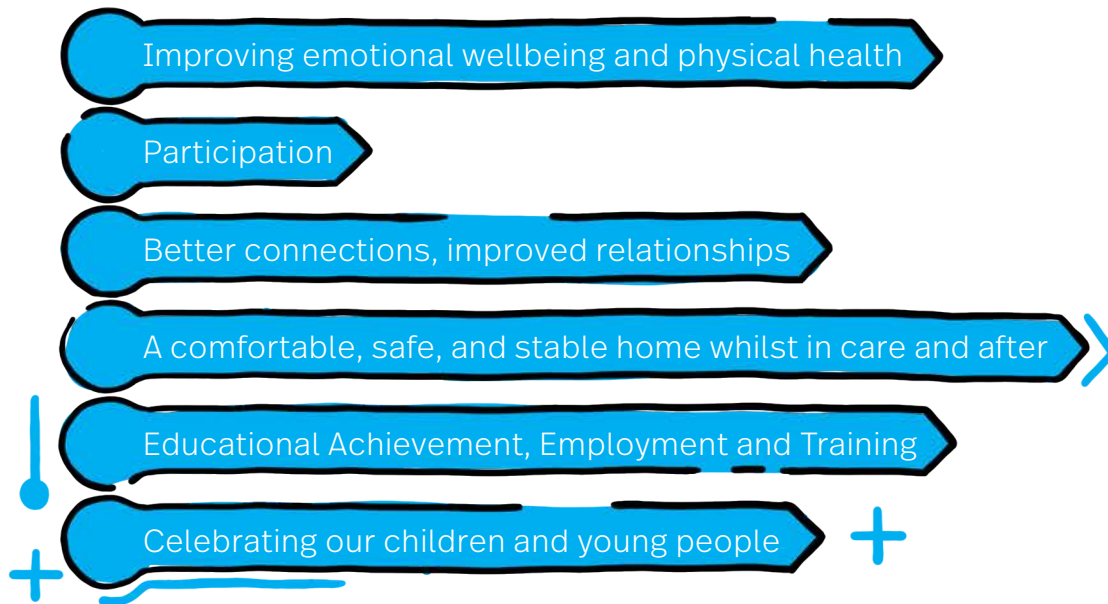
Parents are now more informed as seen in the senior leader example from SL survey 2022 <sup>EV6</sup>.



“In developing our Cardiff Parenting 0-18 booklet for caregivers, we have mapped the services that we offer against which articles in the UNCRC each programme addresses, to raise awareness of children’s rights with parents and carers.”

## CORPORATE PARENTING

In 2021, Cardiff's Corporate Parenting Strategy was refreshed to include a commitment to make changes suggested by children and young people. Sitting underneath the strategy is a detailed action plan which contain the following key priority areas highlighted by children and young people: <sup>EV15</sup>



Work across Children's Services and wider partners has taken place to ensure children and young people have the best possible life experiences, are safe, happy, healthy, and achieve their full potential at school and in their future lives.

The vast majority of care experienced C&YP reported that they are mostly or always **'treated with respect by adults'** (84% 2022 / 86% 2019). <sup>EV109</sup>



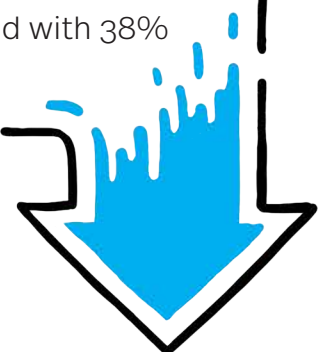
Whilst awareness of children's rights amongst care experienced children and young people had **increased** in 2022 compared with 2019 (77% and 67% respectively) <sup>EV109</sup>

this group were **less likely** to have heard of children's rights than the average respondent as well as each of the demographic groups <sup>EV109</sup> (86% was the overall average in 2022 and 77% in 2019).



Concerningly the proportion of Looked After Children reporting 'Excellent' mental and emotional health fell from **47% in 2019 to 27% in 2022**- compared with 38% dropping to 26% for all respondents. <sup>EV109</sup>

Around **one in twelve** respondents, both care experienced children and all respondents, described their mental and emotional health as 'Poor' in 2019; while this remained static for the larger group, care experienced children saw this rise to 13.1% in 2022. <sup>EV109</sup>





## CHILDREN WITH A DISABILITY

Although not a discreet cohort named in the CFC Strategy in 2018, children with a disability are an important group as they have wide ranging and complex needs.

The 2022 survey saw **two in five** (39.1%) stating that they're 'Always' treated with respect by adults, this is a rise of 12.4 percentage points when compared with the findings from the 2019 survey (26.7%). This was, however, lower than the findings recorded in the overall survey (47.5% in 2022) <sup>EV7</sup>

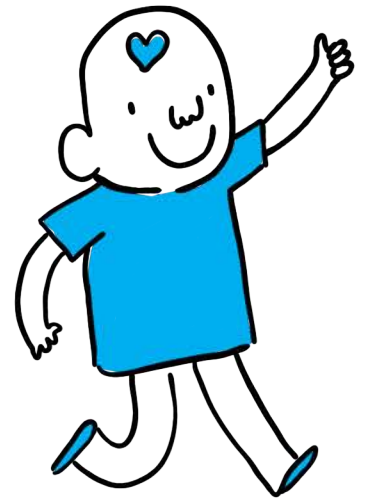


**More than a quarter** (28%) of respondents who identify as disabled felt their views were 'Always' listened to and taken seriously in the 2022 survey, up from 12.6% in 2019. However, the proportion saying this 'Never' happened was higher amongst respondents who identify as disabled (13.9% in 2019 compared with 6.1% overall, and 8.2% in 2022 compared with 4.1% overall). <sup>EV7</sup>

Awareness of children's rights amongst respondents who identify as disabled has **increased in** 2022 compared with 2019 (82.4% and 60.9% respectively). However, they reported as one of the lowest groups with 82% as opposed to 85% overall. <sup>EV7</sup>

The proportion of respondents who identify as disabled reporting 'Excellent' mental and emotional health fell from **26.5% in 2019 to 21.6%** (compared with 38.4% dropping to 26.3% for all respondents). <sup>EV7</sup>

In 2019, **one in four** (24.7%) respondents described their mental and emotional health as 'Poor', this falls to one in five (20.8%) when viewed by 2022 responses. <sup>EV7</sup>



## PARTICIPATION

By introducing, more opportunities for children to participate in decision-making, they have been empowered to influence change. This led directly to young people being actively involved in:

**The development of the Young Carers Card**

**Informing staff and shaping policy and practice through the #WhatLeavingCareShouldbe consultation**

**The Implementation of 'Mind Of My Own' to improve service design**

**Training that has allowed young people to sit on interview panels**

Care experienced children reported that they are mostly or always 'listened to and treated seriously' (59% 2022 / 51% 2019) this was higher than for the overall survey results. <sup>EV7</sup>

Half (50%) of CFC pupil respondents who identify as disabled felt their views were 'Always or most of the time' listened to and taken seriously in the 2022 survey, up from 46% in 2019. However, the proportion saying this 'Never' happened was higher amongst respondents who identify as disabled (13.9% in 2019 compared with 6.1% overall, and 8.2% in 2022 compared with 4.1% overall).

## CELEBRATING OUR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

A wide selection of free, fun activities has been delivered to disabled and care experienced children, families, and carers. These have included priority access to three festivals for children and young people, bespoke programme of events and activities including visiting Flatholm Island, driving lessons, abseiling, theatre visits, sailing and visiting Aqua Park.

# Education & Learning

## Rights Respecting Schools

### Challenge:

During the discovery phase, children & young people consistently told us “the best place to learn about rights was in school and that this should happen as early as possible.”



### Approach:

After lots of research we decided to work with UNICEF UK to implement the Rights Respecting Schools Award (RRSA) across all Cardiff schools.

Cardiff Council is working with the UK Committee for UNICEF (UNICEF UK) to embed a rights-based approach to education which helps build the values of equity, inclusion and the voice of children and young people into daily school life. It gives children the best chance to lead happy, healthy lives and to be responsible, active citizens.

The Award consists of three progressive award stages: Bronze (Rights Committed), Silver (Rights Aware) and Gold (Rights Respecting). Assessment by UNICEF UK help us ensure consistent and quality-assured delivery of provision.

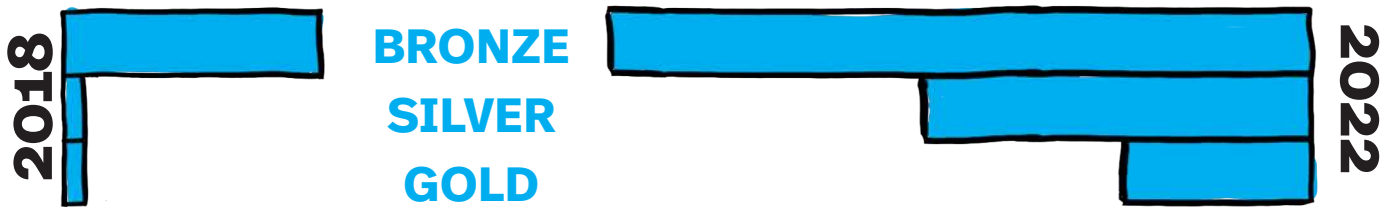
We now have a dedicated member of staff who helps coordinate the RRSA, as well as increased funding and more support to ensure as many schools as possible can progress with embedding children’s rights across school communities.

Ongoing success has now meant we are able to fund the RRSA for all maintained schools meaning that they can register, receive training, access support and be assessed for free at the point of access – the cost of the award was identified as a key barrier by schools.



## Impact:

Significantly more children now attend a school that respects and promotes children's rights, providing a safe and nurturing environment to learn and develop. Pupils report being involved in decision making more than previous years and there is an increase in pupils reporting awareness of their rights.



Cardiff now has 83 schools <sup>EV95</sup> with an action plan in place (65%)  
**46 bronze, 25 silver and 12 gold.** This is 63 more than in 2018!

Take a look on our map!



Three-quarters (76%) of primary school pupils attend a bronze, silver, or gold school. <sup>EV95</sup>

Two-thirds of respondents to our pupil survey (67%) felt that they got the chance to have their say about decisions made in their school at most or all of the time. <sup>EV7</sup>



We made a video about Cardiff's approach to supporting the RRSA with two of our amazing schools



"The commitment that Cardiff's Child Friendly team has shown towards the RRSA has enabled schools to put the UN Convention on the Right of the Child at the heart of their practice. Accreditation visits have shown strong evidence of improved wellbeing, increased confidence and engagement in learning and a greater sense of empowerment among children and young people to become active citizens in their school and beyond."

UNICEF RRSA Team

"Cardiff is the first Local authority in England and Wales to fund full RRSA access for all their schools. We are confident that this will further accelerate school's progress and enable many more children and young people to know about their rights, live and learn through rights and take action for the rights of other locally and globally"

UNICEF RRSA Team

# Education & Learning

## Cardiff Commitment

### Challenge:

During the discovery phase children and young people told us they wanted a curriculum that helped prepare them for life after school.

### Approach:

The vision of Cardiff Commitment is for all young people in Cardiff to make a successful transition from school into ongoing education, training, and the world of work – enabling them to reach their full potential.

Working with over 200 business partners, who have pledged to provide young people with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed, Cardiff Commitment has increased the available employment pathways available for pupils.

With the ongoing growth and commitment of the team and its partners, more young people across Cardiff will be empowered to take their next steps in making informed decisions about their future, and be prepared for independent living, active citizenship, and the world of work.



Impact:



There has been a **6% decrease** in pupils not making a transition to education, employment and training <sup>EV101/102</sup>

More pupils can access relevant information with an average of **1200 monthly visits** to 'What Next' platform <sup>EV110</sup>



**93%** of pupils felt able:

**“To do the best they can to learn and progress in school at least most of the time”** <sup>EV7</sup>

*reflecting the findings of the 2019 survey (90.9%)*

**65%** of pupils agree with statement-

**“My school helps me to learn about all the different jobs/ careers that I could do when I am older.”** <sup>EV7</sup>

*Primary pupils and Carers were most likely to agree (74.2% and 74.1% respectively), whilst Secondary pupils showed the lowest level of agreement at 53.9%.*

**56%** of Year 10/11 pupils stated:

**“They were satisfied with their chosen options”** <sup>EV7</sup>

*(up 10.% from 2019)*

**Over a third (36%)** agreed that their choice of course suited their abilities. <sup>EV7</sup>

Example: Children in receipt of Free School Meals, ESTYN Report 2021 <sup>EV101/102</sup>

**“Outcomes for pupils that are eligible to free-school meals (efsm) have generally been above that of the same group nationally. The proportion of esfm pupils that achieve 5A/A\* grades is notably higher than the national average. Overall, girls outperform boys across the key stages but the performance is broadly in line with that across Wales. The most notable gap between girls and boys is in literacy.”**

# Education & Learning

## Children Looked After in Education

### Challenge:

During the discovery phase it was identified that improved outcomes for care experienced children and young people should be a key focus of our work. This included their educational experience.

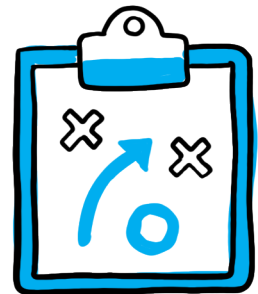
### Approach:

The Children Looked After in Education team has become bigger, better and more equipped over the last three years.



Support provided to looked after children in education (LACE) has significantly improved. Children and young people are empowered to feedback on the support they receive and shape changes. This has resulted in % of LACE reporting improved experiences in engagement and % of LACE young people accessing additional support with their education.

To help young people in care further progress with their education, Cardiff has increased the amount of mentor support they receive. They also help shape their own personal education plans (PEP), ensuring high quality education that leads into ongoing post-16 education, training, or employment.



Further steps are being taken to establish a virtual school with a real head teacher, to increase positive outcomes for looked after children and young people.

### Impact:

Comparing the findings of Looked After Children between 2019 and 2022. <sup>EVZ</sup>

The proportion reporting they were being bullied in school more than halved  
Fell from **28% to 14%**

Those reporting 'I can't get any help with my homework'  
Fell from **17% to 9%**

The proportion stating 'No-one encourages me to do well'  
Fell from **15% to 10%**.

Most Looked After Children felt they were able to do the best they can in school always or most of the time both in 2019 (87%) and 2022 (85%), broadly reflecting the overall results.

# Education & Learning

## Education for Children Seeking Asylum

### Challenge:

Our discovery phase highlighted a clear commitment to focus on the most vulnerable children and young people across all the work that we do. It became very clear that throughout the pandemic there were certain groups more impacted by the restrictions placed upon them. Those children seeking asylum were particularly impacted in a negative way.

Prior to November 2020 asylum seeker children that came to Cardiff as part of the Home Office's Initial Accommodation (IA) scheme were not eligible to apply for a school place until they were dispersed. In theory, dispersal should take place within 14 days but this is very rarely the case, especially when dealing with complex cases. We had some young people that had lived in IA for months. One young person was in IA for over a year.

Not attending school meant that children were missing out on valuable education. Having no purpose from day to day, often resulted in poor mental health and contributed to the feeling of isolation and inequality. Families often lived in small, shared accommodation and this put pressure on the family unit. In some cases, it resulted in family breakdown.

### Approach:

Cardiff Council staff who had received UNICEF training implemented a child's rights approach to developing a programme of work with this cohort. Firstly, by empowering them to identify issues and best way to address them. Secondly, by providing unique and tailored bespoke learning opportunities in the short term.

Importantly, a child's rights-based argument was used with the Home Office to seek change in guidance that enabled children seeking asylum to have access to a school place, which was not the case in the past.



## Impact:

Once children became eligible to apply for a school place, this gave them and their families some hope. They could now start on their educational journey in Cardiff. Children were now safeguarded by the school establishment and became a valuable part of the school community. Children made friends and were able to integrate with others. This also helped them to develop a sense of belonging and self-worth.



Having a structure and a routine to their day also helped support the family unit. Leading to children being safer and accessing education and wider support services as a direct result. Leading to children being safer and accessing education and wider support services as a direct result.

**38 children** seeking asylum who have been allocated a school place.

**198 children** who are seeking asylum have attended **1052** bespoke education sessions prior to being allocated a school place or being dispersed to another area. <sup>EV67</sup>

## Areas for development include:

The opportunity to better understand the impact of the work to keeping children seeking asylum safe and educated.

# Education & Learning

## Educated Other Than at School (EOTAS)

### Challenge:

Our discovery phase highlighted a clear commitment to focus on the most vulnerable children and young people across all the work that we do. Children and young people told us they were concerned for pupils who have a bad experience in school for a wide range of reasons and that no matter what happens they should still receive quality educational experiences.

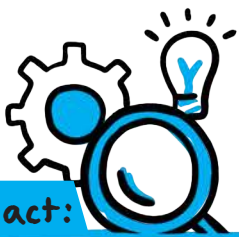
### Approach:



Our “Educated Other Than at School” (EOTAS) team have received UNICEF training and they have seen an increase in improved outcomes of their learners by setting priorities, targets and programmes of action that meet their needs and abilities.

There have been multiple improvements made over the last 4 years. Young people have been empowered with opportunities and the skills through the Young Inspector programme. This teaches them to engage with and influence policy processes and mechanisms around training provider grants. In addition, we have improved participatory practice by training and supporting young people to be involved in the interview process for key staff positions.

Thanks to new guidance, schools now submit referrals for children and young people to receive support from EOTAS provision, there is an expectation and importance placed upon capturing the views of the pupil.



This work contributed to the service being able to overcome the challenges experienced in education settings due to the pandemic, which saw **% increase** in EOTAS referrals over the last year. The team is now bigger and better equipped to support the additional children and young people.

### Impact:

Thanks to new guidance, schools now submit referrals for children and young people to receive support from EOTAS provision. There is a clear expectation and importance placed upon capturing the views of the pupil in this process to ensure that the pupils views are taken into account at the earliest possible stage. Services provided to pupils who receive their education other than at school are more aware of the needs of pupils and develop programmes based in this information. 405 young people have actively helped to design a service. Ensuring their needs remain at the heart of the service. <sup>EV61</sup>

There has been a significant reduction in EOTAS pupils not making a successful transition to employment, education or training. Falling from 27% in 2018 to 14% in 2021. However the pandemic had a significant impact as seen in the 3% increase from 2019 (9%). <sup>EV61</sup>

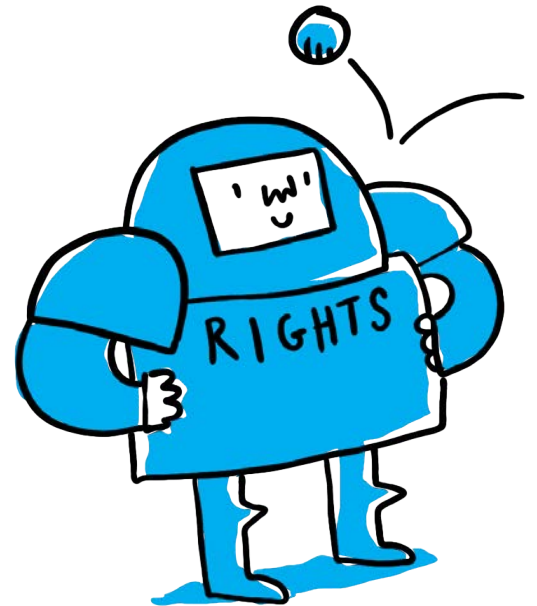
# Healthy

## A&E Safeguarding

### Challenge:

It's important to ensure that adults, as duty-bearers, protect children from harm, abuse and neglect. We call this "safeguarding" and it's so important that we put guidelines in place to make sure everyone does this to the best of their ability.

When young people go to children's A&E in Cardiff, their illness or injury is logged and shared with school nurses to support their wellbeing, and to flag anything unusual. In 2018, it was noticed that 16- and 17-year-old children were coming to adult's A&E for urgent treatment, and this meant the details of their visit were not being tracked in the same way.



### Approach:

Children aged 16 or 17 may feel more at home in adult's A&E than with very young children, but they are still protected under the UNCRC in the same way. Rather than pressuring those older children to go to the children's unit, Cardiff's Local health board has now hired new staff, and put extra guidelines in place to make sure children are safeguarded wherever they feel most comfortable. In this case, adult A&E.

### Impact:

**Better identification of safeguarding issues with 16/17 year olds at A&E presentation.**

**Between 2020 and 2021, 540 cases met the 'inclusion criteria', of which 288 required follow up referral to specialist service such as safeguarding or CAMHS. <sup>EV68</sup>**

**Between 2021 and 2022, 727 cases met the 'inclusion criteria', of which 305 required follow up referral to specialist service such as safeguarding or CAMHS. <sup>EV68</sup>**

# Healthy Active Travel

## Challenge:

During our discovery phase children and young people highlighted the importance of being able to move around the city in a healthy sustainable way. They told us that busy roads with heavy traffic made them feel unsafe, reduced the amount of play opportunities, and made it harder for them to move around the city independently.

## Approach:

Cardiff now has:



**4** Active Travel Team officers



**120** schools with an Active Travel Plan (co-produced with pupils)



**80** schools with bike fleets, improved storage facilities and training (Equality of opportunity has improved)



**Two thirds** of Cardiff roads are now 20 mph zones (with more planned for 2023).



**16** “school streets” are now in place with restricted street access at the beginning and end of school day with fixed penalty notice.



**2** high-quality, safe and fully segregated cycle networks are now in place stretching across the city with three more planned by 2026.

## Impact:

This work has helped more schools, children, young people and their families/ carers be aware of and take part in active travel. Children and young people have told us that they are active and moving with more ease and safety within their communities and across the city.

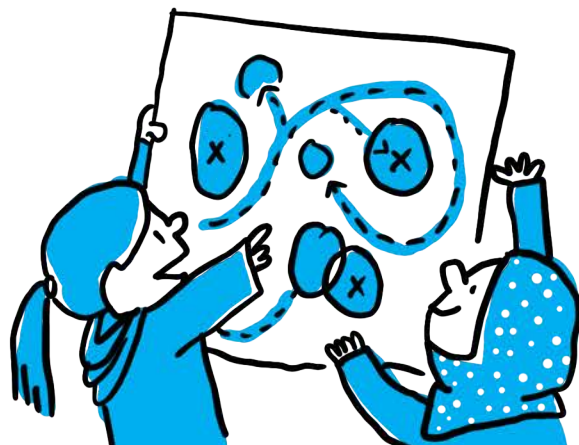
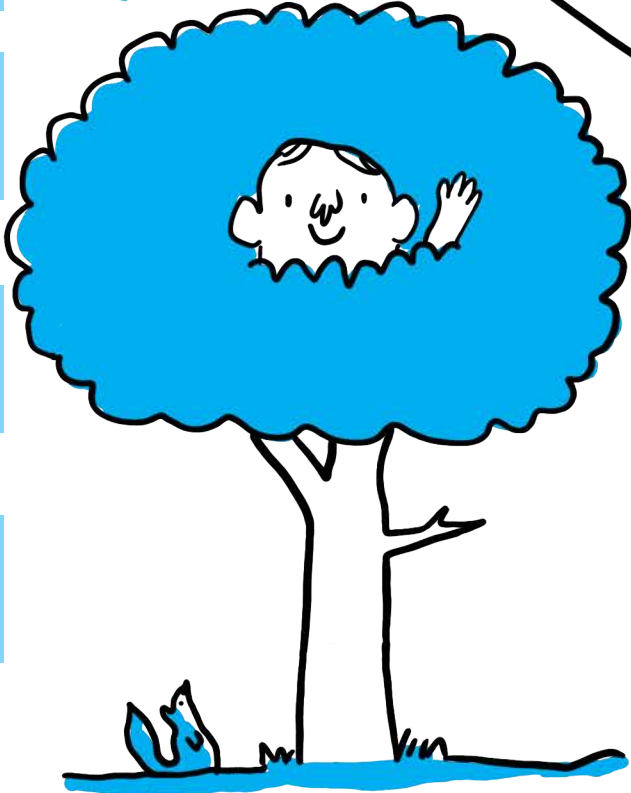


Data from the pilot phase of Safer School Streets showed a decrease in traffic flow, increase in cycling, **108%** in pedestrian usage and **23%** reduction in NO<sub>2</sub> pollution <sup>EV94</sup>

During 2018-22 on average **48%** of secondary children reported that they use active travel methods to get to school. <sup>EV83,84,85</sup>



WOW is a active travel programme run by Living Streets across 47 schools in Cardiff. Data from 6-month pilot programme January – June 2022 should an increase in active travel from **56% to 82%**. <sup>EV74</sup>



# Healthy

## Emotional Health & Wellbeing



### Challenge:

During the discovery phase children and young people frequently told us that accessing information and support for their emotional health and wellbeing was difficult and placed pressure on their lives.

### Approach:

#### Help in communities



Children and young people can get more information and support in schools



A text messaging service with School Nursing was established



Weekly school health hubs are now in place



Parents and carers can now receive better support through parent support workers

#### Upskilling and support for professionals



Specialist emotional wellbeing nurses support school nurses through training and supervision



Primary mental health workers provide consultation to Early Help teams



All professionals can now support and refer children and young people through a single point of access

#### Children and young people influencing service design



Coproducing a wellbeing-focused website



Making sure information and resources are child-friendly and reflect their needs



Shaping the direction of services by sitting on strategic planning committees



Coproducing interior designs for drop in facilities



Interviewing key staff members

## Impact:



The number of referrals to CAMHS since December 2019 has slightly declined whilst the number of referrals to Primary Mental Health has increased. As a result of earlier intervention, the data shows that the number of C&YP requiring access to more specialised mental health support has reduced.

Additionally, the service has also tried to sustain a target of 80% or above for C&YP accessing Primary Mental Health services within 28 days to help prevent mental health conditions worsening over time. <sup>EV75</sup>

This approach has helped services working together towards a common goal of identifying children and young people in need of emotional and mental wellbeing support at an early stage.

This has resulted in an increase from **125** in December 2019 to **240** in June 22 in number of children, young people accessing Emotional Wellbeing Support. <sup>EV77</sup>

Children and young people have also told us their experience of the support has improved and feel more empowered to access support for their emotional health and wellbeing. **100%** of users reported the service to be as expected or better and **96%** of users reported being satisfied or very satisfied with the online therapy service <sup>EV76</sup>

During our delivery phase the world was hit by the COVID pandemic which had a massive impact on children and young people - in Cardiff we saw the percentage of children and young people rating their emotional health and wellbeing as 'Excellent' fall from **38.4%** pre-pandemic to **26.3%** in 2022. Despite this, we have seen an increase in the number of children and young people report that they know where to access support for their emotional health and wellbeing from **75.9%** in 2019 to **80.6%** in 2022 <sup>EV7</sup>

**Consideration around emotional health will form part of the discovery phase in early 2023.**

# Healthy

## UNICEF Baby-Friendly Initiative



### Challenge:

The first chapter of a child's life is incredibly important and its responsibility of adults to ensure that infants are given everything they need for life, survival and development.

### Approach:

To help make this a reality in Cardiff, the local health board take part in something called the "UNICEF Baby-Friendly Initiative". This is a set of standards to help make sure that healthcare services can properly support families with feeding and developing close, loving parent-infant relationships, ensuring that all babies get the best possible start.

### Impact:

Cardiff's local health board have consistently achieved the highest level recognised under this initiative and hope to continue with this high-level of support in the future.

UNICEF inspections scrutinised midwifery, neonatal and health visiting all receiving positive reports from recent re-accreditation in 2021 and early 2022. In health visiting, CAVUHB achieved 90% satisfaction with over care from the health visiting service.

83% staff who were able to give effective information about breastfeeding. <sup>EV33</sup>

In the same report, CAVUHB achieved the following:

93% of mothers who confirmed that they were aware of support available and how to access this. <sup>EV33</sup>

98% of Mothers who confirmed that they had received information about the importance of close and loving relationships. <sup>EV33</sup>



## Case Study:

From our BFI "Assessment Result" in 2021 <sup>EV33</sup>

The staff at Cardiff and Vale UHB are commended for their hard work over the last three years in continuing to support mothers. It was clear to the assessment team that in many areas pregnant mothers and new mothers received a high standard of care.

There is good evidence of partnership working across the city between health visiting teams, flying start teams, maternity and Neo-natal Unit (NNU).

Mothers commented very positively about their experience of the service, including the kindness of the staff.



Two quotes from mothers interviewed:



Health Visiting remains a stage 3 Fully Accredited Baby Friendly service, we will be reassessed in Dec 2024 with the hopes of achieving sustainability "Gold Standard" in 2025. We will be submitting an internal audit to BFI in May 2023 to action a few of the recommendations from our report and health visiting submits annual audits to BFI including interviews with staff and mothers to ensure all the standards are maintained.

To capture the positive outcomes, we have 2 joint run specialist infant feeding clinics with maternity and as an infant feeding team we provide support to mothers and staff in home visits. We also have 2 breastfeeding support groups run by health visiting in the community.



# Healthy Youth Health Board



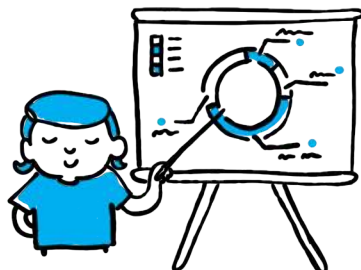
## Challenge:

Since the beginning of our journey, establishing a group of committed young people who could shape and inform decisions within health-related projects was incredibly important.

## Approach:

### Establishment of the Youth Health Board

The cornerstone of their work was the development of a rights-based charter in 2018 which is underpinned by the UNCRC and sets out the promises that the local health board have made to children and young people. The youth health board is supported by specialist staff and in order to join young people must go through an application process to ensure equality of opportunity for young people with protected characteristics.



Young people on the Youth Health Board have been empowered through a suite of training including the UNICEF youth governance module, and more staff have since joined to help support the group.

## Impact:

The YHB are really valuable to CAVUHB and participate in a lot of decision-making, such as, interviewing senior staff (including the Chief Executive), influencing the design of services and shaping policies that give the health board direction for the future.

**65%** of children recruited to Youth Board between 2018-2022 have protected characteristics. <sup>EV91</sup>

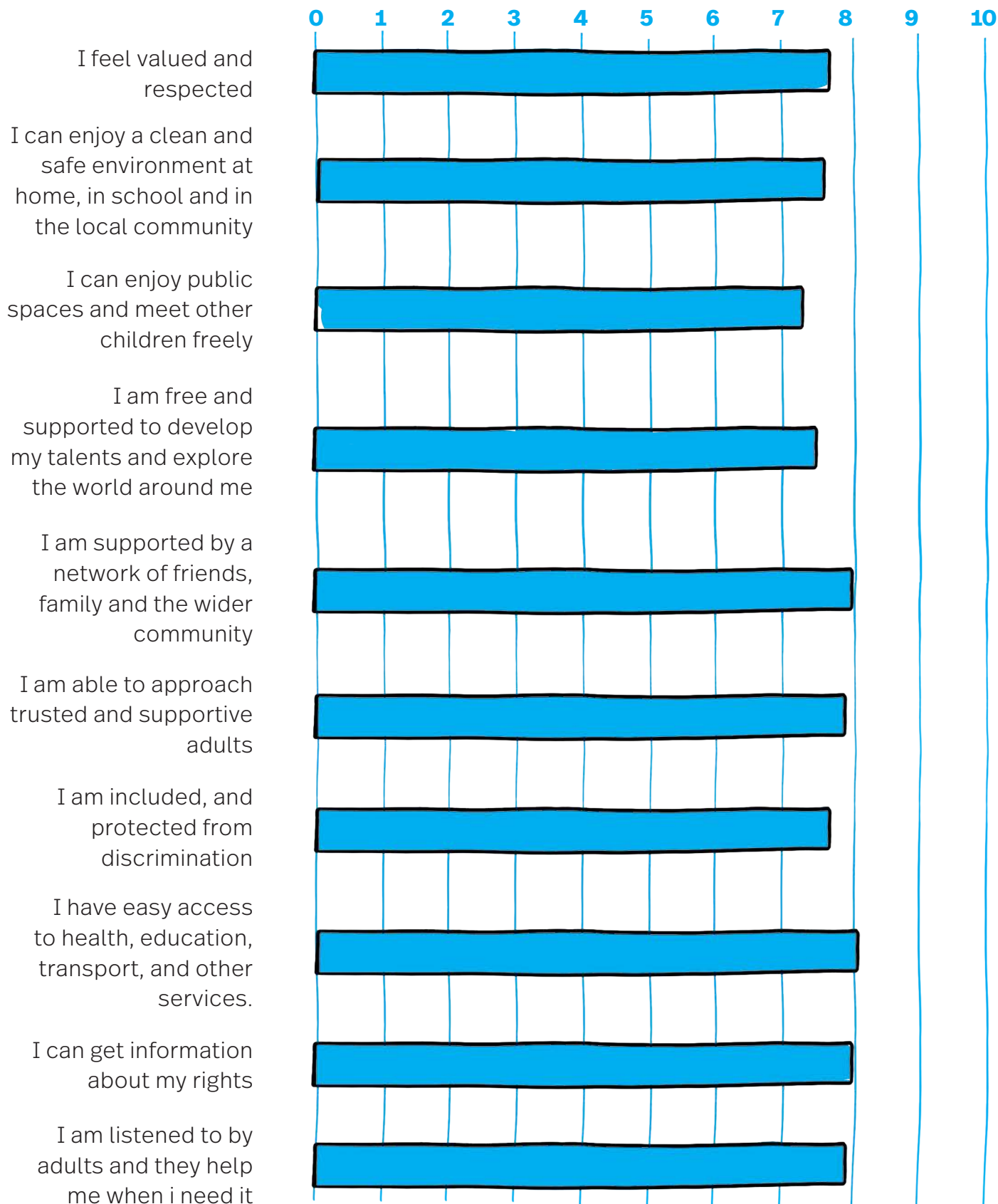
The youth health board have had **68** direct opportunities to be directly involved in UHB significant decision-making (e.g. staff appointments, policy sign-off). <sup>EV79</sup>

The Youth Health Board's perception of its ability to influence was captured in focus group findings. Generally, the YHB feel they can influence decisions made in health through meetings, interview panels and consultations. <sup>EV80,81,82</sup>

The majority of respondents reported that they felt they had the skills and opportunities to be able to influence policy and actions. <sup>EV3</sup>

# CFC Evaluation - a Snapshot in 2022

During the first half of 2022, 251 children and young people (C&YP), aged 3 – 17, responded to the CFC Evaluation Survey at events across Cardiff. The questions were asked using a sliding scale (0=Never, 10=All the time) and the average responses are shown in the graph below. <sup>EV5</sup>



# Glossary of Terms

**Action Plan** - A suggested or previously planned course of action

**Accountability** - When a person or a group of people take responsibility for an action

**Bereavement** - A strong feeling of grief about the death of a loved one

**Commissioning** - When a person or organisation is paid to do a specific piece of work

**Care experienced** - When someone has been, or is currently in the care of the council and cannot live with their family

**Child Rights Approach** - When children's rights are prioritised in the work that organisations do

**CRIA** - Children's Rights Impact Assessment

**Consultation** - When you meet with a person or group of people who are experts in a particular subject

**Core Budget** - Money that is provided yearly

**Data** - Facts and statistics which are brought together

**Digital deprivation** - When groups of people do not have access to and/or do not understand how to use technology

**Disaggregate** - To separate/ break up

**Discretionary budget** - Additional money that has been given on top of the money that is provided yearly

**Duty bearer** - Someone who has a responsibility in law

**Elected Members** - Members of the Council/parliament

**Equality** - When everything is equal

**Equity** - When everything is fair

**NEET** - Not in education, employment, or training

**Home Office** - The department within the British Government that deals with domestic affairs. Domestic affairs are anything that affects the entire country

**Informed decision** - When someone has all the necessary information to make the best decision for them

**Local Authority** - A body within the government which provides services in each local area

**Participation/Participatory activity** - The action of taking part/being involved in something

**Participation Framework** - The framework is a guide that can be used to ensure that children have their right to be heard upheld.

**Personal Education Plans (PEP)** - This is part of the care plan which all looked after children have. The PEP should be used by the school, the child's carers, and other professionals involved to support the child.

**Public Services** - A service whose purpose is to help the public and is provided by the government. Some of these services are hospitals, schools, police etc.

**Pupil Task Group** - A group where children and young people come together to complete assigned tasks

**Quality Assurance Process** - When a process is monitored to ensure that it is up to a certain standard level

**Social Action** - When people come together to help make their lives better and improve issues that are important in their communities

**Sustainable** - When a project can be maintained at a certain rate/level

**Systematically** - When something is done according to an organised plan

**Vulnerable Learners** - Some one who does not have access to or has limited access to their basic needs such as food, shelter, clothing, a safe home etc.

**Youth Advisory Board** - A group of young people who are the voice of, provide insight and raise awareness regarding children's rights and the experiences of children and young people.

**Young Carer** - Children and Young People under 18 years old with caring responsibilities. This may mean that they are providing care to their disabled parent.

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