



CHILD
FRIENDLY
CITIES &
COMMUNITIES

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Child
Friendly
Cities
Initiative

CHILD FRIENDLY CITIES & COMMUNITIES RECOGNITION ASSESSMENT OUTCOME REPORT: CARDIFF

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ABOUT

Child Friendly Cities & Communities (CFC) is a UK Committee for UNICEF (UNICEF UK) programme that works with councils to put children's rights into practice. The programme aims to support councils and their partners to embed a child rights-based approach across local strategy, policy, service delivery and public space.

Over three-to-five years a council, their local partners, and children and young people, work together on an ambitious journey towards international recognition as a UNICEF Child Friendly City or Child Friendly Community.

Child Friendly Cities & Communities is part of UNICEF's global Child Friendly Cities Initiative, which reaches over 30 million children in close to 50 countries.

SUMMARY

Over the past five years, Cardiff City, led by Cardiff City Council and partners, has been taking part in UNICEF UK's Child Friendly Cities & Communities programme, developing and implementing strategies for advancing children's rights, and working towards achieving 'Child Friendly City' status, as recognised by UNICEF.

Following assessment of the city's progress, UNICEF UK is granting Cardiff ***conditional recognition*** as a UNICEF Child Friendly City. Full and public Child Friendly City status will be granted once the city has met the following conditions:

Develop and strengthen Cardiff's Child Friendly City sustainability plan to include commitments and strategies for:

- Tackling discrimination (with special attention to youth justice, policing, school exclusions and behaviour policies and disaggregating data).
- Strengthening the 'participation loop', so children and young people understand the extent of their influence and the impact of their engagement.

ABOUT RECOGNITION

Recognition is the final stage of the Child Friendly Cities & Communities journey. Recognition signifies that UNICEF publicly *recognises* that a council and its local partners have taken significant and sustainable steps towards advancing the human rights of children and young people growing up in their community. **'Child Friendly' status recognises progress, not perfection.**

Cities or communities become eligible for recognition after implementing their CFC action plan for a minimum of 2 years. The action plan sets out how change will be achieved

across 6 thematic ‘badges’ or priority areas, which are chosen in collaboration with children and young people.

Councils and their partners are asked to demonstrate, through relevant, good quality evidence, how they have achieved the ambition set out in their CFC action plan, what they have learned, and how they plan to take forward the commitment to realising children’s rights across the city or community once ‘Child Friendly’ status has been achieved.

At the end of their programme journey, cities and communities are asked to:

- Submit documentation setting out their case for recognition.
- Submit detailed evidence against the outcomes and indicators in their CFC action plan.
- Host a live assessment, during which UNICEF UK’s independent *Recognition Advisory Panel* will hold exploratory discussions with key representatives from the city, including children and young people.

There are four possible assessment outcomes:

<p>Recognition: Child Friendly City or Community Status</p>	<p>UNICEF recognises that significant and sustainable progress towards realising rights for children and young people has been made by the council and partners.</p> <p>The council and its partners have successfully evidenced how the outcomes in their action plan have been achieved, and described appropriate, robust and convincing strategies for sustaining and building on this progress over the next three years.</p>
<p>Conditional Recognition</p>	<p>UNICEF UK recognises that significant progress towards realising rights for children and young people has been made by the council and its partners, though there are notable gaps in the evidence provided, in the case for sustainability or in practice.</p> <p>Recognition cannot be granted until UNICEF UK deems the council and its partners to have responded to recommendations, which might include completing outstanding actions, developing and strengthening the sustainability plan, or submitting missing evidence, within an agreed timeframe of <u>up to</u> 6 months. Once the conditions have been met, Child Friendly status will be granted.</p>
<p>Suspended Assessment</p>	<p>UNICEF UK determines that the council and its partners are ready to be assessed, but the evidence submitted is insufficient.</p> <p>UNICEF UK will provide recommendations and agree a timeframe with the city or community, providing more support if necessary. Once sufficient evidence has been submitted, the city or community will be assessed.</p>
<p>No Recognition</p>	<p>UNICEF UK has assessed the evidence submitted by the council and its partners. The assessment has found there to be limited progress across all six badge areas, that the quality of the evidence submitted is poor, that the sustainability plan is unconvincing, and that there is little or no demonstration of local commitment to realising rights for all children and young people across the city or community.</p>

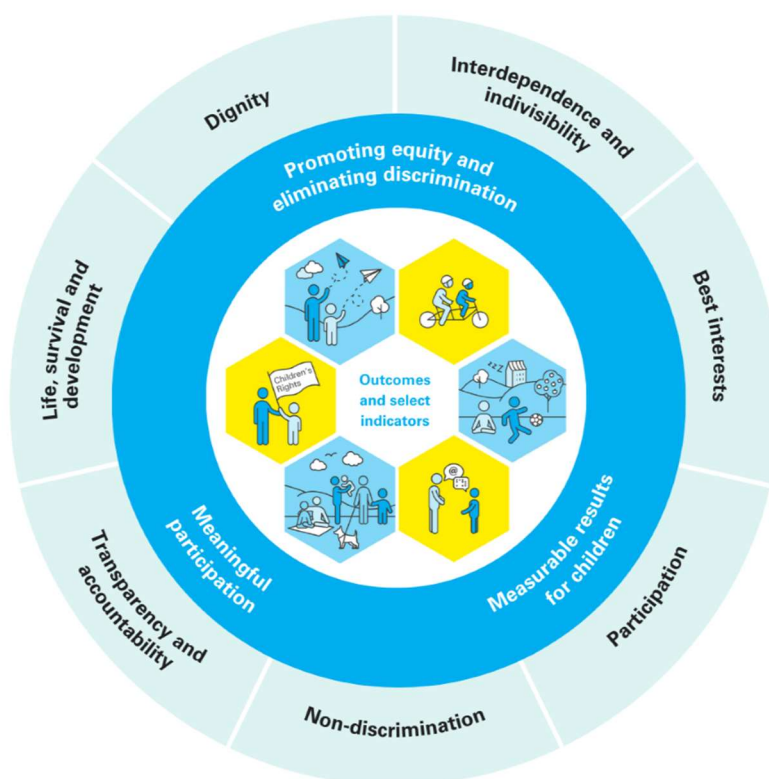
Assessment Framework

Assessment of evidence, progress and impact is carried out by UNICEF UK and scrutinised by the independent CFC Recognition Advisory Panel. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is the foundation of the CFC assessment framework. It is realised through the seven principles of a child rights-based approach:

- Dignity
- Transparency and Accountability
- the Best Interest of the Child
- Non-Discrimination
- Participation
- Life, Survival and Development
- Interdependence and Indivisibility

These principles are reinforced by the global Child Friendly Cities Initiative (CFCI) minimum criteria: **measurable results for children**, including quality, relevant, and significant data; **meaningful and inclusive child participation**; and a **demonstrated dedication to eliminating discrimination**.

Finally, the specific outcomes and indicators set out in the city's CFC action plan against locally chosen 'badges' are at the centre of the framework against which progress is assessed.



CARDIFF

Cardiff joined the CFC programme in 2017 as part of a pioneer cohort of cities and communities. The city's CFC action plan badge areas, chosen in collaboration with children and young people are: **Cooperation and Leadership, Communication, Culture, Healthy, Education and Learning** and **Family & Belonging**.

Cardiff entered the final phase of the programme in 2022. At the start of 2023, Cardiff submitted a story of change, a self-assessment setting out the city's progress and achievements; an independent evaluation capturing children and young people's views on and experiences of the city's progress; a draft sustainability plan; and approximately 120 pieces of evidence in support of local impact. Evidence included a mixture of qualitative and quantitative data, such as case studies, survey and focus group data, sample outputs such as strategies, articles and websites, service evaluations, user experience data and more. Documents and evidence were verified and assessed by the CFC team at UNICEF UK using the assessment framework.

On Tuesday 16 May 2023, over 60 representatives from Cardiff attended an online assessment day. This was a series of roundtables facilitated by UNICEF UK's independent Recognition Advisory Panel, including a roundtable for children and young people facilitated by a member of UNICEF UK's Youth Advisory Board.

The evidence submitted and presented suggests that the council and its partners have made good progress across all six priority areas. This includes:

- **Strong and sustained commitment from city leadership**, including extensive elected member engagement in training, and valued opportunities for children and young people to take part in scrutiny boards and other decision-making forums.
- **Increasing use of children's rights to frame** core local strategies, such as the corporate parenting, safeguarding and children's services plans.
- **Embedding consideration of children's rights** in the council's overarching impact assessment framework.
- **Establishing a permanent child rights unit**, a substantial commitment in economically challenging times.
- **Demonstrable commitment to making communications more accessible** and child friendly.
- **Establishing a new gateway support service** for families and carers and underpinning this practice with child rights principles.
- **Successfully advocating to the Home Office** and changing guidance to secure school places for children and young people seeking asylum.
- **Addressing barriers** that prevent some groups of children and young people from accessing services, including child refugees and children seeking asylum, care-experienced children, and children in 'education other than at school'.

- **Developing a suite of targeted support**, mentoring, resources and events for young people transitioning out of care, or out of non-mainstream education.
- **Empowering children with knowledge** of their rights at school by implementing the Rights Respecting School Award across two-thirds of the city's schools.
- **Establishing a Youth Health Board** to empower young people to influence local health policy.
- **Developing a holistic safeguarding referral protocol for** 16- and 17-year-olds attending accident and emergency services.
- **Developing holistic accessible online therapy** services for children, young people and their families in response to consultations with young people.
- **Launching a 'safer school streets'** programme and promoting active travel.
- **Enthusiastically championing children and young people across the city** and fostering an increased sense of belonging for children through child-centred festivals, play streets, story trails, and youth-led media.
- **Being accountable to children by establishing a 'Young Committee of Experts'** to understand the city's progress towards advancing children's rights from the perspective of children and young people.

The assessment also highlighted areas that require further attention:

- **Developing a comprehensive approach to tackling discrimination.** The city's participation forums are inclusive of different groups of children and young people. The city has made commendable efforts to protect the right to education for child refugees and children seeking asylum. Specific projects, such as a period poverty grant, have set out to address discrimination for some groups of young people. However, some children and young people continue to experience discrimination. For example, in its 2022 report, the prison inspectorate (HMIP) noted that a disproportionate number of black children are in contact with the youth justice service in Cardiff and are three times more likely than white children to be cautioned or sentenced for the same offence. Young people in Cardiff have shared that opportunities aren't available to all, such as public transport which is prohibitively expensive for some. The city is establishing processes for disaggregating data to better understand experiences and outcomes for different groups of children. Proposals to launch affordable travel schemes are being actively explored.
- **Strengthening the 'participation loop' so children, young people and practitioners understand the impact and influence of young people's engagement.** Cardiff has many good examples of innovative participatory practice, such as using 3D video game Minecraft to engage children and young people in city planning. Young people taking part in participation forums, such as the Youth Health Board and Children and Young People's Advisory Group, feel included, supported and heard. Across the city, more young people are aware of their rights. However, some young people don't always know what the impact of their engagement has been, the extent to which they have or haven't been able to influence a change or development in real terms. Some colleagues couldn't describe the impact of

consultations with young people. Recommendations made by the city's Young Committee of Experts were not included in the city's draft CFC sustainability plan. Closing this loop and ensuring that the scope of children and young people's influence and impact is communicated from the outset and understood by colleagues, would strengthen the city's approach to meaningful participation.

- **Expanding the shared understanding of children's rights and a child rights-based approach.** There has been a widespread embrace of 'Child Friendly Cardiff' across the city and an understanding that this is about advancing children's rights. Among some service areas, colleague groups, and organisations, this awareness extends to an embedded, practical understanding of child rights in practice. In other areas there is limited understanding, or children's rights are referred to in broad terms. Child rights principles aren't always explicitly embedded into strategies. The city engaged well with child rights training and plans to roll out a training module as part of its sustainability plan. This training should prioritise colleagues who have not yet engaged in training, and should focus on both awareness of child rights and on implementing a child rights-based approach, to ensure child rights practice continues to be embedded across the city.

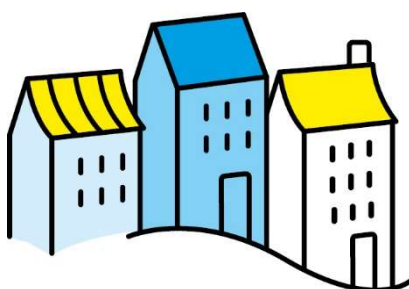
On balance, Cardiff has established an impressive child rights infrastructure, and areas of excellent, embedded child rights practice, which can be built on to address these development areas.

Cardiff is required to elaborate robust strategies for these development areas before moving to fully recognised 'Child Friendly City' status.

Badge by Badge

Each of Cardiff's badges, or priority areas, are set out over the following pages. A table summarises a selection of the specific activities and strategies that Cardiff adopted, the outcomes the city worked towards, and the indicators selected to measure progress and impact.

Each table is accompanied by commentary on the city's assessed progress.



COMMUNICATION

Impact Indicators	<p>Increase in positive stories about children and young people's achievements and experiences across the council's communication platforms</p> <p>Child-focused council events, such as the Summer of Smiles, promote the importance of childhood</p>	<p>Increase in awareness of children's rights among the city's pupils</p> <p>More schools have a child rights action plan in place</p> <p>More young people are accessing information about available help and support</p>
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Outcomes	<p>Childhood is celebrated across the city</p>	<p>Children and young people are aware of their rights and provided with accessible information across various channels to enable them to make informed decisions and be active in city life</p>
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Select Strategies	<p>Promote children's rights and celebrate children and young people through events, programmes and rights-informed communications</p> <p>Establish digital youth work team</p>	<p>Make council communication platforms accessible and raise awareness of CFC initiative and children's rights</p> <p>Teach children and young people about children's rights at school through roll-out of Rights Respecting Schools Award</p>	<p>Child rights training for council communications teams</p> <p>Create and disseminate child-friendly social media channels</p>
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CFCI Minimum Criteria	<p>Promoting equity and eliminating discrimination</p>	<p>Measurable results for children</p>	<p>Meaningful participation</p>
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Child Rights-Based Approach	<p>Dignity</p>	<p>Inter-dependence and indivisibility</p>	<p>Best interests</p>	<p>Participation</p>	<p>Non-discrimination</p>	<p>Transparency and accountability</p>	<p>Life, survival and development</p>
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Progress

Cardiff is making good progress towards embedding a child rights-based approach to communications across the city. Communications staff have engaged in child rights training and the council has invested in a 'digital youth worker' to better engage young people online.

Sprout, part of the Families First Youth Information Service, provides accessible information to young people about service provision in Cardiff. The online service is a good example of youth led communications as it was commissioned in response to young commissioners' identifying 'communication on issues that matter to us' as a gap in provision. Other good examples are Cardiff's accessible and inclusive Covid Recovery Strategy, and a Children and the Media event which took place in 2022. This was an intergenerational, multi-agency listening and learning event reflecting on representation, access to information, platforming of children's voices, addressing stigma and stereotypes and articulating children's rights.

The council is thoughtful about communicating to and with children, using animation, illustration and digital tools to deliver important messages, such as the co-creation of a safeguarding information document and animation. Across the city, a pupil survey points to an increase in children's awareness of their rights (from 77% in 2019 to 86% in 2022), and council communications continue to celebrate children and young people.

Some young people feel that messages and information about available support and opportunities are not reaching all young people, especially the most marginalised and those least engaged with council structures. Site usage data from wellbeing-focused websites for young people suggest an increase in visitors, though this evidence cannot on its own prove an increase in children and young people who are better able to access information about available support. Evidence in support of this indicator should be strengthened as Cardiff builds on the good practice established in this area.

COOPERATION AND LEADERSHIP

Impact Indicators	<p>Increase in children and young people reporting that their views are listened to and taken seriously</p>	<p>Strategy documents that demonstrate how Cardiff has embedded a child right's approach</p> <p>Leaders within the local authority are able to articulate the application/implementation of a CRBA</p> <p>Views of children and young people inform political decision-making</p>
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Outcomes	<p>Children and young people have an active role in decision-making on matters that affect them and decision-makers respect children and young people's knowledge, understanding and skills to meet their own needs now and in the future</p>	<p>The local authority is more accountable to children and young people for decisions, and for outcomes that affect their daily lives.</p>
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Select Strategies	<p>Empower young people by establishing Cardiff Young Citizen's Panel enabling children and young people to help inform policy and services.</p> <p>Improve accountability through development of youth participation network to share practice and collaborate</p>	<p>Improve participation through development of mechanisms to enable children and young people to measurably influence decision-making</p> <p>Embed the participation of children and young people in key policy and decision-making processes within the working practices of the local authority</p> <p>Work with children with lived experience to develop corporate parenting strategy</p>	<p>Children and young people participate in permanent annual processes to gather their views to influence service design and policy</p> <p>Formal participation structures are adequately resourced including staff that are trained and experienced</p>
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CFCI Minimum Criteria	<p>Promoting equity and eliminating discrimination</p>	<p>Measurable results for children</p>	<p>Meaningful participation</p>
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Child Rights-Based Approach	<p>Dignity</p>	<p>Inter-dependence and indivisibility</p>	<p>Best interests</p>	<p>Participation</p>	<p>Non-discrimination</p>	<p>Transparency and accountability</p>	<p>Life, survival and development</p>
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Progress

There has been strong and sustained commitment to achieving 'Child Friendly City' status among the city's leadership, a realistic grasp of what this means in practice and a demonstrated desire to create more influencing opportunities for children and young people. Elected Members engaged positively with child rights training early on and consequently report good and increased awareness of children's rights, and consideration of children when making decisions. The council has resourced a dedicated team to provide participation and child rights support across the city. The council has implemented CFC collaboratively with local partners such as the Third Sector Council and plans to strengthen partnership working through the Child Friendly Cardiff Pledge.

Children and young people taking part in key participation forums such as Cardiff's Children and Young People's Advisory Board, Youth Health Board and Youth Council, feel supported and feel that these groups are reflective of the city's diversity. Young people have had a direct influence in specific areas such as the creation of the 'mind hub' well-being website. Across the city, there has been an increase in children and young people feeling listened to, though some are not always sure if their views are taken seriously. Some young people are concerned that there are few opportunities for young people to influence decision-making outside of the formal participation structures.

References to child rights and the commitment to becoming a Child Friendly City are in key strategies (*Corporate Parenting Strategy; Stronger, Greener, Fairer 2022; The Voice of Children on Safeguarding 2022, All Our Futures: Youth Justice Strategy; Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy*), and there is much contained within these strategies that demonstrate work towards advancing children's rights. Some strategies have been developed in consultation with children such as the city's Corporate Parenting Strategy. The extent to which all strategies that reference child rights reflect a meaningful understanding of a child rights-based approach is not always clear, as explicit reference to child rights principles and articles is inconsistent.

Child Rights Impact Assessment has been embedded in the city's overarching impact assessment portal, ensuring that consideration of children's rights becomes a normal part of decision-making. There are innovative examples of departments across the council seeking children and young people's views, such as the planning team inviting children to influence the design of a new cancer centre through Minecraft workshops.

CULTURE

<p>Impact Indicators</p>	<p>There is a demonstrable increase in staff feeling comfortable talking about children's rights within their work.</p> <p>The workforce observe political and strategic leaders referencing children's rights and demonstrating how a child rights-based approach shapes decisions.</p> <p>Knowledge and understanding of children's rights informs operational management in their discharge of functions.</p>	<p>% of Elected Members demonstrating knowledge and understanding of UNCRC.</p> <p>% of elected members that think about how policy could affect different groups of children and their families when making decisions.</p>
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<p>Outcomes</p>	<p>Staff within the Council champion the rights and priorities of children and young people and routinely apply a child rights-based approach in their interactions with children and young people</p>	<p>Leaders of public services in Cardiff champion the rights and priorities of children and young people and cooperate in endeavouring to ensure equality and fairness for all</p>
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<p>Select Strategies</p>	<p>Build the capacity of Elected Members to be knowledgeable and confident regarding children's rights and to routinely apply a child rights-based approach in their interactions with children and young people</p> <p>Embed child rights training into Elected Members' induction and systematically deliver training thereafter through Elected Member development programme</p> <p>Establish official mechanisms for C&YP to champion and promote children's rights</p>	<p>Adopt a systematic approach to rolling out child rights training and awareness raising, with a particular focus placed on those working in our education, health and social care services</p> <p>Establish a centralised children's rights team and employ a children's rights trainer</p> <p>Ensure local workforce development plans/strategies include CR education for staff who work with or have impact on children</p> <p>Improve accountability by establishing a CFC partner network that adopts child friendly values</p>	<p>Establish a youth participation network and specific groups: Children and Young People's advisory Board, Youth Health Board</p> <p>Establish permanent mechanisms to enable children and young people to measurably influence decision-making</p> <p>Empower C&YP by running surveys to gather their views and enable better service design and policy development</p> <p>Collate and analyse disaggregated data to identify discrimination or inequality in the realisation of children's rights and develop appropriate programmes of action</p>
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<p>CFCI Minimum Criteria</p>	<p>Promoting equity and eliminating discrimination</p>	<p>Measurable results for children</p>	<p>Meaningful participation</p>
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<p>Child Rights-Based Approach</p>	<p>Dignity</p>	<p>Inter-dependence and indivisibility</p>	<p>Best interests</p>	<p>Participation</p>	<p>Non-discrimination</p>	<p>Transparency and accountability</p>	<p>Life, survival and development</p>
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Progress

Cardiff's approach to creating a culture that values and celebrates children has focused on raising knowledge and awareness of child rights among local politicians and making the built environment of the city more welcoming and playful for children and young people.

As already noted, elected members have engaged with child rights training in significant numbers (80%) and there is good self-reported knowledge and awareness of child rights among both them and council staff, with these groups reporting increased instances of considering children in decision-making and service delivery. Elected members have worked with young people as part of scrutiny boards and some report being more inclined to proactively seek children and young people's opinions, though they are not always sure how to approach this. Follow up training, focused on working collaboratively with children and young people, would be a valuable addition to Cardiff's CFC sustainability plan.

Efforts to help children feel a greater sense of belonging in the city have included festivals (see Family and Belonging) and increased opportunities for play. The city council collaborated with Play Wales to pilot a 'street play' programme, creating incidental play opportunities in a select number of streets. The pilot led to the creation of a national toolkit and the scheme is now operated in Cardiff by the city council.

Young people feel that the city is becoming more rights-based and welcoming of children, noting more green and playful spaces and more things to do. At the same time, they feel more could be done to ensure adults are consistently respectful of children in public spaces and services. Stronger evidence of children and young people's direct experience of the city's 'child-friendly' culture, particularly among marginalised groups, will be important for the ongoing assessment of impact in this area.

HEALTHY

Impact Indicators	<p>Number of 16 & 17 year olds who met the inclusion criteria and secured referral to a specialist service</p> <p>No. of safeguarding issues identified with 16/17-years-olds presenting at A&E</p>	<p>Increase in no. of children and young people who report that they are active, moving and travelling easily and safely within their communities and across the city</p> <p>% of secondary school children using active travel to school</p>	<p>Increase in number of children, young people accessing Emotional Wellbeing, School In-Reach and Early Help is increased</p> <p>% of C&YP reporting positive experience of EWSRE service</p>	<p>Increase in number of children, young people accessing Emotional Wellbeing, School In-Reach and Early Help is increased</p> <p>% of C&YP reporting positive experience of EWSRE service</p>	<p>Youth Health Board's perception of its ability to influence strategic decisions.</p> <p>No. of opportunities, and nature of Youth Board direct involvement in UHB significant decision-making (e.g. staff appointments, policy sign-off)</p>	<p>% of children with EA 2010 protected characteristics recruited to Youth Board 2018-2022.</p>
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Outcomes	<p>16 & 17 year olds are safer as result of using A&E health services</p>	<p>The built environment and transport strategies positively contributes to the overall health and wellbeing of C&YP</p>	<p>Children and young people report positive experience with service providing support with emotional wellbeing</p>	<p>Fewer children and young people develop serious mental health problems and those that do are given the best support possible in the community</p>	<p>Youth Health Board members are empowered to engage in strategic planning</p>	<p>Children with protected characteristics participate in strategic planning</p>
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Select Strategies	<p>Implement an approach to ensure the safeguarding of 16/17 year olds attending adult A&E</p> <p>Embed a process to ensure Children & Young people are supported to have their voice heard in A&E safeguarding</p>	<p>Commit to sustainable active travel plans for the City</p> <p>Ensure children can safely and regularly participate in active travel opportunities across the City</p> <p>Ensure all schools in the city either have or are working towards and Active Travel Plan</p> <p>Accessible walking and cycling routes for all schools</p> <p>C&YP are supported by teams across Emotional Wellbeing & Mental Health, School In Reach and Early Help</p>	<p>Schools are supported to embed a whole school approach to emotional and mental wellbeing as per the Welsh Government's statutory framework</p> <p>Children and young people empowered to access support for their emotional wellbeing and mental health.</p> <p>Fully embed Youth Board within UHB structures, including allocation of support/recourses.</p>
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CFCI Minimum Criteria	Promoting equity and eliminating discrimination	Measurable results for children		Meaningful participation
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Child Rights-Based Approach	Dignity	Inter-dependence and indivisibility	Best interests	Participation	Non-discrimination	Transparency and accountability	Life, survival and development
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Progress

The city has begun to apply a child rights lens to some areas of children's health. This includes establishing an inclusive Youth Health Board to empower young people to influence health policy; developing a new safeguarding multi-agency discussion and referral protocol for 16- and 17-year-olds attending accident and emergency; creating 'Safer School Streets' and championing active travel; and developing accessible online therapy services for children, young people and their families.

The Youth Health Board has co-created a health charter for the city and are pleased that so many of their ideas and experiences have been directly incorporated into this document. The charter is yet to be rolled out across the city, though there are plans in place to do so, and it will be important for young people to see the results of their efforts being implemented in a significant way.

Young people attending accident and emergency are better protected; the safeguarding protocol has led to an increase in children and young people being referred on to specialist services as a result of attending accident and emergency, where previously there was no safeguarding protocol in place.

Young people have reported that travel across the city is expensive, sometimes prohibitively so. Plans to make travel more affordable are being actively explored, such as one pound bus routes, though some young people will still find this challenging. The Safer School Streets and Active Travel schemes have led to a significant behaviour shift towards sustainable modes of travel such as walking, park and stride, cycling and a big reduction in children being driven to school; 14 out of 16 pilot schools now have permanent Traffic Regulation in place and evidence shows a reduction in NO2 pollution. These schemes have been embedded in Cardiff's One Planet strategy, and Transport, Vision and Policy Teams are starting to use child rights impact assessments to make the case for active travel. Children and young people's voices could be more present in the design, roll out and evaluation of these schemes.

Children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing has decreased over the last couple of years in line with the national trend. Efforts to raise awareness about available help and support are beginning to pay off: a school survey shows a 5% increase since 2019 in children and young people reporting that they know where to access well-being support. Some young people have reported long delays in access to mental health services and have raised concerns about the long-term impact, especially for vulnerable children. Cardiff Council has been reflective and honest about challenges in this area while pointing to a small decrease in waiting times since 2022. Efforts have been made to provide help sooner by diversifying emotional health and wellbeing provision through social prescribing, online therapy and wellbeing-focused websites for children and young people. User experience information was not made available at the time of assessment, but it will be important to understand children and young people's experience of these interventions over time.

FAMILY AND BELONGING

Impact Indicators	<p>No of enrichment activities and experiences made available to care experienced C&YP</p> <p>No of C&YP involved in co-producing strategies reflecting the principles of a child's rights approach</p> <p>No of significant policy statements that include Children's rights to life, survival and development and to be free from all forms of harm as a framework for planning and delivery</p> <p>No. of young people involved in the Corporate Parenting Strategy Refresh</p>	<p>Children and young people accessing support from the service that report they are listened to and the services meets their need</p> <p>Children, young people and families report that they receive services that meet their needs</p> <p>Number of followers on social media accessing child right's information and campaigns. Family support and interventions are informed by capturing the views of C&YP</p>	<p>Number of Multi-Agency Referral Forms and Public Protection Notices submitted to MASH that are assessed and stepped down to Early Help services</p>	<p>Number of male carers and significant others attending FS groups and engaging in contact with professionals</p>	<p>Number of parents of Children with a range of needs who responded to online questionnaire</p> <p>Range of services specifically aimed to support parents/carers with a wide range of needs</p>	<p>Perinatal services and infant and parent mental health – are improving multi-disciplinary approaches for expectant parents and parents with infants, to enable early intervention in emotional and mental health support</p>	<p>Knowledge and understanding of children's rights has a positive impact on their practice</p>
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Outcomes	<p>Children and young people in our care have the best possible life experiences, are safe, happy and healthy, and achieve their full potential at school and in their future lives</p>	<p>The rights of the child are at the heart of service delivery and are evident in the assessment, engagement, information and support provided to children and young people</p>	<p>Families are able to access the right support, at the right time which will prevent them from reaching crisis point and escalating to intervention from statutory services</p>	<p>All parents and carers are offered support and help with bringing up children in their care. This includes, male carers, same sex carers, foster carers, grandparents, and/or any significant member of a family with caring responsibilities</p>	<p>Parenting Services are inclusive of parents of children with a range of needs</p>	<p>Children with complex needs for example ALN, care experienced benefit from integrated early years services that meets their needs at the right time</p>	<p>Staff are skilled and confident in implementing a Child Rights Based Approach in their practice</p>
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Select Strategies	<p>Embed youth participation standards in Early Help Teams</p> <p>Commit to achieving Family First Quality Award</p> <p>Use media channels to promote information, advice and assistance to young people and families</p> <p>Include the voice of the infant, child or young person when providing parenting support/intervention with parent</p> <p>Frame Early Intervention and prevention services in children's rights</p>	<p>Centre lived experience of children and young people in delivery of family support services</p> <p>Make family support services more inclusive of male carers</p> <p>Embed a child rights-based approach in the Early Years pathfinder pilot</p> <p>Use a right-based, attachment, relational and trauma informed approach in family support services</p>	<p>Commission courses that focus on the mental health and wellbeing of children, such as Youth Mental First Aid or Assessing Suicide in Kids (ASK) and Supporting LGBTQ+ and Young People</p> <p>Provide child rights-based approach training and development for the Early Years, Early Help, childcare and wider children and family's workforce</p>
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CFCI Minimum Criteria	Promoting equity and eliminating discrimination	Measurable results for children	Meaningful participation
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Child Rights-Based Approach	Dignity	Inter-dependence and indivisibility	Best interests	Participation	Non-discrimination	Transparency and accountability	Life, survival and development
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Progress

A child rights-based approach is being applied in some services for children and their families and efforts are being made to include care-experienced children and young people in positive events and strategic decision-making.

City-wide festivals have taken an inclusive approach such as designing elements of the festivals with a neurodiversity lens and subsidising places for care-experienced children. Care-experienced children were involved in the development of both the Corporate Parenting and Children's Services Strategies, with over 250 children taking part in consultation activities. Information about the impact of these events and engagements on these groups of children and young people was not available at the time of assessment.

Cardiff's Early Help and Family Advice and Support Teams have engaged positively in child rights training, and child rights principles have been included in service approaches. The service is child-centred, and children and young people have described positive experiences of using the service. Tools for engaging with children and young people are routinely used in service delivery, including the Mind Of My Own tool for young people, and a template to help practitioners understand the views of infants.

Services to support parenting and caring in Cardiff have been developed with different experiences in mind, such as specific consultation and provision for those whose children have additional support needs. Inclusive communications have led to an increase in male carers and significant others accessing the Early Help service. An even broader approach to inclusion would strengthen this good practice.

The family of every newborn child in Cardiff now receives a UNCRC booklet, an idea that came from a young person who is now promoting the scheme to Welsh Government.

EDUCATION AND LEARNING

Impact Indicators	% of schools are engaged with the Rights Respecting Schools Award	% Young People making a successful transition into Education, Employment or Training	Individual YP's stories reporting improved support with their well-being and education	% of children seeking asylum who are allocated a school place	% of children seeking asylum who are allocated a school place	No of young people in Education Other than at School (EOTAS) involved in service design
	% of primary school pupils who attend a bronze, silver, or gold school	Number of Pupils reporting that they are better prepared for work – thorough evaluations (open your eyes week and case studies)	Number of Children Looked After accessing additional mentoring support with their education	Number of bespoke education sessions delivered to children seeking asylum 2018-2020		
	% of Cardiff pupils aware of children's rights	Number of visits to What's Next platform	% of Children Looked After with a Personal Education Plan that they have been actively involved in			
	% of pupils in Cardiff who feel they are treated with respect by adults "most of time" or "all of the time"					

Outcomes	Children know their rights, feel valued and heard and are active citizens in local and global communities	Children and young people have good access to information about jobs in economic growth sectors, are better prepared for the world of work, can make the most of their talents and develop to their fullest potential - ensuring they make a successful transition into education, training, or employment after school	The education experience of Looked After Children is improved by providing high quality, well-supported school places to meet their needs and ensuring that they are assisted to progress after school into ongoing education, training or employment	Children seeking asylum have their right to an education met through access to school place	Children seeking asylum are safer as a result of attending school	Pupils in EOTAS settings are involved in service design and receive high quality education and support that allows them to progress to education, employment, or training

Select Strategies	Work with employers to create opportunities for children and young people to experience work				Embed issues identified by children and young people in Corporate Parenting Strategy, including Education
	Establish a forum for businesses to come together to create work experience opportunities for young people		Support and train children and young people with lived experience of being in EOTAS on to how to participate and influence policy		Establish a mentor support programme for children Looked After
	Establish learning and employment information hub 'What's Next'		Secure the rights of children seeking asylum to apply for a school place through advocacy to Home Office and Welsh Government		Make the Rights Respecting Schools award available to all Cardiff schools.
	Empower C&YP through participation in EOTAS decision making and service design processes				

CFCI Minimum Criteria	Promoting equity and eliminating discrimination	Measurable results for children			Meaningful participation
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Child Rights-Based Approach	Dignity	Inter-dependence and indivisibility	Best interests	Participation	Non-discrimination	Transparency and accountability	Life, survival and development
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Progress

Cardiff is demonstrably approaching Education and Learning through a child rights lens. Activity includes: teaching and empowering children and young people with knowledge of their rights at school through UNICEF UK's Rights Respecting School Award (RRSA); developing a suite of targeted support for care experienced children and those in education other than at school (EOTAS); resources (What's Next? website for future choices) and events (online opportunities such as 'Open your eyes week') to empower and support children and young people's choices and transitions out of school and EOTAS; successfully advocating to Welsh Government and the Home Office and changing guidance to secure all access to school places for all children seeking asylum, while developing bespoke education support for this group of children during the advocacy process.

Work is underway to improve experiences of local service provision with and for some marginalised groups of children and young people, work which has coincided with a decrease in children who are not in education, employment, or training since 2018. An innovative 'Passport to the City' scheme, launched in collaboration with the University of Cardiff, gives children the opportunity to access informal learning through art, leisure and cultural experiences across the city. The scheme is especially aimed at children for whom these experiences may not be affordable or accessible.

Some young people have noted that children not attending an RRSA school will not have the same opportunities to learn about their rights. Some young people also feel that children's rights are not always respected in school, with some instances of children being treated differently than others because of background or ability. Some young people raised concerns about school support for care-experienced children. There has been a small reduction in this group of children feeling bullied.

Some young people have asked for more support with transitions out of school. The 'Cardiff Commitment', a scheme to bring together schools, youth workers and local businesses to connect young people with job opportunities and help them develop new skills, is driving progress in this area, and there has been a 6% decrease in pupils not making a transition to education, employment or training.

Looking at education and learning through the principle of non-discrimination, Cardiff's work to secure school places for refugee children and children seeking asylum is commendable. Cardiff is a City of Sanctuary and has extended this commitment into schools. The city is aware of the links between school exclusions, care experience and contact with youth justice services, and proactively reviews data to pick up on trends at the city and national level. However, some groups of children are still disproportionately affected by school exclusions and behaviour policies which is mirrored by disproportionately in the justice system. Some young people have asked for more consideration of neurodivergent children in school settings.

CHILD FRIENDLY CITIES & COMMUNITIES IS A UK COMMITTEE FOR UNICEF (UNICEF UK) PROGRAMME THAT WORKS WITH COUNCILS TO PUT CHILDREN'S RIGHTS INTO PRACTICE.

The programme aims to create cities and communities in the UK where all children – whether they are living in care, using a children's centre, or simply visiting their local library – have a meaningful say in, and truly benefit from, the local decisions, services and spaces that shape their lives.



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