



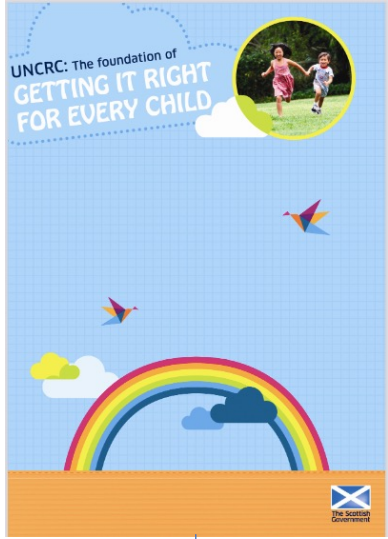
## Learning *Through* Rights in the Early Years:

### Weaving the UNCRC through Policy, Provision and Everyday Practice

**“Quality settings have... a skilled workforce who engage in continuous learning and development to better understand and meet the needs and rights of young children”**

Realising the Ambition, Pg. 84

# Weaving the UNCRC through Policy, Provision and Everyday Practice



'The Wellbeing indicators are aligned with the range of rights specified by the UNCRC to enable all children and young people to grow, develop and reach their full potential.'

'These Health and Social Care Standards [...] seek to ensure that individuals are treated with respect and dignity, and that the rights we are all entitled to are upheld.'

'Quality settings have... a skilled workforce who engage in continuous learning and development to better understand and meet the needs and rights of young children.'

"The ethos and culture of our setting demonstrates a strong commitment to children's rights."  
"Each child is considered as an individual with their own needs and rights."

'In developing this framework, we recognise that children's rights are central to every aspect of care, play and learning provision across all service types.'

The purpose of this document is to help practitioners engage with UNCRC articles and develop an understanding of how children's rights translate from policy into meaningful, everyday experiences for babies and children. As the UNCRC already underpins key ELC documents & national guidance, the content of this document should not be new, but rather reinforce what we know to be best practice in Early Years.

*"Rights are not an add on, they are woven through every aspect of the ethos and provision of the service. Staff interactions with children are loving and caring and support children to understand their rights, not as an activity to be planned but as an **everyday experience.**" Doreen Watson (Care Inspectorate)*

# Learning through Rights in the Early Years: A Rights-Based Approach

“Babies and young children first learn about their rights *through* their experiences.

Long before young children can understand the concept of children’s rights, they can develop a sense of their own agency, through their relationships [...and] environment.”

**Rhona Matheson,  
Starcatchers Chief  
Executive**

“...from an early age children are finding out about their rights, often through the way others treat them”

**Dr. Rosemary Roberts,  
Pre-Birth to Three Guidance**

High quality  
Early Years  
experiences

Learning *about* rights

- I help other people learn about rights
- I recognise when my rights are not being respected
- I can talk about my rights
- I can respect the rights of others
- I understand that I have rights

Learning *through* rights

- I have a sense of empathy
- I understand what is fair and unfair
- I have self-confidence and self-respect
- I have been made to feel valued and listened to
- I have been able to make choices and feel important
- I have a sense of belonging and identity
- I have been treated with respect, fairness and dignity
- I have adults who I can trust and rely on

Before young children are able to understand the abstract concept of ‘having rights’ or talk about rights, they need direct experience of their rights being met, enacted and prioritised within their everyday interactions, spaces and experiences.

Focusing on learning *though*, rather than *about* rights, supports ELC settings to develop a ‘[rights-based approach](#)’ that strives to make children’s rights an integral and tangible aspect of their aims, values and everyday practice.




The UNCRC is an international agreement made up of 54 articles which protect the rights of children up to the age of 18. It recognises not only their basic human rights but gives them additional rights to protect them from harm as one of the most vulnerable groups in society. While it is important that practitioners familiarise themselves with all 54, this document focuses on the articles that are principally relevant to ELC provision, and aims to illustrate how they can translate into everyday practice and experiences. Information regarding the layout of the document is illustrated below.

A range of first-person statements illustrating how a child can experience the UNCRC article through meaningful, everyday experiences

Child-friendly UNCRC article title

Brief summary of the UNCRC Article from Children & Young People's Commissioner Scotland  
<https://cypcs.org.uk>

Key Health & Social Care Standards that link to the UNCRC article

UNCRC Article	How children can experience this right in ELC	SHANARRI Link
<p><b>Article 3 - The right to have adults that do what is best for you</b></p> <p>Adults should think about the <b>best interests</b> of children and young people when making choices that affect them.</p>	<p>-I know I have adults who care for me and work hard to give me the help and support I need as an individual</p> <p>-I have formed positive and trusting relationships with adults</p> <p>-Even when I can't explain how I am feeling, I have adults that will work hard to help me and do what's best for me</p>	<p>I am respected</p>  <p>I am included</p>  <p>I am healthy</p> 

The Well-being indicators are aligned with the range of rights specified by UNCRC (UNCRC: The Foundation for GIRFEC pg.8)


**Health & Social Care Standards:**

- 1: I experience high quality care and support that is right for me
- 1.6 I get the most out of life because the people and organisation who support and care for me have an enabling attitude and believe in my potential.
- 3: I have confidence in the people who support and care for me
- 3.8 I can build a trusting relationship with the person supporting and caring for me in a way that we both feel comfortable with.

**Possible policy & procedure links:**

- Aims and values
- Admissions & settling in policy
- Promoting positive behaviour policy
- Personal care plan policy
- First aid policy & procedures
- GIRFEC

Helpful links for settings who wish to reference and embed UNCRC articles within their own policies & procedures<sup>4</sup>

UNCRC Article	How children can experience this right in ELC	SHANARRI Link
<p><b>Article 2- Rights for all</b></p> <p>Article 2 says all children have the rights set out in the UNCRC, and individual children and young people shouldn't be discriminated against. This covers both direct and indirect discrimination.</p> <p><b>Non-discrimination</b> is one of the four general principles of the UNCRC</p>	<p>-I see all adults and children being treated with consistent kindness, fairness and respect</p> <p>-I receive the care and support I need regardless of my ethnicity, background, gender, religion, language, abilities or any other status</p> <p>-The adults who care for me aware of the rights I am entitled to and their responsibilities as duty-bearers</p>	<p>I am respected</p> 

**Health & Social Care Standards:**




1.1 I am accepted and valued whatever my needs, ability, gender, age, faith, mental health status, race, background or sexual orientation.

1.2 My human rights are protected and promoted and I experience no discrimination.

4.3 I experience care and support where all people are respected and valued.

**Possible policy & procedure links:**

- Aims and values
- Admissions & settling in policy
- Equal opportunities policy
- Equality and inclusion policy
- Promoting positive behaviour policy




UNCRC Article	How children can experience this right in ELC	SHANARRI Link
<p><b>Article 3 - The right to have adults that do what is best for you</b></p> <p>Adults should think about the <b>best interests</b> of children and young people when making choices that affect them.</p> <p><b>Best interests of the child</b> is one of the four general principles of the UNCRC</p>	<p>-I know I have adults who care for me and work hard to give me the help and support I need as an individual</p> <p>-I have formed positive and trusting relationships with adults</p> <p>-Even when I can't explain how I am feeling, I have adults that will work hard to help me and do what is best for me</p>	<p>I am respected</p>  <p>I am included</p>  <p>I am healthy</p> 

**Health & Social Care Standards:**

- 1: I experience high quality care and support that is right for me
- 1.6 I get the most out of life because the people and organisation who support and care for me have an enabling attitude and believe in my potential.
- 3: I have confidence in the people who support and care for me
- 3.8 I can build a trusting relationship with the person supporting and caring for me in a way that we both feel comfortable with.

**Possible policy & procedure links:**

- Aims and values
- Admissions & settling in policy
- Promoting positive behaviour policy
- Personal care plan policy
- First aid policy & procedures
- GIRFEC

UNCRC Article	How children can experience this right in ELC	SHANARRI Link
<p><b>Article 6 - The right to survive, grow and develop</b></p> <p>Article 6 of the UNCRC recognises that all children and young people have the right to survive and the right to develop.</p> <p><b>The right to survive and develop</b> is one of the four general principles of the UNCRC</p>	<p>-I am given the support I need to learn, grow and thrive as an individual</p> <p>-The adults that care for me have the resources, knowledge and skills to help me lead a healthy life</p> <p>-The adults that care for me observe me as I play and make plans to help develop my skills, interests and extend my learning</p> <p>-The adults that care for me record my milestones and share my next steps with my caregivers</p>	<p>I am nurtured</p>  <p>I am healthy</p>  <p>I am achieving</p> 

**Health & Social Care Standards:**



1.6 I get the most out of life because the people and organisation who support and care for me have an enabling attitude and believe in my potential.

1.30 As a child, I have fun as I develop my skills in understanding, thinking, investigation and problem solving, including through imaginative play and storytelling.

1.28 I am supported to make informed lifestyle choices affecting my health and wellbeing, and I am helped to use relevant screening and healthcare services.

**Possible policy & procedure links:**

- Aims and values
- Personal care plan policy
- First aid policy & procedures
- GIRFEC
- Curriculum rationale

UNCRC Article	How children can experience this right in ELC	SHANARRI Link
<p><b>Article 7 - The right to a name</b></p> <p>Article 7 of the UNCRC says that all children and young people have the right to a name and nationality, which they should be granted at birth. It also says that they have a right to – as far as possible – know and be cared for by their parents.</p>	<p>-The adults who care for me learn my name and make sure to pronounce it correctly</p> <p>-I see my name and hear my name being used positively, helping me develop self-confidence and a sense of belonging</p> <p>-I have a named space to safely store my belongings</p> <p>-I am able to use my name to register my attendance and show ownership of things I have created</p>	<p>I am respected</p>  <p>I am included</p> 

**Health & Social Care Standards:**

3.10 As a child or young person I feel valued, loved and secure.

3.13 I am treated as an individual by people who respect my needs, choices and wishes, and anyone making a decision about my future care and support knows me.




3.6 I feel at ease because I am greeted warmly by people and they introduce themselves.

5.3 I have an accessible, secure place to keep my belongings.

**Possible policy & procedure links:**

- Admissions & settling in policy
- Display policy
- Personal care plan policy
- Promoting positive behaviour policy






UNCRC Article	How children can experience this right in ELC	SHANARRI Link
<p><b>Article 8 - The right to an identity</b></p> <p>Article 8 of the UNCRC is about a child or young person's name, nationality and family relationships. It says that the government shouldn't interfere with a child or young person's right to any of these. It also says the government should be able to help if any of these things are taken from them illegally.</p>	<p>-I am encouraged to develop my sense of self by making choices and explore interests</p> <p>-The adults who care for me are interested in finding out about me, my family, my culture and my interests</p> <p>-I have my identity recognised, represented and celebrated within the environment (e.g. through picture books, resources, photographs, drawings etc.)</p> <p>-Events and milestones that are important to me are celebrated and shared</p>	<p>I am respected</p>  <p>I am nurtured</p>  <p>I am included</p> 

**Health & Social Care Standards:**

- 1.29 I am supported to be emotionally resilient, have a strong sense of my own identity and wellbeing, and address any experiences of trauma or neglect.
- 3.13 I am treated as an individual by people who respect my needs, choices and wishes, and anyone making a decision about my care knows me.
- 3.5 As a child or young person, I am helped to develop a positive view of myself and to form and sustain trusting and secure relationships.

**Possible policy & procedure links:**

- Display policy
- Admissions & settling in policy
- Personal care plan policy

UNCRC Article	How children can experience this right in ELC	SHANARRI Link
<p><b>Article 12- The right to be listened to</b></p> <p>Article 12 says that the opinions of children and young people should be considered when people make decisions about things that involve them. Their opinions shouldn't be dismissed out of hand on the grounds of age. They should be taken seriously, with their <b>evolving capacities</b> taken into account.</p> <p><b>The right to be listened to</b> is one of the four general principles of the UNCRC</p>	<p>-The adults who care for me actively listen to what I have to say</p> <p>-My thoughts and ideas are recorded in different ways and displayed where I can see and interact with them</p> <p>-I have the opportunity to make meaningful choices and lead my own learning</p> <p>-My ideas are valued and acted upon</p> <p>-I have a say in decisions that impact me, both big and small</p>	<p>I am respected</p>  <p>I am responsible</p>  <p>I am included</p> 



Health & Social Care Standards:

3.1 I experience people speaking and listening to me in a way that is courteous and respectful, with my care and support being the main focus of people's attention.

3.22 I am listened to and taken seriously if I have a concern about the protection and safety of myself or others, with appropriate assessments and referrals.

2.11 My views will always be sought and my choices respected

- Possible policy & procedure links:**
- Aims and values
  - Curriculum rationale
  - Play policy
  - Planning & observation cycle
  - GIRFEC




UNCRC Article	How children can experience this right in ELC	SHANARRI Link
<p><b>Article 13 - The right to share thoughts and feelings</b></p> <p>Everyone has the human right to express themselves, and Article 13 of the UNCRC makes it clear that this includes children and young people. People should take special care to make sure that very young children and children with additional support needs can also express themselves.</p>	<p>-I am encouraged to express myself and share my thoughts and opinions on a wide range of subjects</p> <p>-I am given the opportunity to share what I know, think and feel in a range of ways</p> <p>-I have the freedom to choose how I share my thoughts and feelings</p>	<p>I am respected</p>  <p>I am included</p> 

**Health & Social Care Standards:**

- 1.9 I am recognised as an expert in my own experiences, needs and wishes
- 2.11 My views will always be sought and my choices respected
- 3.1 I experience people speaking and listening to me in a way that is courteous and respectful, with my care and support being the main focus of people’s attention.

**Possible policy & procedure links:**

- Aims and values
- Curriculum rationale
- Planning & observation cycle
- Personal care plan policy
- Promoting positive behaviour policy
- GIRFEC

UNCRC Article	How children can experience this right in ELC	SHANARRI Link
<p><b>Article 14 - The right to form your own thoughts and beliefs</b></p> <p><b>Article 14</b> of the UNCRC says that children and young people are free to be of any or no religion. Their parents can help them make decisions around religion, but:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-a parent can't force a child or young person to adopt a religion, and</li> <li>-a parent can't force a child or young person to stop following a religion.</li> </ul> <p>Children and young people shouldn't be discriminated against because of their religion. They should be treated the same as everyone else, no matter what they believe.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-I am given the opportunity to learn about my own and other faiths in a range of ways, eg. celebrations, stories, art, music, dance and food</li> <li>-The adults that care for me are interested in learning about my culture and the traditions I share with my family at home</li> <li>-I am learning to respect and celebrate differences</li> </ul>	<p>I am respected</p>  <p>I am responsible</p>  <p>I am included</p> 




**Health & Social Care Standards:**

1.1 I am accepted and valued whatever my needs, ability, gender, age, faith, mental health status, race, background or sexual orientation.

1.37 My meals and snacks meet my cultural and dietary needs, beliefs and preferences.

**Possible policy & procedure links:**

- Personal care plan policy
- Aims and values
- Curriculum rationale



UNCRC Article	How children can experience this right in ELC	SHANARRI Link
<p><b>Article 15 - The right to be with friends and be part of a group</b></p> <p>Article 15 of the UNCRC makes it clear that – like all people in the world – children and young people have the human right to <b>freedom of association</b>.</p>	<p>-I have the opportunity to choose who I play and spend time with each day</p> <p>-I enjoy sharing unhurried mealtimes with my friends</p> <p>-I regularly have the opportunity to be part of a group</p> <p>-The adults who care for me create opportunities for me to collaborate and have meaningful interactions with others, including my siblings</p>	<p>I am responsible</p>  <p>I am included</p>  <p>I am active</p> 

**Health & Social Care Standards:**

- 1.35 I can enjoy unhurried snack and meal-times in as relaxed an atmosphere as possible.
- 2.18 I am supported to manage my relationships with my family, friends or partner in a way that suits my wellbeing.
- 2.15 I am enabled to resolve conflict, agree rules and build positive relationships with other people as much as I can.
- 2.19 I am encouraged and supported to make and keep friendships, including with people my own age.

**Possible policy & procedure links:**

- Aims and values
- Curriculum rationale
- Play policy
- Snack & mealtime prodeedures



UNCRC Article	How children can experience this right in ELC	SHANARRI Link
<p><b>Article 16 - The right to privacy</b></p> <p>Article 16 of the UNCRC makes it clear that children and young people have the <b>right to privacy</b>, just like adults do.</p>	<p>-I have somewhere to go when I want to have quiet time by myself</p> <p>-My privacy and dignity are respected by the adults that care for me</p> <p>-I am learning that my body belongs to me and there are parts of my body that are private</p> <p>-Through everyday experiences and interactions, I am learning how to respect the personal space and privacy of others</p>	<p>I am respected</p>  <p>I am safe</p> 

**Health & Social Care Standards:**

- 1.26 I can choose to spend time alone.
- 1.4 If I require intimate personal care, this is carried out in a dignified way, with my privacy and personal preferences respected.
- 3.13 I am treated as an individual by people who respect my needs, choices and wishes, and anyone making a decision about my future care and support knows me.
- 5.2 I can easily access a toilet from rooms I use and can use this when I need to.

**Possible policy & procedure links:**

- GDPR policies
- Promoting positive behaviour policy
- Play policy
- Intimate care policy & procedures

UNCRC Article	How children can experience this right in ELC	SHANARRI Link
<p><b>Article 17 - The right to information</b></p> <p>Article 17 of the UNCRC says children and young people should be able to access information, particularly from the media. They should be able to get information from many places— from their country and beyond.</p>	<p>-I have adults that listen to my questions and help me find out the answers</p> <p>-I have access to a wide range of appropriate resources that help me learn new information such as non-fiction books and digital technologies</p> <p>-Adults share information about important events with me and listen to what I think</p> <p>-The adults that care for me make sure the media I consume is appropriate for my age and stage</p>	<p>I am respected</p>  <p>I am safe</p> 

**Health & Social Care Standards:**


2.9 I receive and understand information and advice in a format or language that is right for me.

2.11 My views will always be sought and my choices respected

4.27 I experience high quality care and support because people have the necessary information and resources.

**Possible policy & procedure links:**

- Curriculum rationale
- Aims and values
- Technologies policy

UNCRC Article	How children can experience this right in ELC	SHANARRI Link
<p><b>Article 19 - The right to be protected</b></p> <p>Article 19 of the UNCRC makes it clear that children and young people have the basic human right to dignity. This means they have the right to be protected from violence, just like everybody else.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-The adults who care for me take actions to protect me and keep me safe</li> <li>-The adults who care for me show me how I can help keep myself and others safe</li> <li>-With support, I am learning to manage my own risks</li> <li>-I learn about people in my community who help keep everyone safe</li> </ul>	<p>I am safe</p> 

**Health & Social Care Standards:**

2.25 I am helped to understand the impact and consequences of risky and unsafe behaviour and decisions.

3.20 I am protected from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities.



3.22 I am listened to and taken seriously if I have a concern about the protection and safety of myself or others, with appropriate assessments and referrals made.

3.25 I am helped to feel safe and secure in my local community.

**Possible policy & procedure links:**

- Child protection policy
- Accident and incident policy
- Risk assessments
- GIRFEC





UNCRC Article	How children can experience this right in ELC	SHANARRI Link
<p><b>Article 23 - The right to be included</b></p> <p>All children and young people have the right to be safe and happy. When a child or young person has a disability, people should make sure it does not get in the way of this.</p>	<p>-My environment and the resources within it are accessible to all</p> <p>-I am learning what is fair and unfair</p> <p>-Everyone is given the opportunity to take part in activities and experiences</p> <p>-I am given the support I need to learn and grow as an individual</p>	<p>I am included</p>  <p>I am respected</p> 

**Health & Social Care Standards:**

- 1.9 I am recognised as an expert in my own experiences, needs and wishes.
- 1.11 I can be with my peers, including other people who use my service, unless this is unsafe and I have been involved in reaching this decision.
- 5.1 I can use an appropriate mix of private and communal areas, including accessible outdoor space, because the premises have been designed or adapted for high quality care and support.
- 5.11 I can independently access the parts of the premises I use and the environment has been designed to promote this.

**Possible policy & procedure links:**

- Aims and values
- Curriculum rationale
- Equality & inclusion policy
- Personal care plan policy




UNCRC Article	How children can experience this right in ELC	SHANARRI Link
<p><b>Article 24 - The right to good health, clean water and healthy food</b></p> <p>Article 24 of the UNCRC says that healthcare for children and young people should be as good as possible, and also goes further than this by saying children and young people have the right to be both physically and mentally fulfilled.</p>	<p>-The adults that care for me have the resources, knowledge and skills to help me lead a health life</p> <p>-I enjoy drinking and using clean water everyday</p> <p>-I am encouraged to help prepare and make choices about the foods I eat</p> <p>-I am learning about where different foods come from and how food can keep my body strong and healthy</p> <p>-I am learning how to listen to and look after my body</p>	<p>I am healthy</p>  <p>I am nurtured</p> 

**Health & Social Care Standards:**

- 1.24 Any treatment or intervention that I experience is safe and effective.
- 1.28 I am supported to make informed lifestyle choices affecting my health
- 1.33 I can choose suitably presented and healthy meals and snacks, including fresh fruit and vegetables, and participate in menu planning.
- 1.38 If appropriate, I can choose to make my own meals, snacks and drinks, with support if I need it, and can choose to grow, cook and eat my own food
- 1.39 I can drink fresh water at all times.

**Possible policy & procedure links:**

- Health & wellbeing policy
- Health & safety procedures
- Snack and mealtime policy
- Personal care plan policy
- Administering medication policy
- GIRFEC

UNCRC Article	How children can experience this right in ELC	SHANARRI Link
<p><b>Article 27 - The right to food, clothing and a safe environment</b></p> <p>Article 27 of the UNCRC says that children and young people should be able to live in a way that helps them reach their full physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social potential.</p>	<p>-There is always a variety of healthy food to eat at snack and lunchtime</p> <p>-I have access to clean clothes when I need them</p> <p>-The adults that care for me make sure the spaces I use are safe and clean</p> <p>-I help the adults that care for me look after the environment</p>	<p>I am healthy</p>  <p>I am nurtured</p>  <p>I am safe</p> 

**Health & Social Care Standards:**

1.33 I can choose suitably presented and healthy meals and snacks, including fresh fruit and vegetables, and participate in menu planning.

5.17 My environment is secure and safe.

5.19 My environment has plenty of natural light and fresh air, and the lighting, ventilation and heating can be adjusted to meet my needs and wishes.

5.22 I experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy and well-maintained premises, furnishings and equipment.

**Possible policy & procedure links:**



-Health & wellbeing policy

-Risk assessments

-Health & safety procedures

-Snack and mealtime policy

-Intimate care policy

UNCRC Article	How children can experience this right in ELC	SHANARRI Link
<p><b>Article 28 - The right to learn</b></p> <p>Article 28 of the UNCRC says that all children and young people have the right to education no matter who they are.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-I am encouraged to take risks and try new things</li> <li>-The adults that care for me know how to support my development and plan my next steps</li> <li>-I am given the opportunity to learn new skills and develop my understanding in a variety of ways</li> <li>-The adults that care for me help me and my family prepare for the next stage of my education</li> </ul>	<p>I am achieving</p>  <p>I am nurtured</p> 

**Health & Social Care Standards:**

1.30 As a child, I have fun as I develop my skills in understanding, thinking, investigation and problem solving, including through imaginative play and storytelling.




1.6 I get the most out of life because the people and organisation who support and care for me have an enabling attitude and believe in my potential.

1.27 I am supported to achieve my potential in education

2.27 As a child, I can direct my own play and activities in the way that I choose, and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable for my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity.

**Possible policy & procedure links:**

- Aims and values
- Curriculum rationale
- Planning and observation cycle
- Promoting positive behaviour policy
- Transition policy
- Technologies policy
- Play policy
- Equality & inclusion policy
- GIRFEC

UNCRC Article	How children can experience this right in ELC	SHANARRI Link
<p><b>Article 29 - The right to develop interests and talents</b></p> <p>Article 29 of the UNCRC says that a child or young person’s education should help their mind, body and talents be the best they can.</p> <p>It should also build their respect for other people and the world around them.</p>	<p>-The adults that care for me observe me as I play and make plans to help develop my interests and extend my learning</p> <p>-I have the opportunity to lead my own learning</p> <p>-My interests and talents are recognised and celebrated in a variety of ways</p> <p>-I am encouraged to keep going even when I find a task challenging</p> <p>-I am learning important life skills such as how to protect the environment and respect others</p>	<p>I am achieving </p> <p>I am active </p> <p>I am responsible </p>



**Health & Social Care Standards:**

2.22 I can maintain and develop my interests, activities and what matters to me in the way that I like.

2.27 As a child, I can direct my own play and activities in the way that I choose, and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable for my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity.

**Possible policy & procedure links:**

- Aims and values
- Curriculum rationale
- Planning and observation cycle
- Play policy



UNCRC Article	How children can experience this right in ELC	SHANARRI Link
<p><b>Article 30 - The right to celebrate your own culture and home language</b></p> <p>Children and young people who belong to a minority group have the right to share their culture, language and religion</p>	<p>-I see representation of myself, my family and my home life within the environment</p> <p>-The adults that care for me want to learn about my culture and celebrate it with me</p> <p>-I have access to texts in my home language</p> <p>-I am able to share words, songs and rhymes from my home language with my friends</p>	<p>I am respected</p>  <p>I am included</p> 

**Health & Social Care Standards:**

- 2.9 I receive and understand information and advice in a format or language that is right for me.
- 2.10 I can access translation services and communication tools where necessary, and I am supported to use these.
- 3.1 I experience people speaking and listening to me in a way that is courteous and respectful, with my care and support being the main focus of people's attention.
- 4.3 I experience care and support where all people are respected and valued.

**Possible policy & procedure links:**

- Admissions & settling in policy
- Curriculum rationale
- Equality & inclusion policy
- Personal care plan policy

UNCRC Article	How children can experience this right in ELC	SHANARRI Link
<p><b>Article 31 - The right to relax, play and take part in cultural and creative activities</b></p> <p>Article 31 of the UNCRC says that children and young people have the right to have fun and rest in the way they want to</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-I have the freedom to choose how and where I play without frequent or unnecessary interruption</li> <li>-When I am tired, I have the choice to rest in a comfortable, quiet space</li> <li>-I have the freedom to choose to play inside or out each day</li> <li>-I have access to variety of different spaces and resources to suit my wants and needs (busy/quiet, inside/outside, wet/dry)</li> <li>-I have the opportunity to access and engage in a wide range of cultural and creative experiences involving food, drama, music, art, dance &amp; nature</li> </ul>	<p>I am active</p>  <p>I am included</p> 

**Health & Social Care Standards:**



1.31 As a child, my social and physical skills, confidence, self-esteem and creativity are developed through a balance of organised and freely chosen extended play, including using open ended and natural materials.

2.27 As a child, I can direct my own play and activities in the way that I choose, and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable for my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity.

5.20 I have enough physical space to meet my needs and wishes.

**Possible policy & procedure links:**

- Aims and values
- Curriculum rationale
- Play policy
- Sleep and rest policy
- Planning & observation cycle

UNCRC Article	How children can experience this right in ELC	SHANARRI Link
<p><b>Article 39 - The right to support &amp; care</b></p> <p>Article 39 of the UNCRC says children and young people have the right to recover from difficult things that happen to them, and that they can expect to receive the help that allows them to do so.</p>	<p>-I can go to an adult for help if I am distressed or have been hurt</p> <p>-The adults that care for me have the resources, knowledge and skills to help me when I have been hurt, upset or face potential harm</p> <p>-I know that adults are not allowed to cause me harm</p>	<p>I am healthy</p>  <p>I am safe</p> 


**Health & Social Care Standards:**

- 1.24 Any treatment or intervention that I experience is safe and effective.
- 3.17 I am confident that people respond promptly, including when I ask for help.
- 3.18 I am supported and cared for sensitively by people who anticipate issues and are aware of and plan for any known vulnerability or frailty.
- 3.21 I am protected from harm because people are alert and respond to signs of significant deterioration in my health and wellbeing, that I may be unhappy or may be at risk of harm.
- 3.24 If I might harm myself or others, I know that people have a duty to protect me and others, which may involve contacting relevant agencies.

**Possible policy & procedure links:**

- First aid policy & procedure
- Accident & incident policy
- Health & wellbeing policy
- Administering medication policy
- Risk assessments
- Personal care plan policy
- Promoting positive behaviour policy
- Child protection policy
- GIRFEC



UNCRC Article	How children can experience this right in ELC	SHANARRI Link
<p><b>Article 42 - The right to know your rights</b></p> <p>Article 42 of the UNCRC says that all children, young people and adults should know about the Convention.</p> <p>People should think about ways to make sure everyone knows about the Convention, regardless of their age.</p>	<p>-The adults that care for me are knowledgeable about the UNCRC and can help me and my family learn about my rights</p> <p>-The adults that care for me build the ‘language of rights’ into our everyday interactions, eg. “They have the right to play there too”</p> <p>-I am learning to respect the rights of others through everyday interactions</p> <p>-I know that I have adults that can help me if I feel worried, unwell, unhappy or unsafe</p>	<p>I am respected</p> 

**Health & Social Care Standards:**

- 1.2 My human rights are protected and promoted and I experience no discrimination.
- 2.3 I am supported to understand and uphold my rights.
- 3.10 As a child or young person I feel valued, loved and secure.
- 4.1 My human rights are central to the organisations that support and care for me.

**Possible policy & procedure links:**

- Curriculum rationale
- Aims and values
- CLPL policy
- Health & wellbeing policies

# Learning *about* Rights in the Early Years

The grid contains the following events and numbers:

- Autumn:** Diwali (30), BBC Children in Need (23), Road Safety Week (19), Universal Children's Day (2), Christmas (42).
- Winter:** Lunar New Year (30), Burns Night (31), Hanukkah (14).
- Spring:** Eid-al-Fitr (30), Earth Day (29), Transition (17), Friendship Day (15).
- Summer:** World Health Day (24), Easter (14), Mother's Day (3), World Ocean Day (24), Pride month (2), Happy Father's Day (3).

## Article 42 - The right to know your rights

As I explore the rights which I and others are entitled, I am able to exercise these rights appropriately. I show respect for the rights of others. **HWB 0-09a (CFE, Early Level)**

In addition to learning *through* rights, practitioners can further enhance children's experiences by talking *about* rights in a way that is both meaningful and developmentally appropriate for young children.

Using the seasonal events and celebrations that are already part of your Long-Term Plan can be an engaging way to introduce children to the rights they are entitled to and/or the values that underpin them. However, it is important these experiences remain relevant and meaningful to the families and community you work with to avoid appearing tokenistic.

# Talking about Rights with Young Children

“Rights are **a list of promises** to children and young people to keep them safe. They are used to make sure you are treated fairly and looked after properly. When something is called a right, it means that nobody can take it away from you”. *Children and Young People’s Commissioner Scotland*



“The UNCRC states that children should know about the convention and the rights within it and that grown-ups have a responsibility to help children understand their rights. However, this can feel like a big and abstract concept for practitioners, parents and carers to explain to children, particularly in the early years. How do we begin to open up these conversations about rights in a way that is fun, engaging and age appropriate?”

At Bookbug, we believe that picture books are the best place to start. [...] The Children's Parliament explains children's rights as things that all children need to feel **healthy, happy** and **safe**. That gives us lots of scope for fun and creativity when exploring children's rights with our little ones!”

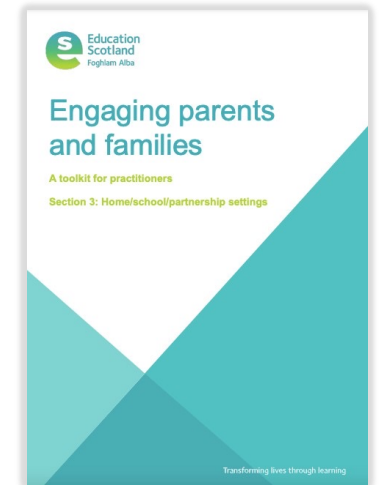
**Bookbug, Scottish Book Trust**

[Children's Rights through picture books \(Scottish Book Trust\)](#)

# Talking about Rights with Parents & Carers

Both the UNCRC and Scotland's [National Parenting Strategy \(2012\)](#) recognise the central role family plays in the growth, protection and development of children. Both place a responsibility on parents to ensure children's rights are defended and met, but also recognise that families may require practical support to meet and understand their child's rights, needs and aspirations. An integral part of our role as '[duty bearers](#)' is to provide this support to parents and families.

'We want to ensure that Scotland's parents have the skills, knowledge and respect to provide support with confidence.' National Parenting Strategy, 2012



Education Scotland's [Engaging Parents and Families: A toolkit for practitioners](#) provides links to research, examples of practice and advice to help settings achieve and sustain high levels of parental involvement and meaningful engagement within their settings. There are also resources and practical examples of how to promote children's rights among parents on CEC's [UNCRC Early Years Padlet](#).

In our role as duty bearers, we must also be mindful of the special rights and protections vulnerable groups are entitled to. For instance, Article 20 of the UNCRC requires that, 'Children who are separated from their parents have the right to special protection and help.' Information regarding the Scottish Government's efforts and plans to protect and support vulnerable groups can be found using the links below:

[The Promise Scotland](#)

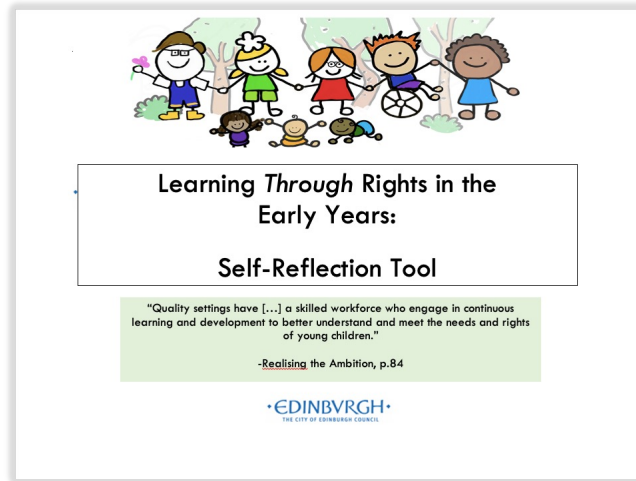
[Additional Support for Learning in the Early Years](#)

[National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland](#)



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
gov.scot

# Supporting Documents & Resources



## Learning Through Rights in the Early Years: Self Reflection Tool

A self-reflection tool has been created alongside this document to further support settings who wish to evidence and evaluate their current provision and practice in terms of children's rights. Both these resources are intended to help practitioners engage with the UNCRC articles and illustrate how children's rights can translate into meaningful everyday experiences for babies and young children.



## Rights-Based Approach in the Early Years CLPL Padlet

This CEC Early Years Padlet collates key documents, guidance, links and resources to support settings develop and deliver a rights-based approach. This is a working document that will be updated and maintained by the CEC Early Team. If you would like to add any supporting documents or examples of children's rights being championed in your setting, please email: [nicole.1.torrens@ea.edin.sch.uk](mailto:nicole.1.torrens@ea.edin.sch.uk) and [earlyyears@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:earlyyears@edinburgh.gov.uk)

Weblink: <https://bit.ly/3BVy48b>

# UNCRC Child-friendly Glossary

Word/phrase	Child-friendly definition	Useful links
Rights	<p>“Rights are things that all children <b>need</b> to feel healthy, happy and safe” <i>Children’s Parliament</i></p> <p>“Rights are <b>a list of promises</b> to children” <i>CYPC Scotland</i></p>	<p><a href="#">Children’s Rights through picture books (Scottish Book Trust)</a></p>
Rights are universal	Rights are for everyone, everywhere and always	<p><a href="#">Activities to Explore Human Rights with Children 3-5</a> (Amnesty International)</p>
Rights are unconditional	You will always have rights no matter what you do or say	
Rights are inalienable	No one can lose their rights or take your rights away	<p><a href="#">Child-friendly UNCRC Scotland video</a></p> <p><a href="#">Free Rights of the Child Poster</a> (CYPCS)</p>
Respect	Acting in a way that shows <b>you care</b> about something or someone. You can respect others, yourself, the environment and resources by treating them with love and care.	<p><a href="#">Sesame Street: Word on the Street</a></p> <p><a href="#">Picture books that promote inclusion &amp; diversity</a></p> <p><a href="#">Early Years book topics</a></p> <p><a href="#">Picture books to promote empathy</a></p>
Inclusion	Everyone is welcome and made to feel like they belong.	
Anti-discrimination	Helping people feel healthy, happy and safe; no matter who they are, where they live, what they look like or what their lives are like.	
Protection	Protection is something that helps you to feel safe from harm.	<p><a href="#">Picture books about safety and protection</a></p>