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Related documents

Children's Rights & Wellbeing Screening Sheet, Child Protection Policy, EDI Policy and Action Plan.

Starcatchers: who we are in the context of children's rights and wellbeing

Starcatchers is Scotland's Arts and Early Years organisation. It offers innovative, beautiful, collaborative arts and creative experiences that babies, toddlers and young children aged 0-5 can share with their parents and carers. Engaging with and participating in these activities brings joy and wonder and fosters the understanding that very young children are creative agents with their own capabilities and voices. Placing the child's voice at the heart of everything we do also means looking after things that are central to children's wellbeing. This means making strong choices to actively support diversity and inclusion so that all babies can grow up in a more equal and just society. It also means a commitment to climate action, carbon reduction and new models of sustainable working.

Starcatchers was founded to provide our youngest children with the opportunity to experience theatre and the arts. Integral to that was the belief that all children, regardless of their age and stage of development, have a right to access arts and cultural life as outlined in Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). This belief is unwavering. As Scotland incorporates the UNCRC into domestic law, our resolve to ensure that all our youngest children have access to age-appropriate, quality arts and cultural experiences is reinforced. We believe that Scotland should be the best place in the world to grow up and that Starcatchers, as Scotland's Arts and Early Years organisation, has an integral role to play in achieving this goal.

We recognise all children have human rights and that children's rights recognise that special provisions are needed to help our youngest citizens access their rights. We take a children's rights-based approach in our strategic planning and in our delivery. Children's rights underpin our strategic priorities that govern the company's new Business Plan for 2024 on. We recognise Scotland's commitment to children's rights and the incorporation and implementation of the UNCRC through the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) bill.

This impact assessment will ensure children's rights and wellbeing are explicitly front and centre in our project planning, delivery and evaluation, and that all services have a positive impact on children's rights and wellbeing. Individual activities will need specific measures when looking at impacts on different groups of children and young people, and the differing interests between children and the adults around them. This will help Starcatchers mitigate against possible negative impacts on children and young people by ensuring all team members have a sound knowledge of children's rights, wellbeing, and the implementation of the UNCRC. All staff have completed the Scottish Government's [training](#) and will continue to do so annually. Starcatchers will continue to run regular in-house and external training with specificity on babies' rights and perinatal wellbeing.

Overview and Aims of a Children's Rights & Wellbeing Impact Assessment

A Children's Rights & Wellbeing Impact assessment (CRWIA) gives the company a thorough process through which to identify, research, analyse and record the anticipated impact of any activities or other measures on children's human rights and wellbeing. These impacts can be direct or indirect; short, medium or long-term; they can also be positive, negative or neutral. Scottish Government guidance includes all children from birth up to the age of 18, this includes individual children, groups of children and collective children's services. Starcatchers extends this to cover children pre-birth and young people up to 25, given the additional protections and vulnerabilities of the individuals with whom we work. This CRWIA effects babies, children and young people across Scotland who participate in Starcatchers' activities, including children from all six of the Scottish Government's priority families and those living in areas of multiple deprivations and/or rural isolation.

Consultation with babies, children, young people and other stakeholders

Babies and very young children were involved in this CRWIA through our regular, consistent contact each week in the areas in which they live. The Starcatchers' team use arts-based methods for gathering communication from pre-verbal and non-verbal children, using research-based 'Engagement Signals' developed in conjunction with the University of Strathclyde. This practice is being developed through a research project with the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, 'Towards an arts-based framework for consultation/participation with pre-verbal and non-verbal children'. Consultation with young people under 25 takes place through surveys, committee meetings, interviews regularly throughout the year and focuses on the impact of activities on social outcomes including rights and wellbeing.

How this CRWIA will impact on rights and wellbeing

The CRWIA provides a mechanism for the company to plan, check and monitor that its activities respect and promote children's rights as outlined in the UNCRC, and that activities support the national SHANARRI wellbeing indicators. Starcatchers aims to provide equal opportunities to participation and works regularly with babies, children and young people with a range and intersectionality of protected characteristics (specifically age, sex, pregnancy/maternity and also those with differing disabilities and from diverse ethnicities).

Different groups will need different measures depending on needs. For example, we ensure that activities include age-specific session times for those under 2 years old, and that public performances are accessible to the youngest audiences (eg: buggy park/level access, changing facilities, feeding-friendly, lighting/sound levels). This keeps our activity safe and nurturing for the specific ages and needs of babies, children and young people.

Which Articles and Indicators are impacted by Starcatchers

Starcatchers has four pillars of activity:

1. Community Engagement
2. Producing & Touring
3. Professional Development
4. Advocacy

This activity supports the four General Principles of the UNCRC in the following ways:

Article 2 - Non-discrimination: this article upholds the right of all children to live without discrimination of any kind. Starcatchers' community engagement activity is free to access and all babies and young children are welcome accompanied by their parent or carer. Our performances are toured to arts venues and community spaces across Scotland. While there is a ticket price applicable in public venues, Starcatchers works with local partners to be able to offer opportunity to those for whom the ticket price is a barrier to facilitate attendance. Our Wee Inspirations and other resources are freely available to download from the Starcatchers website.

Article 3 - Best interest of the child: this article ensures that the best interests of the child are the primary consideration in matters that affect them. Starcatchers' work is developed and delivered with the voice, needs and interests of babies and young children at its heart. Our productions are inspired by the ideas and materials that fascinate and stimulate the curiosity of our youngest children. We test these productions with babies and young children and tailor them to meet their emotional and developmental needs. Our community engagement programmes respond to the interactions with and observations of babies and young children so that the activities that are offered are age and stage appropriate as well as being inspired by the community who form the group. Our training programmes and activities for the Early Learning and Childcare workforce though designed for adults, is inspired by young children and the desire that they access rich early childhood experiences within early learning.

Article 6 – The right to life, survival, and development: every child has the right to optimal development and Starcatchers' rich, creative childhood experiences can contribute to our youngest children having the best start in life. These experiences support attachment, and bonding, as well as social and emotional development supporting the creation of a strong foundation for life that can be built from as they grow up.

Article 12 – The right to express views and for them to be heard: The views, interests, and perspectives of the babies and very young children we connect with are considered across the work that is developed and delivered. While the views of our youngest children are often overlooked because they do not yet have language, we know that they are constantly communicating their thoughts and feelings, expressed through facial

expressions, movement, vocalisation etc. We respond to what the young children share with us, and this informs that content and direction of the work we create for and with them.

General Comment No 7 (2005) was shared by the UN Committee to facilitate greater understanding of how the UNCRC can be realised in Early Years. The General Comment sets out how our youngest children can access and enjoy their rights and much of this text is relevant to Starcatchers.

<https://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs/AdvanceVersions/GeneralComment7Rev1.pdf>

The activities of the organisation positively affect the following specific articles of the UNCRC and the GIRFEC principles:

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)	Scottish Government's GIRFEC principles (GIRFEC)
Our work supports implementation of the UNCRC and has particular relevance to the Articles listed below. Articles should never be considered in isolation.	GIRFEC is central to all government policies which support children, young people and their families and is delivered through services and people who work with families.
Article 2 – The right to non-discrimination	Child-focused
Article 3 – The right that all decisions are made with the best Interests of the child at the heart	Wellbeing (SHANARRI) approach
Article 5 – Role of the adult in realising children's rights	Early intervention
Article 6 – The right to life, survival and development	Joined-up working
Article 12 – The right to express views and have these views heard	
Article 13 – The right to freedom of expression	
Article 29 – The right to develop through education	
Article 31- The right to play, rest, leisure and access the arts and cultural life	

Analysis of each service and how it is supporting the Articles of the UNCRC is listed below:

Starcatchers' activities	Priority & Goal	Delivery and Beneficiaries	UNCRC articles and GIRFEC principles
Community Engagement	<p>To ensure that babies, toddlers and young children can access the arts</p> <p>By</p> <p>Connecting artists and communities in activities that support early childhood development, infant-adult wellbeing and creative confidence</p>	<p>Continued delivery of:</p> <p>Expecting Something in SW Edinburgh, arts-based group sessions for babies up to 2 years old and their parents/carers.</p> <p>Play & Explore in Cowdenbeath and Dunfermline, arts-based group sessions for young parents up to age 25 and their babies.</p> <p>Musical Explorers, Kirkcaldy, arts-based group sessions for families with babies and very young children.</p> <p>Continued programming of the Baby Studio in Westside Shopping Plaza, Wester Hailes Edinburgh. Engaging with babies and their families pre-birth to 5 years old offering whole family wellbeing support and integrating with the local ELC settings, family support agencies, and health providers.</p>	<p>Articles 2, 3, 5, 6, 12, 13, 29, 31</p> <p>Child-led Wellbeing Early Intervention Joined-up Working (GIRFEC)</p>
Professional Development: Early Years Workforce training	<p>To ensure that babies, toddlers and young children can access the arts</p> <p>By</p> <p>Increasing the creative confidence and capacity of the early years workforce through artist-led training, resources and projects.</p>	<p>Continued delivery of:</p> <p>Creative Skills programme for Early Learning & Childcare practitioners, indirectly benefitting the babies and young children in their care across Scotland.</p>	<p>Articles 2, 3, 5, 6, 29, 31</p> <p>Child-led Wellbeing Early Intervention Joined-up Working (GIRFEC)</p>

Starcatchers' activities	Priority & Goal	Delivery and Beneficiaries	UNCRC articles and GIRFEC principles
Producing & Touring: New Work Development	<p>To create exceptional arts experiences for our youngest children.</p> <p>To ensure that babies, toddlers and young children are able to access the arts.</p> <p>By</p> <p>seeding, nurturing and growing new productions for the 0-5 age group by commissioning artists who have ambitious artistic visions for creating work for young children</p>	<p>Bounce/Every Colour of Light - Stephen Deazley Bounce is an interactive music performance for babies aged under 24 months, with original score. Every Colour of Light is inspired by the book of the same name.</p> <p>Float - Kerry Cleland A space to experience together as adult and baby. For babies birth-12 months in Wester Hailes, Edinburgh.</p> <p>Out of the Box - Skye Reynolds A performative experience for early years.</p> <p>Island - Heather Fulton A new live performance experience for babies.</p> <p>Falling Star Community show development led by Kirsty Pennycook.</p>	<p>Article 31</p> <p>Child-focused (GIRFEC)</p>
Producing & Touring: PlayFund	<p>To create exceptional arts experiences for our youngest children</p> <p>By</p> <p>supporting artists to research new ideas for early years audiences</p>	<p>Current roster of supported artists/projects:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rachel Colles and Fiona Ferrier (Dirliebane Theatre Company). • Lucy McGreal. • Ben Winger. • Niloo-Far Khan and Sarmed Mirza. • Jude Williams. 	<p>Article 31</p> <p>Child-focused (GIRFEC)</p>

Starcatchers' activities	Priority & Goal	Delivery and Beneficiaries	UNCRC articles and GIRFEC principles
Professional Development: PlaySpace programme	<p>To create exceptional arts experiences for our youngest children</p> <p>By</p> <p>providing inspiration and support for artists creating work for our youngest children</p>	<p>Labs for artists to meet up, collaborate, share and explore new ideas in work for babies and young children. Various Scottish locations.</p> <p>Practical training sessions including Children's Rights, Trauma-informed practice, Child Protection, Anti-Racism, Climate Action.</p> <p>Artist Mentoring and shadowing opportunities with Creative Skills and Community Engagement programmes.</p> <p>Go and See visits to international festivals.</p>	<p>Article 42</p> <p>Child-focused Wellbeing (GIRFEC)</p>
Advocacy	<p>To advance children's right to engage with and participate in arts and cultural experiences from birth.</p> <p>To amplify young children's agency and voice.</p> <p>By</p> <p>Taking a children's rights-based approach</p>	<p>Methodology project in partnership with Cattanach and Royal Conservatoire of Music continues with Principal Investigator Dr Rachel Drury and Research Assistant Claire Ruckert. <i>An Arts-Based Methodology for Consultation/Participation with Pre-Verbal and Non-Verbal Children</i></p> <p>Conference and presentation appearances, delivery of mentoring to children's theatre organisations.</p> <p>Indirect benefit to babies, children and young people across Scotland as skills are shared in gathering the voices of pre-verbal and non-verbal children, ensuring organisations and service providers are confident to amplify children's rights in practice.</p>	<p>Articles 2, 3, 5, 6, 12, 13</p> <p>Child-focused Wellbeing Joined-up Working (GIRFEC)</p>

Starcatchers' activities	Priority & Goal	Delivery and Beneficiaries	UNCRC articles and GIRFEC principles
Organisational sustainability	<p>Develop and implement a business model that fosters a sustainable approach, ensuring a long-term future for Starcatchers</p> <p>By</p> <p>Aligning with robust principles and targets for Equalities, Diversity & Inclusion, Net Zero, Fair Work, Children's Rights</p>	<p>Continue to diversify staff, Board and artists engaged with the organization.</p> <p>Implement new committees for participants and artists to feed directly into planning and governance-level voice.</p> <p>Continue to uphold good practice in our Fair Work approach and to share our learning with others.</p> <p>Invest in strategic development activities in the Wester Hailes area, led by a Creative Babies Artist, to inform the concept of a Centre of Excellence model.</p> <p>Continue to generate income through the 12 identified avenues in the Business Model.</p> <p>Continue to fundraise effectively from a diverse range of private and public funders.</p> <p>Seek funding opportunities to take performance work currently in development into production and touring.</p>	Articles 2, 3, 5, 6, 12, 13, 31 Child-led Partnership-working (GIRFEC)

Effects to the implementation of the UNCRC in Scotland

Starcatchers aims to have a positive effect on furthering the implementation of the UNCRC in Scotland by delivering services that help very young children realise their rights, recognising this is achieved for this age range through their lived experiences. The impact assessment will help Starcatchers further its best practice in the planning and delivery of these experiences. Externally, Starcatchers will be positively impacting the implementation of the UNCRC by sharing knowledge, research, and best practice with others on how very young children can experience and realise their rights.

Conducting CRWI assessments

This CRWIA is relevant to the whole company and team. It is published on the website and reviewed annually. The next review is to be completed by December 2024 and signed off by the Board of Trustees. Project specific measures/separate CRWIAs are created, where relevant. All staff are trained in children's rights and inducted/briefed on CRWIAs and how to use them in their project planning, delivery and evaluation.

Stakeholders are consulted in the creation of all CRWIAs, recognising that our core beneficiaries are pre-verbal and non-verbal children and so consultation takes an ongoing participatory approach. Starcatchers uses 17 years of evidence from participants and other stakeholders to inform the writing of CRWIAs, including standard adult modes of consultation as well as those that are inclusive of children whose language is in development. Starcatchers uses Engagement Signals and is currently commissioning research into arts-based approaches to consultation with very young children. The impact of all services, including children's rights outcomes, are planned into the evaluation processes and continually monitored. Starcatchers uses a contribution analysis system of evaluation designed to capture social outcomes.

Data collection, feedback from babies, children and young people, case studies, film/photography, feedback from partners, Outcome Star charts, Leuven Scale measurements, committee meetings, surveys.

Communicating to babies, children and young people the impact on their rights

Babies and young children learn about their rights through their lived experiences. Starcatchers takes a rights-based approach to delivery, ensuring that all babies and young children experience rights-respecting environments and relationships. Young people we work with are young parents, and take an active role in these rights-respecting spaces and activities, seeing rights in action for their babies while also experiencing their own rights being upheld.



November 2023.