



Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA)

CONTENTS

Page 1	Starcatchers: in the context of children's rights and wellbeing and why it is important to have a CRWIA
Page 2	Overview and aims of the Children's Rights & Wellbeing Impact assessment
Page 2	Consultation with babies, children, young people and other stakeholders
Page 2	How this CRWIA will impact on rights and wellbeing
Page 3	Which Articles and Indicators are impacted by Starcatchers
Page 10	How our activities can affect the implementation of the UNCRC in Scotland
Page 10	Conducting impact assessments
Page 10	Communicating the impact to babies, children and young people on their rights

Starcatchers – who we are in the context of children’s rights and wellbeing

Starcatchers is Scotland’s Arts and Early Years organisation. We deliver 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 that all children have human rights. We also recognise that children, particularly babies and young children, need special provisions to help them access their rights. To support this, Starcatchers takes 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 Business Plan. We recognise Scotland’s commitment to children’s rights and the incorporation and implementation of the UNCRC through the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act.

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 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 our research-based 'Engagement Signals' and more recently through the Starcatchers Reflective Guide for the Arts developed by researchers from The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and Queen Margaret University during our 'Voice of the Baby' research project. 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 work is focused around four pillars of activity:

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

Our activities support 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 tour 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 opportunities 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 to build on 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 the 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 to 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 South West 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 the age of 25 and their babies.</p> <p>Continued programming of pop-up experiences in Wester Hailes Edinburgh. Engaging with babies and their families pre-birth to 5 years old offering creative play sessions and whole family wellbeing support, 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</p> <p>Early Intervention</p> <p>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 for Early Learning & Childcare practitioners, indirectly benefiting the babies and young children in their care across Scotland.</p> <p>Development and delivery of bespoke training offers for individual settings, local authorities or voluntary sector organisations.</p>	<p>Articles 2, 3, 5, 6, 29, 31</p> <p>Child-led Wellbeing</p> <p>Early Intervention</p> <p>Joined-up Working (GIRFEC)</p>

<p>Producing & Touring: New Work Development</p>	<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 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><u>Touring Productions</u></p> <p>Float - Kerry Cleland An immersive shimmering world for babies from birth to 12 months old and their grown-ups. A durational performance experience for adult and baby. Performing at the Fringe 2026</p> <p>ISLAND – Frozen Charlotte A new live performance experience for babies, Island will explore the joys of being in your own encapsulated little world and the isolation that can come with it, with meaningful themes for adults with visual and sensory exploration for children. Touring in Spring 2026.</p> <p>Laaunch! - Dirliebane Theatre Company A non-verbal performance, filled with musical beats and comedy, where the babies can interact with the performers in their own way and in their own time. For babies up to 12 months old and their grown-ups. Touring in Spring 2026.</p> <p><u>Works in Development</u></p> <p>All new productions are developed in line with</p>	<p>Article 31</p> <p>Child-focused (GIRFEC)</p>
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		Starcatchers' Voice of the Baby approach.	
Professional Development: PlaySpace programme	To create exceptional arts experiences for our youngest children By providing inspiration and support for artists creating work for our youngest children	Labs for artists to meet up, collaborate, share and explore new ideas in work for babies and young children. Various Scottish locations. Practical training sessions including Children's Rights, Trauma-informed practice, Child Protection, Anti-Racism, Climate Action. Artist Mentoring and shadowing opportunities with Creative Skills and Community Engagement programmes. Go and See visits to international festivals.	Article 42 Child-focused Wellbeing (GIRFEC)

<p>Advocacy</p>	<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>Voice of the Baby: Implementation and dissemination of Starcatchers Reflective Guide for the Arts and In Practice resources. Application of the model within Starcatchers projects with case studies supported by researchers. Sharing of resources through Early Years Development activity, commissioned projects and wider advocacy.</p> <p>Starcatchers’ 20th Birthday A year of mini pop-up birthday activities aligned with scheduled activity and in partnership with sector colleagues. One week-long celebration focusing on digital engagement and Voice of the Baby</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- and non-verbal children, ensuring organisations and service providers are confident in amplifying children’s rights in practice.</p>	<p>Articles 2, 3, 5, 6, 12, 13</p> <p>Child-focused Wellbeing Joined-up Working (GIRFEC)</p>
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<p>Organisational sustainability</p>	<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 diversifying staff, Board and artists engaged with the organisation.</p> <p>Continue participant committees and mechanisms for 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 to inform the development of a Centre of Excellence model.</p> <p>Identify and develop new opportunities for income generation through a range of sources, including the commissioning of consultations, projects and training</p> <p>Continue to fundraise effectively from a diverse range of private and public funders.</p>	<p>Articles 2, 3, 5, 6, 12, 13, 31</p> <p>Child-led Partnership-working (GIRFEC)</p>
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How our activities can affect 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 March 2026** 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 18 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, is planned into the evaluation processes and continually monitored. Starcatchers uses contribution analysis in 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, survey

Communicating the impact to babies, children and young people 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.

Jennifer Phillips, Co-Chief Executive

March 2026

