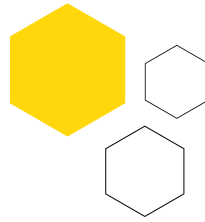




The



# RIGHT START.

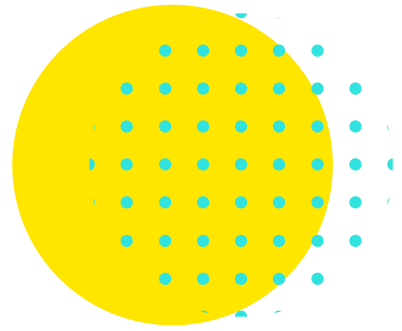


Babies, their rights, voice, and the arts.

## DELEGATE PACK.







# Welcome .

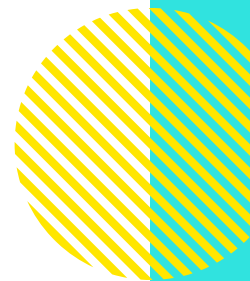
We are delighted to welcome you to The Barracks, Stirling for **The Right Start: babies, their voice, rights and the arts.**

We look forward to a day rich with discussion, insight and sharing as we continue the journey together to making Scotland the best place for children to grow up.

We would like to thank our funders Creative Scotland and the Independent Human Rights Fund, and Cattanach for their continued support of this work.

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# Conference partners .



## About Starcatchers .

Starcatchers is Scotland's Arts and Early Years organisation. We believe that our youngest children, those aged birth-to-five, should be able to fulfil their rights under the UNCRC through access to arts and creative experiences that give inspiration, joy and wonder to early childhood in Scotland. Our mission is to inspire babies, toddlers and young children by including them in high quality live performances and creative experiences that fulfil their right to access a rich arts and cultural life in Scotland regardless of where they live or their background.

[starcatchers.org.uk](https://starcatchers.org.uk)

## About Children in Scotland .

Giving all children in Scotland an equal chance to flourish is at the heart of everything we do. By bringing together a network of people working with and for children, alongside children and young people themselves, we offer a broad, balanced and independent voice. We create solutions, provide support and develop positive change across all areas affecting children in Scotland. We do this by listening, gathering evidence, and applying and sharing our learning, while always working to uphold children's rights. Our range of knowledge and expertise means we can provide trusted support on issues as diverse as the people we work with and the varied lives of children and families in Scotland.

[childreninscotland.org.uk](https://childreninscotland.org.uk)

## About Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights) .

Together is an alliance of Scottish children's charities that works to improve the awareness, understanding and implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). We do this by:

- promoting the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- helping children's organisations to integrate the UNCRC into their work;
- monitoring and reporting on the progress made at a Scottish and UK level.

Our growing membership is made up of a range of children's charities, from small local playgroups through to large international charities, alongside individuals, academics and professionals with an interest in children's rights.

[togetherscotland.org.uk](https://togetherscotland.org.uk)



# Schedule for the day .

TIME	SESSION	LOCATION
9:30-10:00	Registration and Coffee	Reception & Robertson Conference Suite
10:00-10:15	<b>Welcome</b> Rhona Matheson (Starcatchers)	Robertson Conference Suite
10:15-10:55	<b>Keynote: Laughing babies: their joyful role in the evolution of humanity</b> Dr Caspar Addyman	Robertson Conference Suite
10:55-11:15	Coffee	Robertson Conference Suite Macphail Room McNeil Room
11:15-12:00	<b>Starcatchers' Voice of the Baby</b> Dr Cara Blaisdell (Queen Margaret University), Dr Rachel Drury (Royal Conservatoire of Scotland) & Heather Armstrong (Starcatchers)	Robertson Conference Suite
12:05-12:50	<b>Parallel Sessions (1)</b>	
	1a. Dr Ruth Boycott-Garnett (Manchester Metropolitan University)	Robertson Conference Suite
	1b. Anna Westall (Children in Wales) & Katie Spendiff (Welsh Government)	Macphail Room
	1c. Amy Woodhouse (Parenting across Scotland), Cheryl Brown & Jackie Davidson (Midlothian Sure Start)	McNeil Room
12:50-13:45	Lunch	Robertson Conference Suite Macphail Room McNeil Room
13:45-14:30	<b>Parallel Sessions (2)</b>	
	2a. Dr Sharon Skehill (NCCA, Ireland)	Robertson Conference Suite
	2b. Rachel Colles & Fiona Ferrier (Dirliebane Theatre Company)	Macphail Room
	3a. Juliet Harris & Jacqui Dunbar (Together, Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights)	McNeil Room
14:30-14:45	Coffee	Robertson Conference Suite Macphail Room McNeil Room
14:45-15:30	<b>Keynote: Promoting, respecting and protecting the evolving capacities of young children</b> Gerison Lansdown	Robertson Conference Suite
15:30-16:00	<b>Q&amp;A Panel and Final Reflections</b> Rhona Matheson (Starcatchers), Juliet Harris (Together) & Dr Judith Turbyne CEO (Children in Scotland) Chaired by Nicola Killean, Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland	Robertson Conference Suite

# Information on the day .

## Contact

If you have any questions in the lead up to The Right Start, please contact [emili.astrom@starcatchers.org.uk](mailto:emili.astrom@starcatchers.org.uk). For any questions or queries on the day, please look out for Starcatchers staff who will be there to offer assistance.

## Photography and filming

There will be filming and photography taking place throughout the day in each of the rooms and areas including during lunch. If you would rather not appear in film or photographs, please let a member of Starcatchers staff know.

## Catering

The venue is providing catering on the day. They state: *"We are pleased to accommodate specific dietary requirements and most allergies. However, as all food is prepared off site by our third-party catering partner, we cannot guarantee that cross contamination won't occur. Therefore, in circumstances where the allergy may be acute, we offer attendees the option of bringing food to the event, for their personal consumption. Please can you also ensure that anyone who needs an epi-pen brings one along."*

## Join the conversation

Use #TheRightStart to join the conversation online and stay connected with us after the conference @StarcatchersUK, @Together\_SACR and @childreninscotland.



## Delegate discount to Children in Scotland conference

Conference partners, Children in Scotland, have created a special code providing a discount on full price tickets to Children in Scotland's Annual Conference on 28-29

May. The conference, which will welcome 25 workshops, 5 keynotes, and an informative panel, will address many key issues impacting children and young people today. By using the code **Starcatchers25** when booking a ticket through the [conference hub](#), you will receive £10 off a one-day ticket or £20 off a two-day ticket. The code is valid until the 30 April.

# Keynote speakers .

Dr Caspar Addyman

**Laughing  
babies: their  
joyful role in  
the evolution of  
humanity.**



**10:15-10:55 in the Robertson Conference Suite**

This talk explores the profound role of infant laughter in human evolution and its significance in contemporary rights-based approaches to early childhood. In the first half, we'll look to the past, discussing how the mother-baby bond may have given rise to art itself, and how infant curiosity and laughter have driven human adaptability and social cohesion. In the second half, we'll look to the future, connecting these insights to the conference theme, examining laughter as a pre-verbal "voice" of babies. We will highlight its role in fulfilling their right to joy and participation, as enshrined in the UNCRC, and discuss how arts-based methodologies can amplify this voice in inclusive, rights-respecting ways.

**Dr. Caspar Addyman** is a child psychologist who has studied how babies learn for two decades, focusing on language, concepts, and their sense of time. Since 2011 he has studied why babies laugh and why it matters. He authored the popular science book "The Laughing Baby" and collaborated with Grammy winner Imogen Heap to create "The Happy Song.". Currently, Caspar is an extraordinary lecturer at the Institute for Life Course Health Research, Stellenbosch University and researcher with the Global Parenting Initiative. He is Chief Insight Officer at [playtandem.com](http://playtandem.com) and his "Babies Laugh" picture books are published by Campbell Books. Discover more at [babies.lol](http://babies.lol).





Gerison Lansdown

## Promoting, respecting and protecting the evolving capacities of young children



**14:45-15:30 in the Robertson Conference Suite**

Babies and very young children have exactly the same rights as all other children. However, the way those rights are realised and the degree to which they themselves are able to exercise those rights is significantly impacted by their age. The Convention on the Rights of the Child introduces the concept of respect for the evolving capacities of the child which serves as an enabling principle to help inform the process through which rights are realised as children transition through childhood. It provides a conceptual framework through which to examine:

- the implementation of children's social and economic rights to promote their optimum capacities consistent with their age and development,
- the need for recognition of and respect for their gradually enhanced capacities to exercise their rights for themselves
- the imperative to afford them appropriate protection consistent with their levels of vulnerability and maturity.

This lecture will explore the implication of these issues for young children.

**Gerison Lansdown** is an international consultant and advocate, publishing and lecturing widely on the subject of children's rights. She has worked with the Committee on the Rights of the Child on several general comments, including on the rights of children to be heard, to play, during adolescence, and in the digital environment, and was involved in the drafting of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Publications include *The Evolving Capacities of the Child*, Innocenti Research Centre, 2005; *Article 31, A Commentary on the CRC*, Oxford University Press, ed J Tobin, 2019; *Children's Rights Institutions*, in *The Oxford Handbook of Children Rights Law*, ed J Todres and S King, Oxford University Press, 2019. She is an adjunct professor at Carleton University Canada, as well as at University College Cork, has an Honorary Doctorate from the Open University, Carleton University and the University of East London, an Honorary Fellowship from the University of Central Lancashire. She is Chair of the International Advisory Group for GAGE at the ODI, and the Advisory Board for Digital Futures for Children at LSE, and on the board of the Child and Youth Friendly Governance project.



Dr Cara Blaisdell (Queen Margaret University)  
Dr Rachel Drury (Royal Conservatoire of Scotland)  
Heather Armstrong (Starcatchers)

## Starcatchers Voice of the Baby research

**11:15-12:00 in the Robertson Conference Suite**

In this keynote, we will share the latest insights from Starcatchers' Voice of the Baby research, in partnership with the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and Queen Margaret University. This project explores how the arts can enable babies' right to be heard, aligning with Article 12 of the UNCRC. We will review why this work matters, highlight key findings—including five Reflective Areas for listening to babies through the arts—and showcase how these are being applied in practice in three knowledge exchange projects with early years practitioners. Finally, we will discuss how babies are shaping short, medium and long-term strategic planning through arts-based consultation initiatives like Love Letham.

**Dr Rachel Drury** is a researcher and creative artist working in the field of music psychology and therapeutic arts. She is Co-Programme Leader for the MA Psychology in the Arts (Music) programme at the RCS and the music specialist for Rachel House Children's Hospice in Kinross (CHAS). Her current creative and research interests focus on rights-based approaches in the arts in the following contexts: music in therapeutic settings (in particular, paediatric palliative care) and arts in social and criminal justice.

**Dr Cara Blaisdell** is a Senior Lecturer in Teacher Education at Queen Margaret University. She is an experienced early years pedagogue, having worked in corporate, Reggio-Emilia-inspired, and Froebelian early years settings in the United States and Scotland. Her research focuses on two main strands. First, she explores children's rights in early childhood, particularly participation rights and listening to very young children. Second, she works on outdoor learning in the early years, particularly young children's experiences and relationships with land and place. She approaches both strands from a relational perspective, looking at how young children's lives and experiences are shaped by intergenerational relationships, attitudes toward childhood, policy/practice trends, and relationships of power. Her research has been supported by funding from the Froebel Trust, the Scottish Funding Council, and Starcatchers, Scotland's Arts and Early Years organisation. Recent publications include papers in the European Early Childhood Education Research Journal, *Emotion, Space and Society*, and *Policy Futures in Education*.

**Heather Armstrong** is Starcatchers' Head of Early Years Development, creating training and programmes of work that bring together artists and the early years workforce in Scotland and beyond. Heather developed the *Voice of the Baby: In Practice* resource, and has been instrumental in setting up knowledge exchange projects with early years practitioners that apply Starcatchers' research. Prior to joining Starcatchers, she studied Psychology and Theatre, and co-created arts projects with young people in Glasgow in some of the most deprived communities in Europe. She believes in the power of the arts to transform lives.



Nicola Killean

Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland

## Q&A Panel and Final Reflections

**15:30-16:00 in the Robertson Conference Suite**

We are delighted to welcome the Children and Young People's Commissioner to The Right Start as chair of the Q&A Panel to close the event. Joining the Commissioner on the panel will be Starcatchers' Chief Executive, Rhona Matheson, Director of Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights), Juliet Harris, and Chief Executive of Children in Scotland, Judith Turbyne.



**Nicola Killean** is the Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland. She and her team are responsible for protecting and promoting the human rights of everyone under 18 in Scotland, or up to the age of 21 if they have care experience. Nicola has spent most of her career supporting children and young people from communities facing particular challenges and disadvantages. Nicola was founding Chief Executive Officer of the charity Sistema Scotland. She oversaw the launch and growth of the charity which delivers Big Noise programs, using music and nurturing relationships to support over 3,500 children and young people across Scotland. Nicola was awarded an OBE in 2020 for services to music, children and community cohesion.

**Rhona Matheson** is Chief Executive of Starcatchers, Scotland's arts and early years organisation having joined as the project manager of the pilot project in 2006. She is a passionate advocate for the role that the arts has to play in the lives of our youngest children and championing their right to access high quality arts and creative experiences that they can share with their parents and carers. In 2023, she graduated from Queen's University Belfast with a MSc (Distinction) in Children's Rights with a specific focus on the rights of babies.

**Dr. Judith Turbyne** became Chief Executive of Children in Scotland in August 2021. She has spent most of her professional life working in and with the charity sector. For much of that time she worked in international development, with charities challenging global poverty and inequality. She worked in Latin America and the Caribbean for many years, in local frontline organisations and with multinational funders, before moving to Dublin to work as the CEO of Progressio Ireland. Judith returned home to Scotland in 2013 as Head of Engagement with the Scottish Charity Regulator where she has had the pleasure of working with many charities across Scotland. She is currently the Chair of the Corra Foundation and a board member with the Scotland Malawi Partnership. She has a PhD from the University of Bath which looked at empowerment in development.

**Juliet Harris** has a strong track record in advancing the human rights of children both at a national and international level. As Director of Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights), she leads an alliance of over 600 members to increase awareness, understanding and implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and other international human rights treaties across Scotland. In 2023, she was winner of the Children's Health Scotland Healthcare Rights award, which recognises someone who has taken significant steps to advance the health rights of children and young people, in school, at hospital or in the community. In addition to her role as Director of Together, Juliet holds a number of prominent positions in the children's rights sector. She is the Chair of the Rights of the Child UK coalition, a Trustee of the Environmental Rights Centre Scotland, a Trustee of Families Outside and a founder member of the Observatory of Children's Human Rights Scotland. She has previously played an active role in numerous UN Taskforces, including the UN Committee's Day of General Discussion on Children as Human Rights Defenders. Juliet is also a respected guest lecturer at the University of Edinburgh and has authored a number of publications on children's rights.





# Parallel sessions .

**Dr. Ruth Boycott-Garnett**

***Parallel session 1a: 12:05-12:50 in the Robertson Conference Suite***

**What do we mean by babies' voice?** Babies are expressing themselves in non-verbal, sensorial and movement-based ways that make lively and tangible contributions to the local spaces in which they live. These engagements with the world around them contradict usual ideas of children's voice that often rely on words and directed communication. In this session, I will draw examples from different projects created through a long-standing relationship between Manchester Metropolitan University and Manchester Art Gallery where babies are positioned as space makers, exhibition makers and even policy makers. I will discuss how paying attention to babies' and toddlers' daily lives not only ensures that we meet the needs of our youngest citizens but also unsettles our own assumptions and habitual ways of making welcoming spaces.

**Dr. Ruth Boycott-Garnett** works with the spatial and material encounters of babies and toddlers. Her research stems from fifteen years working with performance and story-making across multi-professional networks to develop creative practice for 0-3s. Her doctoral research focused on babies as space makers and how attending to babies' spatial practices allows a rethinking of public space. As a Research Fellow at Manchester Metropolitan University, she is currently working with babies and toddlers to create a lively exhibition that celebrates the 'Things of the Least' opening at Manchester Art Gallery in September 2025.

**Anna Westall, Children in Wales & Katie Spendiff, Welsh Government**

***Parallel session 1b: 12:05-12:50 in the Macphail Room***

This session will provide an overview of the work Wales is doing to support babies and young children's Rights and voice. Welsh Government is committed to the realisation of a Wales where all children have their rights respected, protected and fulfilled. The session will begin by setting the legislation and policy context of children's rights in Wales, outlining key work that supports babies and young children to have the best start in life. Following this, Children in Wales, an organisation funded by Welsh Government with the vision of "Building a Wales where all children and young people have all their rights fulfilled", will share some of the creative methods and resources they have developed and have been using to support parents to both understand their baby's voice and support their wider Rights.

**Anna Westall** is a Senior Policy Officer at Children in Wales focusing on Early Years and Family Support. She has worked with babies, children, young people and their families for 17 years in a variety of roles both in the statutory and voluntary sector. She specialises in Early Years, Family Support, Children's Rights and Participation. She has been involved in the set up and delivery of new services and approaches; these include expanding therapeutic approaches to working with families; embedding Children's Participation and voice into multiple levels of Children's Services and setting up the Parents Connect Wales project aiming to empower the voices of parents and carers to promote Children's Rights. Anna's main passion is Early Years and holistic family support; where the child is at the heart of all decisions that are made. Anna is currently focusing on Early Years Rights and working to promote the voice of babies and young children; and supporting parents and carers to 'have a voice' and directly influence policy development.



**Katie Spendiff** is a Senior Policy Manager in Welsh Government's Children's Rights Branch, focusing on raising awareness of children's rights. A professionally qualified youth worker, Katie has worked with children and young people for 20 years in various roles. In the last decade, before moving to Welsh Government, Katie has specialised in supporting policymakers to understand and implement rights-based approaches in their service delivery. She has been involved in the co-ordination of formal children's rights policy at both a local authority and National level in Wales, implementing impact assessment structures, participation methodology and developing and facilitating children's rights workforce development opportunities. Katie is currently finalizing her doctorate at Cardiff University, which considers the impact of children's rights legislation in Wales, on the practice of education and social work practitioners. Katie is particularly interested in how the image of young children is constructed, and how a children's rights approach can support policy makers and practitioners to realise the rights of babies, infants and toddlers.



## **Midlothian Sure Start & Parenting across Scotland - Open Kindergarten**

**Parallel session 1c: 12:05-12:50 in the McNeil Room**

**Open Kindergarten** is a well established Nordic model of community based family support in the early years, where parents and carers build their confidence in listening to and responding to the needs of their babies. Since 2018 Parenting across Scotland, Midlothian Sure Start and Children in Scotland have been collaborating to bring the model to Scotland. We're currently working with the Open University to test the approach in three local authorities - Midlothian, East Lothian and West Lothian. Come along to hear about Open Kindergartens and discuss how babies' rights can be placed at the centre of whole family support.

**Amy Woodhouse** is Chief Executive Officer of **Parenting across Scotland**, the national membership organisation working for a Scotland where all parents and carers are valued and supported to give children the best possible start in life. She has been in this position since October 2023 and as part of her role leads the Open Kindergarten project with Midlothian Sure Start, Children in Scotland and the Open University. Earlier in her career, Amy worked for various national mental health charities and for 11 years was a social researcher, evaluating national mental health initiatives in Scotland. More recently she was Head of Policy, Projects and Participation for Children in Scotland, a position she held for 8 years. Amy has been interested in the role the arts can play in enabling babies, children and young people to realise their human rights for many years. Her 2023 Churchill Fellowship focused on increasing children and young people's access to hobbies, learning from Finnish and Icelandic approaches. She is also a Board Member of Scottish Ensemble, a pioneering group of outstanding musicians.

**Midlothian Sure Start** perinatal services are delivered across Midlothian; in Dunbar, Prestonpans and Tranent localities in East Lothian; recently expanding into West Lothian. NHS funding from 2017 enabled the dream of developing a non-clinical community based perinatal team. In 2020 a small team of parent infant practitioners was formed providing our award winning relational, educational, early intervention programme 'A Good Start' together with Open Kindergarten. Currently our service includes Video Interactive Guidance, CBT, Counselling and jointly with our NHS Lothian PAIRS specialist colleagues we deliver the Circle of Security programme. We are thrilled to continue to be the delivery partner for Phase 3 of the Open Kindergarten project with Parenting across Scotland, Children in Scotland and the Open University. Midlothian Sure Start is part of a local mental health consortium with partners Play Therapy Base, Home Link Family Support, MYPAS and Play Midlothian and is working with the Erikson Institute to bring the FAN (facilitating attuned interactions) approach to Scotland.

**Jackie Davidson** is the Perinatal Services Manager at Midlothian Sure Start. She is passionate about infant mental health and providing opportunities for the voice and rights of babies. In 2024 she joined with many fellow presenters at the World Association of Infant Mental Health in Tampere, Finland, to share the work of the team around 'A wish and intention to support a shift from Vulnerability to Visibility'. **Cheryl Brown**, MBE CF Chief Executive and founder at Midlothian Sure Start, contributes to local strategic planning through representing the third sector on the local GIRFEC children's services board and sub-committees. She is a member of the Scottish Government cross party group on shared parenting. She volunteers on the Midlothian Adoption Panel and is a Trustee of Home-Start West Lothian. Cheryl is passionate about working to build best beginnings for children - ensuring that infants and young children are heard and supported.

**Dr Sharon Skehill, National Council for Curriculum & Assessment (NCCA), Ireland**  
**Parallel session 2a: 13:45-14:30 in the Robertson Conference Suite**

**Babies' rights, voice and the Arts in Aistear, the early childhood curriculum Framework: Connecting policy and practice.** This presentation describes how the rights and agency of babies, toddlers and young children is embedded in the updated curriculum Framework in Ireland. There is a particular emphasis on a slow relational pedagogy to guide and nurture learning and development within the daily routines and rituals. Crucially, there is discussion of how free play, guided play and educator-led playful experiences nurture creativity and the arts for babies, toddlers and young children, aligning with national policy and supported with examples from practice.

**Dr Sharon Skehill** is an Early Years Educator and Researcher at her full daycare outdoor service in Galway. She has been working with babies, toddlers and young children for over 20 years and is a passionate advocate for early childhood education and care. Sharon also works with the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) as an Education Officer updating Aistear, the early childhood curriculum framework. She has a PhD in Education from University of Limerick / Mary Immaculate College and is currently studying a MSc in Children's Rights in Queens University Belfast. Sharon's pedagogical practice in her outdoor setting in Galway embraces a rights-based approach, drawing influence from Froebel, Malaguzzi and Montessori to develop an early years curriculum underpinned by the Aistear Framework. Sharon has engaged in research from practice and is proactive in sharing experiences from daily life at Newtown Kids Club (Willows and Nursery outdoor settings) through communities of practice, Erasmus projects and various conference presentations. She has published work relating to early childhood education, sustainability, leadership, inclusion, outdoor learning and nature-pedagogy.

### **Dirliebane Theatre Company**

**Parallel session 2b: 13:45-14:30 in the Macphail Room**

Starcatchers and Dirliebane co-produced Laaaunch!, a show for babies under 12 months and their carers. Laaaunch! is a comedy show that centres around babies transitions, from lying to sitting to standing, and the celebrations of these milestones. Laaaunch! was developed through three development periods before reaching final production, and in every work-in-progress, the voice of the baby was central to the work, from the first babies they met in April 2022 to final production in March 2024.



This session is presented by the Co-Artistic Directors of Dirliebane Theatre Company, Fiona Ferrier and Rachel Colles, and you will learn about their development process, the involvement of lots of babies and how their voice influenced the final production and will continue to influence the delivery of Laaaunch! through its tour in Autumn 2025.

**Co-Artistic Directors, Fiona Ferrier and Rachel Colles**, are trained clowns, in both theatre and arts-in-health settings. They are passionate about co-creating work with children and young people so that their voices shine through. Dirliebane Theatre Company is Perth Theatre's Children's Company in Residence, and has also recently joined the portfolio of organisations with Multi Year Funding from Creative Scotland. [www.dirliebane.org.uk](http://www.dirliebane.org.uk).

**Dirliebane Theatre Company** creates theatre performances for children, young people, and their families using gentle, character clowning, where the characters are open, curious, and vulnerable to connect with audiences and take them on journeys where empathy, joy and playfulness are key. Over the last nine years, Dirliebane Theatre has delivered funny, engaging, interactive and participatory clown theatre performance and creative activities. Developing the work alongside children and young people is key to their process, to ensure the work reflects their thoughts, needs, desires and world. Their productions include BIG, for children transitioning to Primary 1, SPACE, for children transitioning to S1, BOUNCE, exploring emotional resilience and marshmallows, THE CINNAMON SISTERS, a Christmas show centred around siblings and traditions and co-production with Perth Theatre, and LAAAUNCH!, our performance for babies under 12 months and co-production with Starcatchers. Dirliebane have also undertaken learning and engagement projects, research and development into VR theatre and created comedy films around resilience during Covid.

**Jacqui Dunbar and Juliet Harris, Tiny Human Rights Detectives  
Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights)  
Parallel session 2c: 13:45-14:30 in the McNeil Room**

**The UNCRC in action: Access to justice for babies What does access to justice mean for babies, and how can we ensure their rights are realised?** This interactive workshop, led by Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights), will explore the key findings from Tiny Human Rights Detectives and invite participants to reflect on their own experiences of babies' rights. Together, we will consider different ways access to justice happens—sometimes it's about a baby being heard in decisions affecting them, sometimes it's about families challenging barriers to services. We'll also explore how the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024 can be used to strengthen access to justice for babies and their families.

**Jacqui Dunbar** is a freelance consultant with 30 years' experience in practice and leadership roles within the civil society sector, local and national government. Her career has focused on trauma informed work with babies, children, young people, families and communities in the fields of children's human rights, policy influencing work and project development. Her most recent work includes the development and facilitation of Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights) Rights Detectives project, supporting the Children and Young People's Commissioner for Scotland in the development of their new strategy and providing strategic leadership and management support with a lived experience led organisation. Jacqui has worked closely with Professor Laura Lundy (the Lundy Model) and key decision makers to explore the conditions required for children and young people's meaningful participation in policy and practice. Jacqui embraces empowering and collaborative ways of working and has a particular interest in trauma informed approaches, the power of creativity and innovative digital technologies as enablers to exploring ourselves, our relationships, our communities and the world around us. [See page 8 for Juliet Harris' biography.](#)



# Travel and accommodation .

## By Train

The Barracks is about a 6-minute walk from Stirling Station (turn left outside the station and use the footbridge to cross over the tracks). Alternatively, there is a taxi rank outside the train station. Trains between Stirling and Edinburgh take approximately 50 minutes, Glasgow and Perth trains take about 35 minutes.

## By Bus

Stirling Bus Station is next to the train station and only a short walk via the footbridge to The Barracks. Stirling is served by intercity bus numbers 38, M8 and X36. Local bus services, numbers 1, 57, 59, 160, C11, C59, F16, P1 and S60, stop at stance D at the bus station. The Moovit app provides information on bus routes and fares.

## By Car

Glasgow to Stirling via the M80 takes approximately 30 minutes; Edinburgh to Stirling via the M9 takes about 45 minutes. There is ample parking in an adjacent car park.

### Car Parking

- GPS – the postcode FK8 1QZ does not bring you specifically to the Conference Centre. Instead, we advise using 'Vue Cinema Stirling', 'Forthside parking' or chef.tame.moods (What3words).
- There is a Council car park adjacent to the Conference Centre. Payment is by cash at a machine or via the RingGo app; from 1 April 2024, the charge is approximately £4 for the day.
- There are six accessible parking bays on site at The Barracks. For GPS use 'Vue Cinema', 'Forthside parking' or What3words: drives.planet.buns



## Accommodation options

For those looking to stay overnight, there is a Premier Inn located just 5 minutes walk from The Barracks. The train station is 300 yards away, and the bus station is 400 yards away.

- Address: Forthside Way, Stirling, Stirlingshire, FK8 1QZ
- Sat Nav Directions: FK8 1QZ
- What 3 Words:///mole.taped.hunter



# Access .

Below you'll find some information on Accessibility at The Right Start Conference. If you can't find what you're looking for, or if you have any feedback on how we can improve, please send an email to Natalie at [info@starcatchers.org.uk](mailto:info@starcatchers.org.uk) or telephone/text 07771223937.

## **Accessible Parking**

There are six accessible parking bays for blue badge holders directly at the front of The Barracks. For GPS use 'Vue Cinema', 'Forthside parking' or What3words: drives.planet.buns.

## **Accessing the programme**

The programme for the conference will be available in Large Print, Dyslexia friendly and audio versions. Visual timetables will be available during the conference.

## **Accessible Toilets**

There are two disabled toilets in the building which are all wheelchair accessible located on the ground and first floor.

## **Assisted Hearing**

The Barracks has a Sennheiser Mobile hearing support system installed. The hearing support system includes 5 iPod Touches with the app installed, along with personal neck loops, available to borrow. Any mobile device being used needs to be connected to the 'Mobile Connect' wi-fi available within the room. When connected to the wi-fi, open the app and select the Conference Audio feed. Please let a member of staff know if you require this when you visit the conference or send us an email to [info@starcatchers.org.uk](mailto:info@starcatchers.org.uk) to arrange this in advance. A number of Starcatchers staff members have been trained in Deaf awareness.

## **Assistance Dogs**

Guide, hearing and other assistance dogs are welcome in all areas of the building, please let us know when booking if you are bringing an assistance dog.

## **Baby-Friendly Space**

The Right Start is a conference aimed at grown-ups, and will be a baby-friendly space. There will be a quiet space for feeding your baby on the ground floor. There is also baby changing facilities located in the ground floor disabled toilets.

## **Quiet Space**

We have a quiet space located on the ground floor for anyone who feels overwhelmed or in need of space during the conference.



### **Sensory packs**

Sensory packs will be available to borrow during the conference. The packs will contain items such as noise cancelling headphones and fidget toys.

### **Support for those with Sight loss**

Large print versions of handouts will be made available. A Starcatchers member of staff can assist you should you require additional support during the conference, please contact Natalie to let her know when booking.

### **Wheelchair access**

The venue is fully accessible with wheelchair access. The conference will be across two levels, and a lift is available for use. There are automated doors at the entrance to the building.

### **3D Walkthrough of the Barracks**

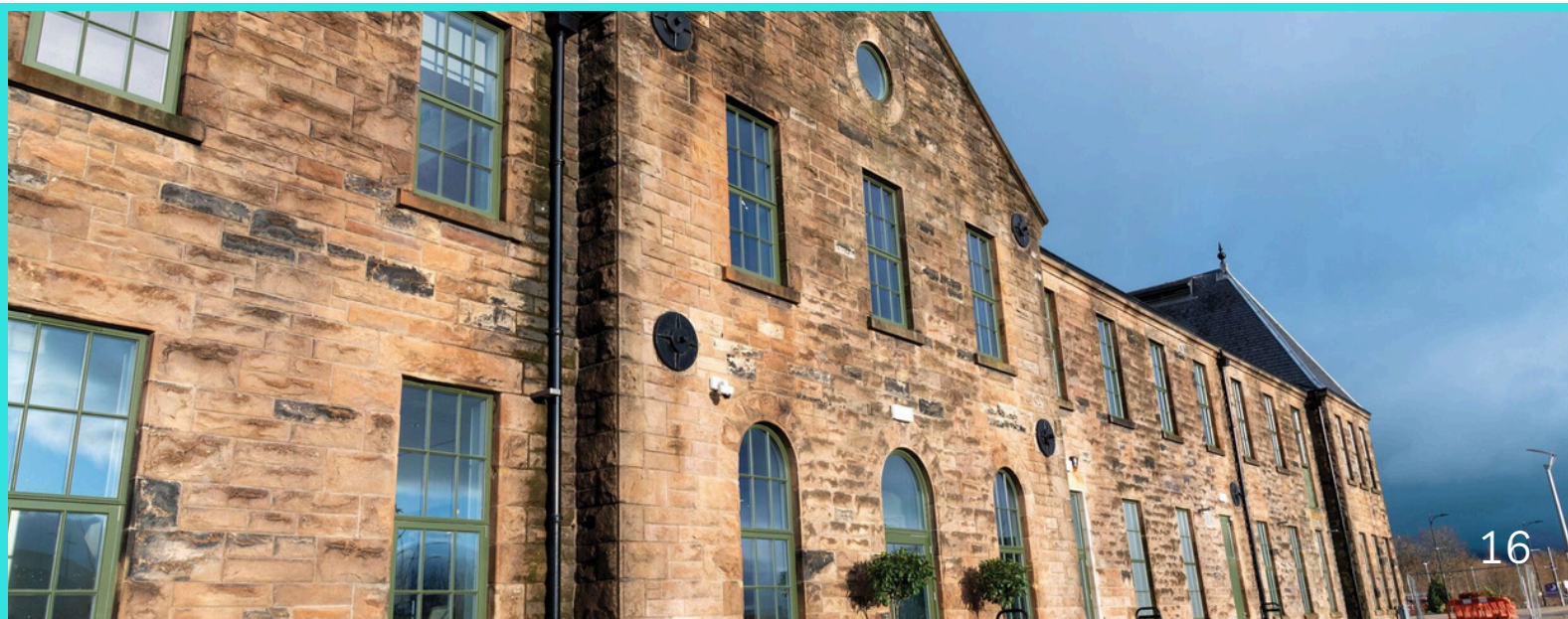
If you would like to see the layout of the space, please click the link below to view a 3D walk through of The Barracks in Stirling.

[The Barracks 3D Walkthrough](#)

### **Visual story**

Please read the Visual Story for the event by clicking the link below.

[The Right Start Visual Story](#)

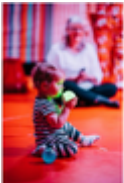


# Sharing resources .



## Starcatchers

Resources and reports on Voice of the Baby in practice



### The Voice of the Baby In Practice

Starcatchers, in partnership with the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, are collaborating on a research project...  
starcatchers.org.uk

Final Love Letham report

Summerston Approach report

Delegates have shared some excellent examples of exciting work in the area of babies' rights, voice and the arts. Here we share some relevant research studies, projects and resources that will be of interest to all of us working in this area.

## Dundee Contemporary Arts

Creating Hello in There Wee One



### Creating Hello in There Wee One

Hello in There Wee One is a new book designed to support Dundee parents-to-be to bond with their baby before birth. It launched at an event in DCA, and will be given to all expecting families in the city. Part ...

Dundee Contemporary Arts

## Inspiring Scotland

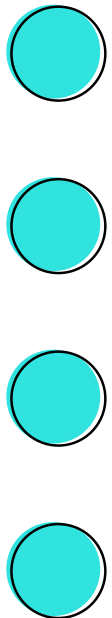
Babies in Scotland conference



### Putting Infant Mental Health at the forefront with Babies in Scotland conference

We kicked off the new year by hosting the first online conference of its kind in Scotland - Infant Mental Health: Babies in Scotland 2024. This event was in partnership with the Scottish Government and was our...

Inspiring Scotland



## Imagine

Creative Encounters



### Creative Encounters — Imagine

Information on current artists-led project managed by Imagine

ImagineUK

## Gymboree

Play & Music



### Gymboree Play & Music Glasgow South, Glasgow South Side

Gymboree Play & Music is the World leader in classes from Newborn up to 5. We run Award Winning Sensory classes for babies from 7 weeks and Mobile baby classes for Crawlers, shufflers and walkers. We...

Gymboree Play & Music

## Scottish Book Trust

Bookbug



### Bookbug

Discover the benefits of sharing stories, songs and rhymes with babies, toddlers and pre-schoolers to give them the best start in life.

Scottish Book Trust



### Anna Daly

Community Dance Artist

**I See You** In the moment movement play in early years settings in Cumbria:  
[https://www.annadaly.co.uk/\\_files/ugd/34b42f\\_ef59cffe59b416cb31e809008a19321.pdf](https://www.annadaly.co.uk/_files/ugd/34b42f_ef59cffe59b416cb31e809008a19321.pdf)

**Duvet Dancing** For children under 3 and their families - supporting attachment and development:  
<https://www.annadaly.co.uk/project09>

### Children's Parliament

Rights-based practice in the Early Years



### Cambridge University

How a young child sings a well-known song before she can speak



**How a young child sings a well-known song before she can speak...**  
How a young child sings a well-known song before she can speak - Volume 39 Issue 3  
cambridge.org

### Save the Children

Young Children's Voices



**Young Children's Voices | Save the Children UK**  
All children have a right to be listened to, but often, the voices of the youngest children are not heard.  
savethechildren.org.uk

### University of Strathclyde Glasgow

Study shows technologies can offer rich learning experiences for babies and toddlers



**Study shows technologies can offer rich learning experiences for babies and...**  
A pioneering UK wide study has demonstrated that babies and toddlers engage with digital devices as...  
strath.ac.uk

### Scottish Government

Voice of the Infant: best practice guidelines and infant pledge



### Manchester Metropolitan University

Toddlers, Tech and Talk: summary report

#### Toddlers, Tech and Talk: summary report

Toddlers, Tech and Talk is an ESRC-funded project about 0-3-year-old children's language and literacy learning at home in a digital age (2022-2024). This is the only contemporary project reporting in depth and at...  
mmu.ac.uk / Nov 4, 2024



[starcatchers.org.uk](http://starcatchers.org.uk) | [@starcatchersuk](https://twitter.com/starcatchersuk)

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Charity Number: SC042222

