

2017/18

Annual report on the progress of the implementation of the Children & Young People's Rights Scheme in Swansea

August 2016 – July 2017



Cyngor **Abertawe**
Swansea Council



Foreword

Children and young people has always been a priority for the City & County of Swansea.

The City & County of Swansea is the first local authority in the UK to voluntarily make a public commitment to Children's Rights and create a platform for change to achieve a culture where there is a full appreciation of children's rights. We consciously consider the rights of the child in all of our work so that ultimately it results in better services and lives for children, young people and families in Swansea.

Being the first local authority to adopt this approach challenges existing ways of working and we are starting to see a culture change as we further develop our approach and embed our policy into practice.

The Children and Young People's Rights Scheme is an innovative road map to ensure consideration is given to the UNCRC in every decision the council makes. The success so far would not be possible without a partnership approach which includes working with our schools, communities, council services and wider partners to make this happen. We are delighted to be working with a wide group of people with a shared interest and commitment to this agenda.

The report captures the actions and progress that we have seen so far and we are both really pleased and impressed with the feedback received in relation to adopting a rights based approach. Awards are good, but putting child rights at the heart of our business is the right thing to do which is far more important for the future of our children and young people in Swansea.

Lead Cabinet Member and Lead Director

Councillor Jen Raynor, Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Life Long Learning

Chris Sivers, Director of People

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Introduction

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)¹ is an international convention that sets out rights for all children and young people up to the age of 18. It includes civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights and not only recognises children and young people's basic human rights, but gives additional rights to protect them from harm as one of the most vulnerable groups in society.

The Children & Young People's Rights Scheme was launched in November 2014. This sets out the arrangements in place to ensure transparency in the processes that are being followed to demonstrate that we pay 'due regard' to the UNCRC. We do this by;

1. Making such arrangements as is considered suitable to promote and facilitate participation by children in decisions of the authority which might affect them, as required in the Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010.
2. Developing knowledge and understanding of the UNCRC through training for all staff and decision makers within the City and County of Swansea, including other statutory and key voluntary partners.
3. Promotion and awareness raising of the UNCRC.
4. Ensuring appropriate and robust mechanisms are in place to receive feedback and complaints in relation to the UNCRC.
5. Ensuring compliance, accountability and impact of the UNCRC due regard duty that is evidenced based.

This report is the third annual report on the progress of the implementation of the Children and Young People's Rights Scheme in Swansea and outlines how we have embedded the UNCRC into the local authority policy framework, specifically focusing on progress made in the areas outlined in our Action Plan 2016/17.

The reporting cycle of this report has changed slightly and now captures rights activity between August and July. This is to align with the Corporate Parenting Strategy reporting cycle and more effectively captures Rights Respecting Schools work within an academic year.

¹ United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) 1989

Objective 1: Engagement and Participation with Children & Young People

Statutory Duty: Making such arrangements as is considered suitable to promote and facilitate participation by children in decisions of the authority which might affect them, as required in the Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010.

Local Authorities have a duty to promote and facilitate the participation of young people. The City and County of Swansea supports children to participate, and recognises the value and importance of listening to what children and young people have to say about decisions that affect them.

The Big Conversation is a project co-ordinated by the Council, which aims to offer inclusive, safe and meaningful opportunities for children and young people to exercise their right to voice. This work is delivered through a variety of mechanisms with a range of partners, to ensure as far as possible, that opportunities are accessible and right for the widest number of children and young people regardless of their race, gender, sex, class maturity or ability.

In 2016/17 has seen a sustained engagement of children and young people in Big Conversation opportunities with 2,399 children and young people have participated in opportunities to have their voices heard.

Engagement Numbers 2013-2017

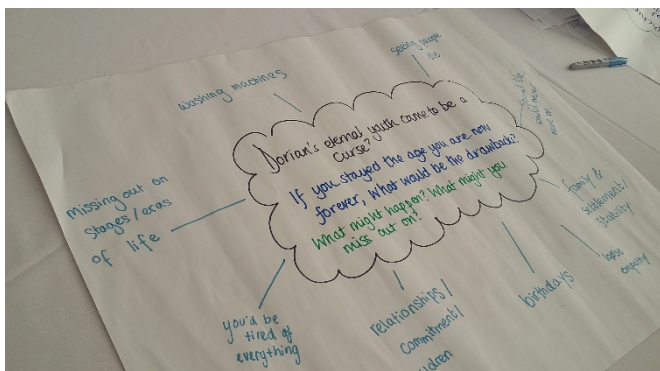
Year	2013/14		2014/15		2015/16		2016/17	
Age	Age 11 and under	Age 11 and over	Age 11 and under	Age 11 and over	Age 11 and under	Age 11 and over	Age 11 and under	Age 11 and over
Contact	0	538	75	332	730	1851	443	2552
Reach	0	372	71	226	645	1608	338	2061
Total	372 Children & Young People		297 Children & Young People		2253 Children & Young People		2399 Children and Young People	

The Big Conversation Forum

The Big Conversation offers a space for young people aged 11-18 years to initiate and explore topics important to them in an attempt to gain a wider understanding of the world, and make more informed decisions about how they feel in relation to that topic, potentially identifying areas for change.



Using last year's Big Conversation priorities, national priorities for young people, findings from the Beth Nesa' Sally campaign and their own experiences, young people in Swansea worked together to agree themes for Big Conversations in 2016/7. Between August 2016 and July 2017, 370 young people attended five Big Conversations, exploring the following themes:



- Housing and homelessness
- Support in transition to adulthood, particularly for vulnerable young people
- Sustainable Swansea, City Centre Regeneration and the Council's Budget
- Healthy relationships
- Substance abuse

Whilst action is not always necessary following Big Conversations, the following outcomes have occurred as a result:

- Engagement in Big Conversations has increased with a maintained, good relationship with Secondary Schools. Nine secondary schools attended all Big Conversations with most of the remaining five attending regularly.
- Based on conversations with young people, Swansea Council's Housing Service is working to develop a young people's advisory group for the service. Issues raised at the Big Conversation will form the basis of the group's work plan.
- Young people recognise that those who thrive in school have a good chance of reaching their potential in adulthood, but this often requires support and receiving the right offer at the right time from the right person. Feedback from young people about this support has been reported to the Cabinet Advisor Committee for Education and has contributed to the development of the Family Support Continuum and Children and Young People's Plan, where supporting vulnerable young people into adulthood is an objective for Partners to address, directly as a result of young people making it a priority.
- As a result of the discussing the Council's budget, the proposal to increase school meals was modified to better meet the needs of children and families in Swansea: <http://www.southwales-eveningpost.co.uk/school-pupils-convince-councillors-to-change-education-budget/story-30139346-detail/story.html>
- The Big Healthy Relationship Conversation was an opportunity for young people to explore the complex and moral aspects of a healthy and unhealthy relationship. The conversation raised questions about the curriculum and what could be included in PSHE lessons to extend teaching to encompass the emotion of relationships as well as biological aspects. Information has been passed to the Healthy Schools Team who are exploring new teaching modules based on feedback from young people.

Participation of Looked After Children

Corporate Parenting Challenge



The Corporate Parenting Challenge is a week of activities designed to get members of the Corporate Parenting Board and senior officers listening directly to the concerns of young people in care.

In August 2016, 17 young people aged between 11 and 17 spent five days at Down to Earth, taking part in team building activities, discussing the issues that matter most to them as Looked After young people, and planning workshops to deliver to the Corporate Parents. Young people identified 6 priorities for discussion:

- Being a Looked after Child or young person in school
- Changes at 16+ and 18+
- Respite care
- Obstacles looked after children and young people face
- Relationships with families, carers and social workers
- Information sharing by professionals

The workshops offered an opportunity for corporate parents to gain a real understanding of the issues and challenges young people in care face, and the young people were able to express the impact of policy and practice on their lives.

Councillors also joined young people in an adventurous river walk at Three Cliffs Bay

Shout Out is the County-wide group for young people aged 11-17 years who are looked after to have their voice heard. Through this forum, young people were able to work on priorities identified at the Corporate Parenting Challenge, and the outcomes of engagement are notes below:

Delegated authority

Young people made detailed comments on the form, language and content of the delegated authority form introduced in 2016. This was to ensure that the process and paperwork was more accessible and understandable to child and young people who are affected by it. This work has been fed back to Child and Family.

Looked After Children in Education

Young people and practitioners have worked together to write a comprehensive guide for schools on how to treat and work with looked after children. This includes advice on lesson planning, sensitivity to individual needs, keeping information confidential, dealing with bullying and behavioural challenges. This work has been supported by the LAC Education team who have been liaising with Welsh Government on this issue, with a view to publish and distribute the Swansea guide that young people wrote, to all schools in Wales.

Respite Care

Young people have worked with Computer Animation students from University of Wales Trinity St. David to develop a short film that outlines children and young people's views, opinions and concerns of respite provision. Young People have also worked to make posters with key points about how to make respite care better.

Foster Swansea have taken on board young people's feedback about respite and are working on alternative opportunities for young people, including providing residential outdoor activities for young people in care, to encourage carers to take a break during a time when young people are taking part in an exciting programme of activities.

Young people's feedback has also contributed to the development of training for Foster Carers, including opportunities to facilitate training themselves, which will be included in the program of courses for Carers and Practitioners in 2018.

Building opportunities for Looked After Children and Young People to Participate

In 2016/17 has seen growth and opportunity in the offer of participation opportunities for children and young people who are looked after, and now care leavers. 64 children and young people have participated directly in Looked After Forums.

Work has been done to strengthen existing mechanisms and extend the age range of people who can engage. There is now a clear offer for:

- **Children aged 7-10 years through the 123 Forum**

The Forum is supported by the Council’s Life Stages Team, Foster Swansea and Independent Reviewing Officers, and offers a space for younger children who are looked after to engage and participate. In 2016/7 the group has worked on emotions, getting to know and understand the system, important people, and safe spaces.

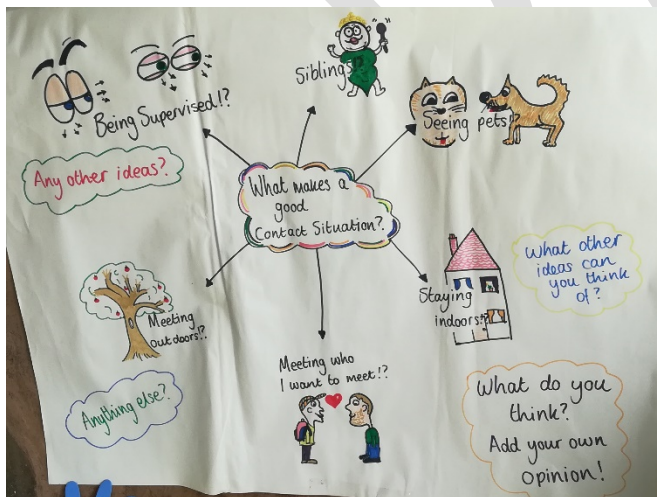


the

It has been difficult in the past to engage this younger group, however through the year, the group have participated in lots of fun activities. This has included Halloween activities, a visit to pantomime to see Hansel and Gretel and beach days, and the balance between activities and appropriate and relevant participatory work has strengthened the group and level of engagement.

- **Young People aged 11-17 years**

Work has been ongoing in 2016/7 to strengthen and develop opportunities for young people to participate. The Shout Out group continues to meet fortnightly and as well as working on the year’s Corporate Parenting Challenge priorities, have also begun to discuss the following emerging issues:



Contact with siblings

Several young people in Shout Out have been unable to maintain contact with their siblings, either through family circumstances or adoption. These issues have been raised in the group and have been brought to the attention of decision makes. Although for many of the young people there is no possibility of the situation changing for them personally, they are keen to campaign for others not to be put in the same situation. This issue will be raised at the Corporate Parenting Challenge for action in the next year.

Recruitment of Student Social Workers

Working in partnership with the Social Services Training team, information collated about the qualities of a ‘good’ social worker, was used to develop a series of activities for interviewing and assessing support staff wishing to apply for sponsorship through the Open University social work degree. Young people delivered the group interview and assessed the candidates.

Sustaining and Building new relationships with Senior Decision Makers locally

There has been much work this year to increase dialogue between young people and decision makers beyond the Corporate Parenting Challenge. Discussions have taken place to find the right balance of keeping in touch and meeting. The group continue to report annually to Full Council, and have presented to the Corporate Parenting Board on the progress of forums. Additionally, arrangements have been made for pre-arranged drop-in sessions where senior decision makers visit young people at forums to check in and keep in touch. This has proved positive with young people reporting to feel they have a better relationship with people and that more is being achieved by them being listened to.



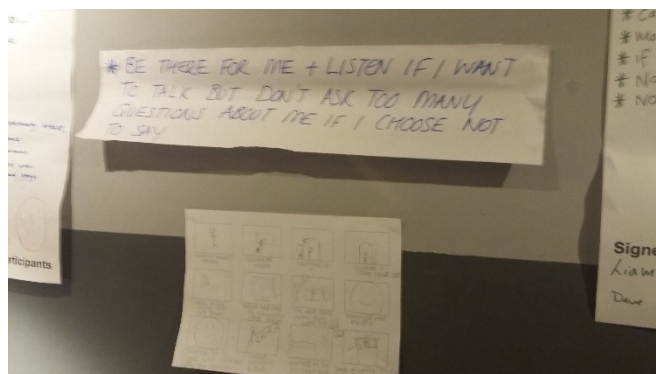
Work with National Agencies

Swansea Council continues to have a good relationship with Voices from Care. Young people have through the year attended regional participation activities with other looked after children and young people, including::

- A residential event at Llangrannog,
- Contributing questions about contact for a “Question Time” event at the Senedd, resulting in a visit to the group from the Children's commissioner, Sally Holland and Julie Thomas, Head of Child and Family Services, to discuss their localized and individual issues.
- Two young people from Swansea are being supported to contribute to Voices from Care Policy Group.

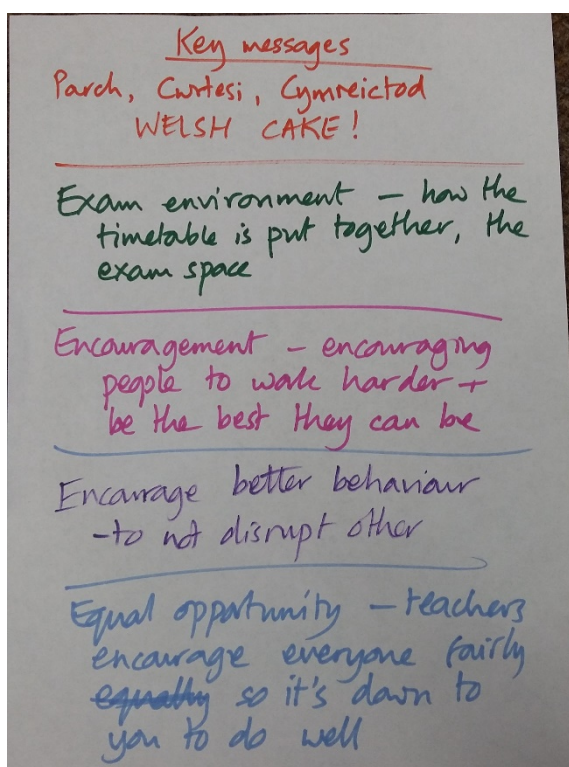
- **16+ and Care Leavers**

The establishment of a forum dedicated to listening to Care Leavers has been new and welcomed in 2017. The group has met twice and continues to grow but has started work on setting priorities for the forum to focus on. These include pathway planning and earlier support for transition to leaving care.



Participation of Learners in Pupil Voice

Pupil Voice Forum



In March 2016, a County-wide Pupil Voice Forum was established to enable elected pupil representatives from each of our secondary schools to directly engage with the Chief Education Officer and have a voice in decisions that affect them, specifically in relation to education. 2017 saw the appointment of new Chief Education Officer, Nick Williams who has entirely supported the development and continuation of the Pupil Voice Forum.

Considerable work has been done to continue the development of the Pupil Voice Forum. In August 2016, a Children's Rights Officer for schools was seconded from Pentrehafod Comprehensive to support schools, an element of which is to facilitate the Pupil Voice Forum. This enabled the opportunity to be extended slightly, offering space for year six pupils on a cluster basis to join secondary schools at the Forum.

The forum offers an opportunity for two pupils from each secondary school and a primary school from each cluster to attend on a half - termly basis. 189 pupils (69 male, 120

female) have represented 35, of a possible 80 invited schools.

Of this, 13 of the 14 secondary schools have attended regularly and 35 of the 80 primary schools invited in this time took up the offer. This does not include work with Ysgol Pen Y Bryn who have requested more bespoke opportunities (please see below). There is work to do to explore and engage Primary schools in this mechanism and also to consider extending this offer further again. This will form a recommendation at the end of this report.

The Pupil Voice Forum offers a space for learners to come together and discuss issues specifically about their learning environments. Topics covered and discussed at the Pupil Voice Forum include:

- Priority setting – what is important to learners?
- What does the best education in Swansea look like?

- Mindfulness in schools
- What helps pupils grow in schools?
- The role of the duty bearer in transition in and between schools
- School Meals Service review
- Welsh in Education Strategic Policy
- Play provision in schools
- Introducing the new Chief Education Officer
- Reviewing the context of the Pupil Voice Forum
- High 5 Awards
- Anti-Bullying
- Supporting parents/carers in schools
- City of Culture 2021 bid
- Education Department self-evaluation
- Attendance
- Budget and Finance
- Learning and speaking Welsh in school



A full report of Pupil Voice Forum Activity is available upon request; key discussions and outcomes of engagement this year are:

- Increased attendance & differentiated Pupil Voice Forums. 2016/7 saw the first opportunity to begin to extend the age range, offering an opportunity for year 6 pupils to join secondary school pupils at the forum.
- Improved feedback opportunities. This year saw all pupil voice forum dates, session plans, reports and feedback posted to a shared HWB folder for schools to access. Information was uploaded in a timely manner for schools.
- A request from pupils for Rights Respecting Schools, Restorative Practice and LGBT+ training.
- A request to consider blanket policies for schools that showcase good practice and set some consistency to approach;
- A request from pupils to consider more proactive wellbeing/anti-bullying and mental health support in schools
- Request for Youth workers in schools/promote clubs
- Exploration of sustainable, greener energy efficient alternatives
- Discussion and request to centralize a database for bullying reporting
- A request to move toward accessible language in all documents produced and brought to the Pupil Voice Forum

Some schools have picked up actions from the Forum themselves, e.g. Glais primary have worked directly with the High 5 team to create a video for schools. Other actions require a County-wide approach and work is ongoing with the Chief Education Officer to work with pupils to address, act and feedback as appropriate on change that can or cannot be made, and why.

School Project Work

Ysgol Pen Y Bryn

For the Academic year commencing September 2016, bespoke support has been provided to Ysgol Pen Y Bryn. At the request of the school, this has taken a multi-pronged approach:

- To work with staff and pupils to develop an accessible CYP Super Survey
- To facilitate bespoke forum sessions that most suited the needs of pupils at Pen y Bryn
- To support the school to re-engage in the Rights Respecting Schools Award

CYP Super Survey

Officers, pupils and staff at Ysgol Pen Y Bryn to create and deliver an accessible Super Survey for pupils with additional learning needs across Swansea. The result of this is that staff and pupils at Pen Y Bryn have developed accessible sections of the Swansea Super Survey enabling pupils to complete small parts of the survey at a time. Questions have also been adapted to be most suitable and are presented using Wigit software, a symbol package that is familiar to pupils. Pupils have piloted the new survey with 58 learners having successfully taken part.

Bespoke Forum Sessions

Building on an increased relationship with Ysgol Pen Y Bryn, the Life Stages Team were able to explore with pupils the support required to engage in other opportunities offered in Swansea, e.g. the Big Conversation and Pupil Voice Forum.

Feedback from pupils has included not feeling able or confident to participate in such a large-scale group for a whole day. This often seemed daunting and at times sessions were not always accessible enough. It was agreed that bespoke sessions mirroring that of the Pupil Voice Forum and Big Conversation could be facilitated in school so that young people could engage in the same opportunities as others, but in a space and with people with whom they feel safe.

These sessions have been highly successful with pupils reporting to feel much more comfortable and engaged in the wider participation structure. This work will continue until pupils feel ready to join the main forums. There is also a view to replicate this model with Ysgol Crug Glas who feel that a similar approach would be most beneficial for pupils at the school.

Re-engagement in the Rights Respecting Schools Award

Staff changes and new headship at Pen Y Bryn has led to the school feeling that a refresh in Rights Respecting Schools Award (RRSA) training was required.

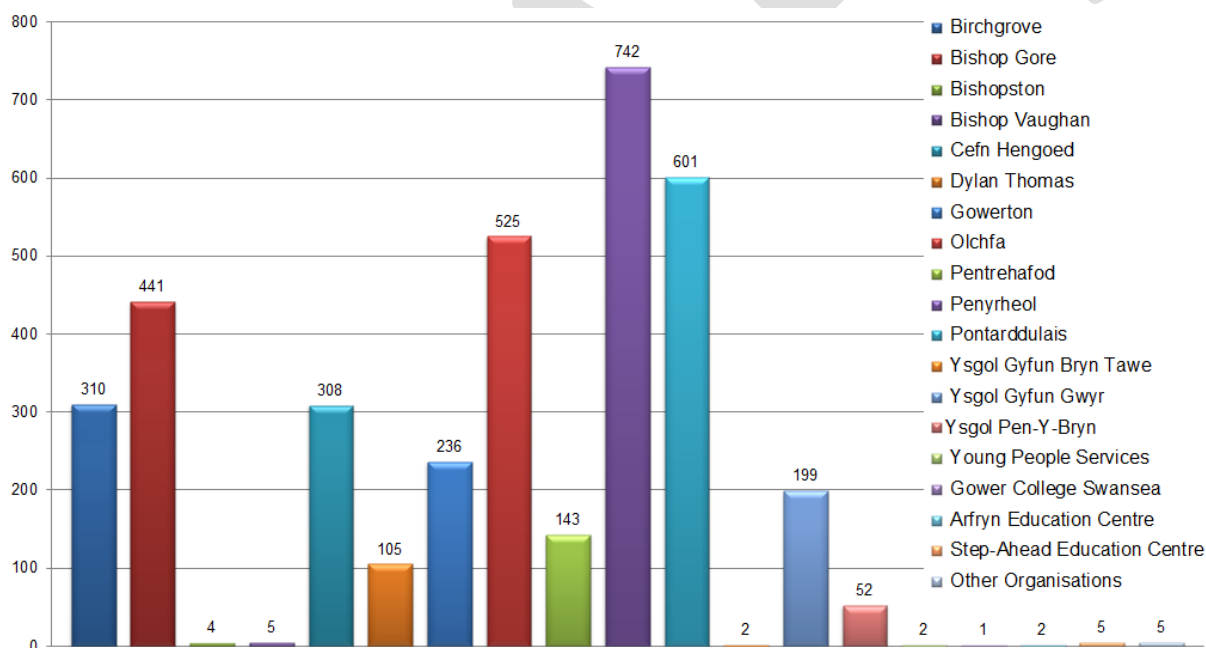
Both the school and the members of council staff agreed that, whilst pockets of excellent rights-based practice are taking place in the school, there are some small areas whereby pupils could have more opportunities to learn about their rights and have their rights realised, and that adults could do more to support this.

Pupils recognise and appreciate that they are listened to and that teachers and staff in the school respect their rights. Teachers recognise that some staff might have a working knowledge of the UNCRC but have not received the training, and so in theory they might have gaps in their knowledge as to how they can implement the rights of the child and work with the pupils to help them access their rights. UNICEF and the Children’s Commissioner for Wales’ Office provided whole-day INSET training in January 2017.

The school is now re-engaged in the award and receiving ongoing support to sustain their great work and achieve their Level 2 award.

Super Survey Key Findings

Over the Summer and Autumn terms of 2016 the views of 3,688 young people were gathered through the Survey and a parallel shorter ‘accessible’ imaged based pilot survey. This is a 14% rise in survey participants in comparison to the 2014 Super Survey. Young people took part from the following organisations:



52% of participants who responded were male and 48% were female. The majority of respondents were aged 13-15 years (63%) with 32% being aged 11-12 years, and 9% being aged 16-18 years.

UNCRC Links

As part of the Survey young people were asked if they had heard of Children’s Rights or the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. 76% of respondents have said that they have heard of Children’s Rights. This is a significant increase in the responses given to this question in 2014 (61%) and in 2013 (43%).

Involvement

- Young people were asked three separate questions about whether their views were asked about the things that affected them.
- For 'In school or college' the responses were mixed, with the majority saying that they were asked their views 'Some of the time' (35%), or 'Not often' (32%). The third highest response was 'Not at all' (21%), whilst the lowest response was for 'Most of the time' (12%).
- For 'At home', most responded positively saying that they were asked their views 'Most of the time' (30%), or 'Some of the time' (30%). But 22% said they were 'Not often' asked, and 18% chose 'Not at all'.
- For 'In your community' most responded that they were not asked their views, with 53% choosing 'Not at all', and a further 33% saying 'Not often'. 11% chose 'Some of the time', but only 3% said 'Most of the time'.
- This question was split into three parts in the 2016 Survey. It was felt that in the earlier surveys the question asking to what extent they felt involved in decisions that affected them was too general. In 2014, 14% said they were 'Always' involved in decisions, and a further 35% said 'Most of the time'. However, 33% of the young people said 'Not often' and 18% said they were 'Never' involved.

Health and Healthy Lifestyle – General Health

- Of 2,830 responding, 64% said I'm hardly ever ill. 46% of those who said they were always ill or quite often ill don't know why. The others mostly thought their health was poor because they don't eat enough healthy food, don't drink enough healthy drinks, or don't do enough exercise.

Emotional and Mental Wellbeing

Young people were asked a series of questions about how happy they had felt over the last few months at home, in school/college, and where they live.

Of 2,903 responding, the highest responses were:

- Very happy at home (50%, n = 1432)
- Often happy at school/college (44%, n = 1278)
- Often happy in their local area (42%, n = 1188)

When asked about all the things that worried or upset them, most young people said my Future, or School/college or education.

Cigarettes and Alcohol

Young people were asked at what age they first smoked cigarettes or drank alcohol, if at all.

- 86% said they had never smoked, 8% first smoked by the age of 13,
- 53% said they had never drunk alcohol, 30% first drank alcohol by the age of 13 (

Young people were also asked if someone in their home smoked cigarettes. Of 2,785 young people responding:

- 33% said 'Yes' someone in their home smoked
- 22% of those living with a smoker had smoked
- 90% of those from a smoker free home had 'never smoked tobacco'

Drugs

Older young people were presented with a list of drugs and asked to select any that they had tried. Of the 2,757 responses, 86% said they had never tried any of the drugs listed, 5% of the young people had tried cannabis, 2% of the young people had tried legal highs.

Sexual Health

Older young people were also asked about their sexual experiences. 2,525 young people responded. 89% said they had never had sex, with 4% saying they were aged 14 or younger when they first had sex and 2% saying they were aged 15-16. 5% preferred not to say.

The young people who said they have had sex were asked to select from a list all the methods they had used to prevent pregnancy. Of the 174 responding, 21% said that no method was used, with others most commonly saying that they used condoms or birth control pills.

Domestic Abuse

Young people were asked if they, or someone they lived with, had been a victim of domestic abuse. 2,966 responded. 7% said 'Yes'. Of the young people who said 'Yes', 65% felt they could seek support from someone about the domestic abuse.

Of 123 responses, the young people most commonly said they would go to the following people for help:

- Mum, Dad or Carer (68%)
- Friends (42%)
- A teacher (31%)
- Another relative (27%)
- My brother or sister (27%)
- The Police (20%)

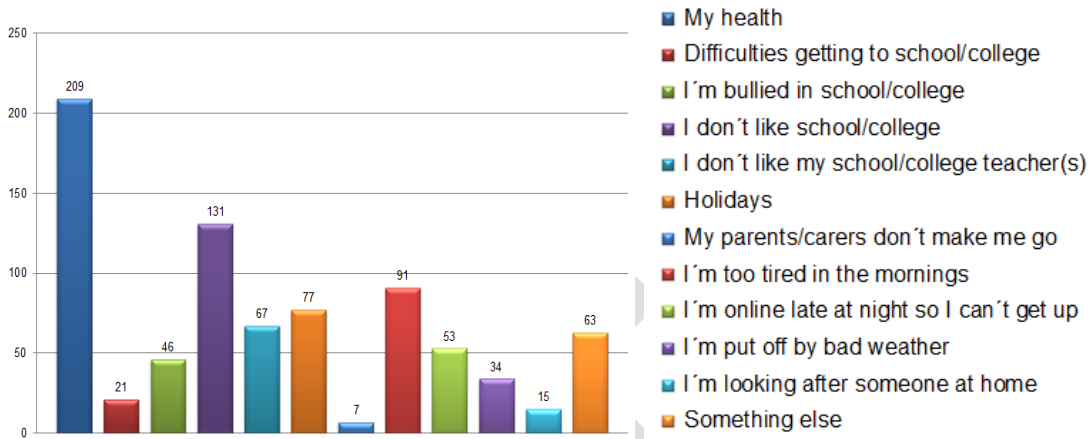
Young Carers

516 young people said they looked after someone at home. When asked if they found meeting homework/coursework deadlines hard because they looked after someone. 25% said Yes, all the time or Quite often. Young people were also asked if looking after someone at home stopped them from going out and enjoying themselves. 41% said Yes, Often, or Sometimes.

Education

Attendance

- Young people were asked whether they always went to school/college when they should. 2,719 responded in total. 83% (n = 2,261) said Yes, always. The 17% who did not always attend gave these reasons why:

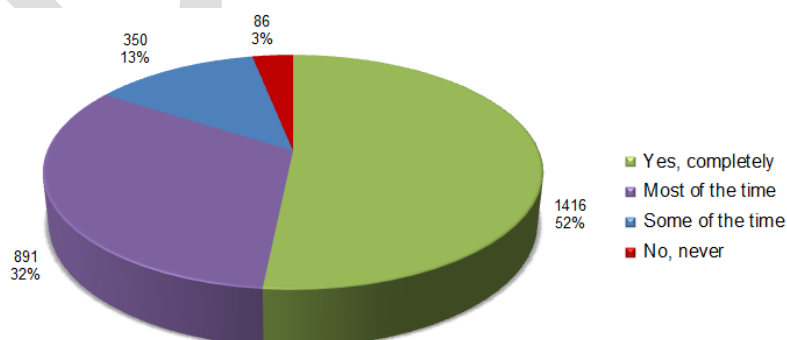


View of school

- The young people were asked to select the best things about their school. 2,744 young people responded (More than one response could be given). The highest responses were the teachers (34%), classroom facilities (33%), and exam results (31%).
- The young people were asked to select from an identical list the worst things about their school. 2,724 responded (More than one response could be given). The highest responses were the standards of behaviour (34%), nothing (31%), and the teachers (13%)

Feeling Safe at School

Young people were asked if they felt safe at school. Of 2,743 responding, 52% said Yes, completely safe.



Those who said they never felt safe or only felt safe some of the time, were asked to say where in school they felt unsafe. The highest responses were given for in the toilets, in the corridors, or in the school yard.

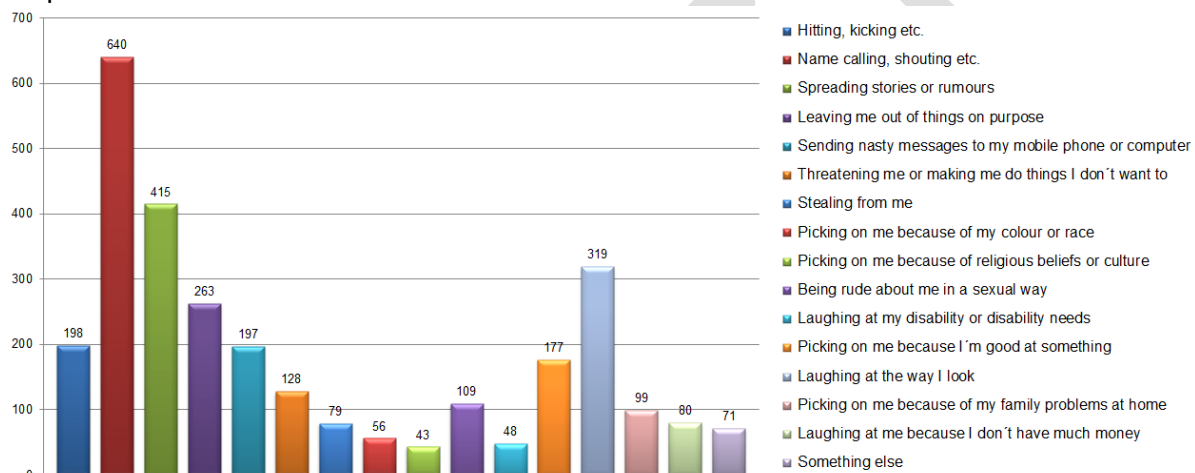
Bullying

The young people were all asked if they had been picked on or been bullied in the last few months. 2,989 responded. 69% said No, 10% said Once or twice a year, 9% said Once or twice a term, 6% said About once a week and 6% said it happened Several times a week.

Those who had been picked on or bullied were asked where. Of the 1,019 young people responding:

- 78% said it had happened in school or college
- 12% said in my community
- 8% said at home

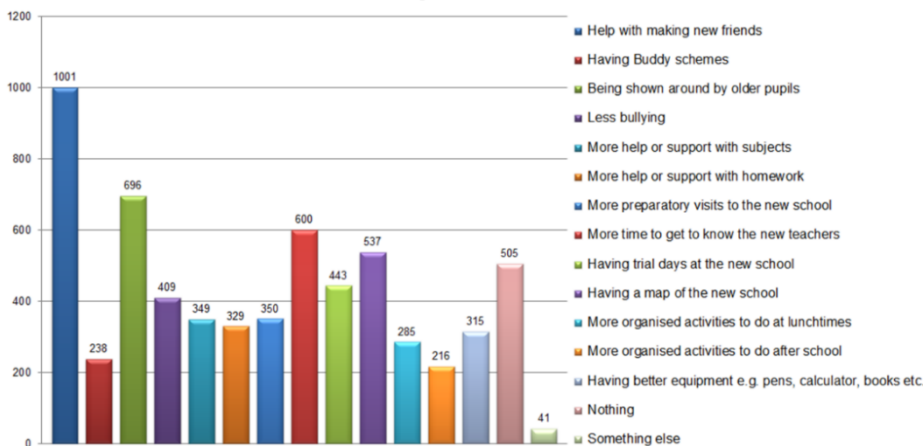
Young people who had experienced bullying were asked what forms they had experienced. 1,100 responded.



74% felt they could tell someone about the bullying

Transition to Secondary School

Young people were asked how easy the move was from primary to secondary school. 2,526 young people responded. 64% found the move very easy or easy, but, 24% said it was difficult or very difficult. 92% had visited their secondary school at least once and 86% had felt welcome on their first day. 37% said that help making friends would have made the move easier, but 19% said nothing would have helped.



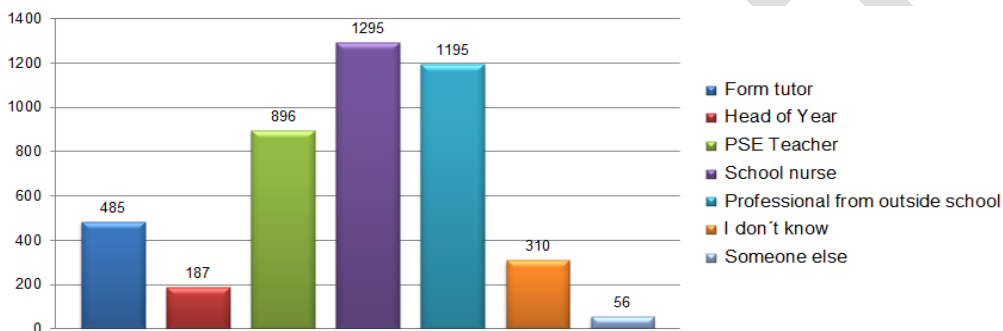
School Council

The young people were asked if they felt their School Council had made a difference to their school. 3,036 young people responded. 6% said it had made a big difference. 56% said it had made some difference. 38% said it had made no difference.

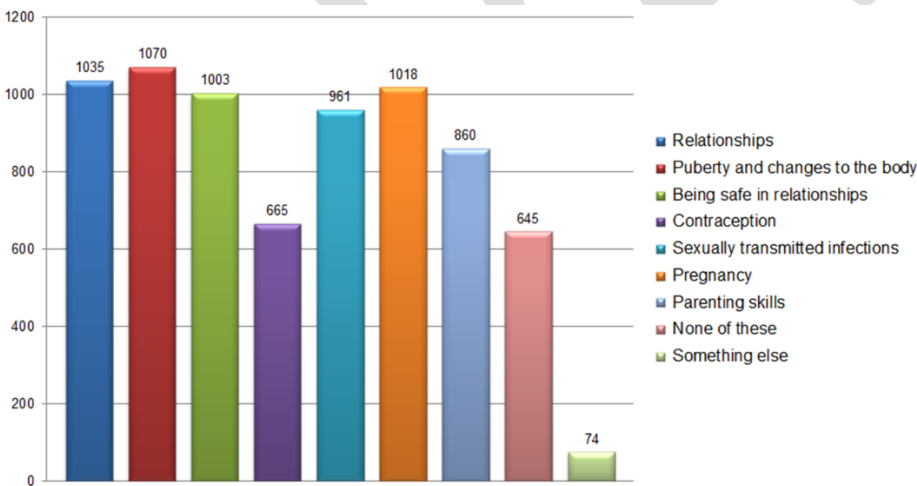
Sex and Relationship Education

Young people were asked at what age they thought SRE should start. Of 2,625 young people responding 3% said they didn't think there should be SRE at school. Most said they thought it should take place in Years 6 (33%) or 7 (24%), whilst 13% said it should be in Year 5 or below.

When asked who should teach it, the 2,770 responding said:



When asked 'Which areas of SRE would you like to learn more about?', the 2,853 responding said:



Community Safety

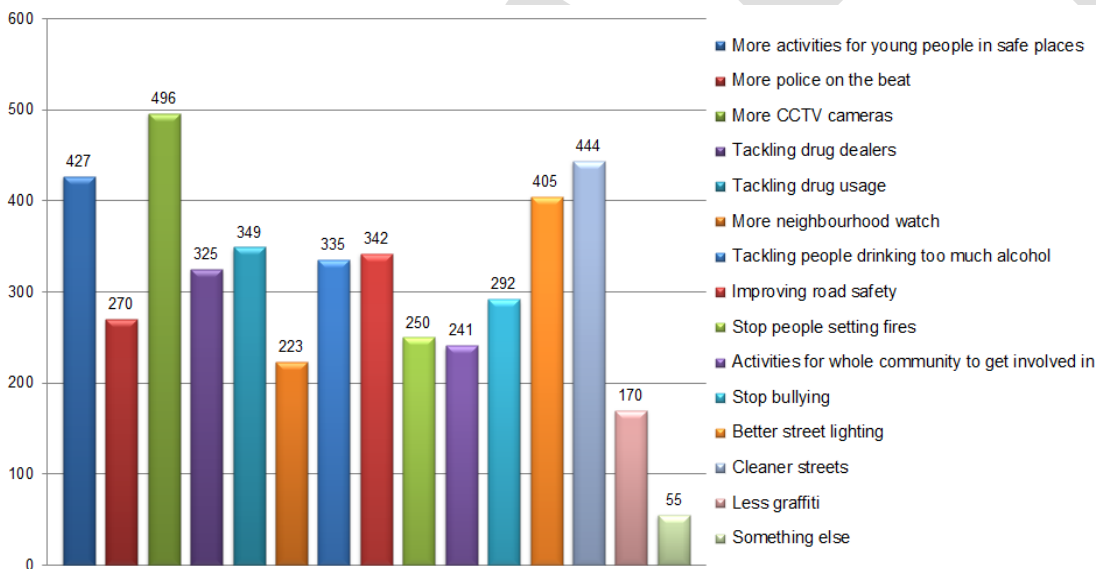
Young people were asked how safe they felt in their local area. **3,315** responded.

- 60% said they felt completely safe
- 34% said they felt safe most of the time

The young people who said they felt unsafe were asked to select from a list all the things that made them feel that way. 183 people responded.

- 53% said People using drugs
- 51% said People drinking alcohol
- 48% said Violence and threatening behaviour
- 42% said Groups of people older than me

The young people who did not feel completely safe were asked 'What would make the street/area you live in safer?' 1420 responded.



Participation in Early Years

Swansea's Healthy City Early Years Strategy sets out how those working with children and families in Swansea plan to support every child to have the best start in life. Recognising respecting and fulfilling the rights of our youngest children is continuing to build as a priority in Swansea, and the recognition that young children can also make informed decisions about their lives continues to be evident in ongoing extensions of consultations to this group:

Childcare Sufficiency Assessment

Under the UNCRC children are recognised as full human beings who must be acknowledged as citizens with a voice, and competent in using that voice as experts in their own lives. Therefore, when it came time to reassess the sufficiency of childcare in Swansea in 2017, it was regarded as fundamental that children who use childcare were offered an opportunity to say what they thought about the quality of provision they received.



In January 2017, the Swansea Family Information Service and Life Stages Team undertook consultation with a total of 67 children aged 2 – 11 years. 17 of the children were aged 2 years, 22 were aged 3-4 years, 15 were aged 5-7 years and 13 were aged 8-11 years.

Five consultation sessions took place at specific day care settings including:

- Two Flying Start providers
- Two private day nurseries
- An after school club



Children were invited to share what quality childcare looks like to them, in ways that were appropriate to their age and maturity. This included talking about what the best and worst things were about childcare, what they would like to see more or less of and how they would improve settings.

Children were also invited to provide information about other requirements of the assessment, e.g. how often children attend childcare, why they attend and how they get to and from settings.

Consultation with these very young children was highly successful, enabling a number of key conclusions to be reached including:

- Children aged 2 – 4 years believe that (free) play is a very important part of their childcare experience – especially, when possible, outdoor play
- Grandparents play a vital informal role in helping to provide childcare for 2, 3 and 4 year olds
- Children aged 5 years and over also frequently enjoy more physical types of (free) play, including being outdoors – when at a childcare setting
- Children aged 5 years and over evidently had clear thoughts and views on the type(s) of food they received when at childcare
- There was a more frequent incidence of part-time attendance of a provision than full-time



Outcomes of engagement:

- A successful test of engaging with younger children than last year was demonstrated, i.e. taking the age of this consultation down to 2 years.
- Children successfully contributed to thinking about the definition of quality childcare in Swansea. This is more than affordability and accessibility for parents, but also must incorporate the experience children receive whilst in settings, often of which they have no choice about attending.
- Children across the age range resoundingly requested more opportunity to play outdoors. Outdoor play forms a large part of the actions to implement the findings of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment and has become a priority of the Family Information Service and others working on delivering quality provision for parents and young children in Swansea.

UK Youth Parliament

Each year the UK Youth Parliament attends a sitting at the House of Commons to debate issues voted for by young people across the UK.

As a part of this, the 'Make Your Mark' project supports young people from all areas of the UK to vote on issues that are most important to them. Each person can vote for one topic from a list of ten and the five most popular will be debated in the House of Commons.

In September 2016, 1467 young people were supported by pupils who attended the Big Housing Conversation to submit votes.

This is a record high in Swansea.

The outcome of the vote in Swansea is as follows:

A curriculum for life	235 votes
First aid education	225 votes
Votes at 16	196 votes
Transport	177 votes
Tackling racism and religious discrimination	173 votes
Mental health	170 votes
NHS Cuts	108 votes
Body image	87 votes
Raising awareness of sexual harassment in school	69 votes
Fund our Youth Services	27 votes

Election of Members of Youth Parliament

July saw the election of a new member of the UK Youth Parliament for Swansea. Young people gave their views on the democratic process at a Big Conversation and as a result, each secondary school was invited to nominate a candidate for election. Five candidates submitted written and recorded statements and an online survey was distributed to pupils via schools. 523 pupils voted in an alternative vote system, and a member of the Youth Parliament and Deputy Member of the Youth Parliament were duly elected.

The MYP will be supported to attend national events. They will be encouraged to fulfil their role locally by engaging with other young people through Big Conversation and other means, and campaigning on issues arising.

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Objective 2: Promoting Knowledge and Understanding of the UNCRC

Developing knowledge and understanding of the UNCRC through training for all staff and decision makers within the City and County of Swansea, including other statutory and key voluntary partners

We are committed to supporting people to understand children's rights. This often involves supporting services to think about how the UNCRC applies in their day to day running and how practically children's rights is or can be embedded into service infrastructure.

In the last 12 months 141 people from a variety of areas have accessed bespoke training opportunities

Decision Makers Training

Buy-in and leadership at a senior level has undoubtedly underpinned the success Swansea has experienced so far in embedding children's rights in all of its work. Training sessions have been offered to all, and facilitated with 31 Councillors following the election process.

Governors have continued to attend UNCRC training as a part of the Annual School Governor Training Programme, with 23 receiving support in the last academic year.

Bespoke Training Requests

A number of requests for workforce development sessions that are bespoke to particular services or areas of work were facilitated in 2016/7. Most commonly, these requests came from early years services and the following sessions were provided:

- A UNCRC session to those making Healthy and Sustainable Pre School Scheme assessments. This session was developed to support assessors to make clear links between the modules of the HSPS Scheme and the rights of the child.
- A regional 1-day UNCRC session for childcare settings participating in the HSPS Scheme. This was to support the session for assessors and to explore the work settings do, and can do, and their links to the UNCRC.
- A workshop for Wales Pre-School Providers Association was held to explore the practicality of children's rights in Early Years. The session specifically considered models of childhood and the competencies of young children. The session was delivered in partnership with Early Intervention and Prevention services and encompassed storytelling and cooking with children work.

Other bespoke workforce development sessions have included children's rights for children with parents in prison, and children's rights of young parents.

Training in School Settings

In September 2017, 98% of schools in Swansea are engaged with the Rights Respecting Schools Process.

26 schools have received individual support from UNICEF in the last 12 months. This includes full INSET training, after school workshops and sessions for pupils

Partnership Approach Embedding Children's Rights

UNCRC within the Public Service Board and Children and Young People's Partnership

A Partnership Commitment

There is a long standing, established partnership approach to this agenda and will continue to work together as the wellbeing plans develop to ensure children's rights is embedded for future generations. This includes recognition of partner's commitments to the UNCRC and supporting others by sharing the Council's learning of embedding children's rights. The ABM University Health Board has made a commitment to Children's Rights and developed their own Children's Right Charter focussing on specific articles of the UNCRC to ensure the voices of children and young people are being heard at the highest level of decision making. Other partners are also looking at how child rights can be embedded within frameworks.

The re-established Children & Young People's Partnership Board has reinvigorated partnership working on children and young people's issues, ensuring that the Council's top priorities around safeguarding, educational attainment and poverty reduction are reflected, along with the commitment to Child Rights, ensuring rights based practice is embedded.

A joint programme has been established by the Future Generations Commissioner and the Children's Commissioner to assist public bodies in embedding the UNCRC in developing our approach to implementing the Wellbeing of Future generations Wales Act; this will be discharged through 'Children's Rights: Doing it the Right Way' and its accompanying Children's Rights Self-Assessment. Swansea Council has arranged with the office of the Future Generation Commissioner and the office of the Children's Commissioner to make use of their CRSA toolkit to self-assess the extent to which children's rights are embedded in Swansea's Well-Being Plan and across the Children and Young People's Partnership.

Children's Rights Network

The Children's Rights Network is a multi-agency group of over 80 organisations whose aims is to champion children's rights in or to promote and raise awareness to officers, partners and members of the public. The network shares learning and resources, in order to further embed Children's Rights within practise, throughout the authority area and support the development and implementation of the Children and Young People's Rights Scheme in Swansea. The Network supports communication between diverse ranges of partners and contributes to enhancing a whole council approach to

embedding children’s rights. Work has been done this year to formalise links and communication between the Network and the Children and Young People’s Partnership Board.

Whole Council Approach Embedding Children’s Rights

Our ethos in Swansea is that everyone working for the Council is a member of the team committed to developing services to deliver the best outcomes for children and young people. Services for children and young people are at the heart of all our work with Safeguarding being our top corporate priority.

This approach has transformed the way the council works, developing services which are integrated and joined-up approach and deliver outcomes which are best for children and young people.

Corporate Directorate

Strategic Equality Plan

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) has been integrated into the Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) to raise awareness and place children’s rights at the heart of decision making across all directorates of the local authority.

Last year, all service areas were required to set three UNCRC objectives that focussed on training and development of knowledge and understanding of the UNCRC within each service area, promotion and awareness raising of the UNCRC, making explicit links to relevant articles and use of the Children’s Rights logo for Swansea, and compliance with the EIA process

Progress on the UNCRC Objectives within the Strategic Equality Plan

Each department is required to report annually on how they meet the objectives relevant to their department within the Swansea Equality Plan. For 2016/17, this includes reporting on the UNCRC objectives.

Whilst there is a commitment to the UNCRC across the authority, information on the progress of individual departments is limited. Work needs to be done to support departments to access workforce development opportunities and to promote Children’s Rights and evidence due regard, particularly those who do not work directly with children and young people but can have an impact on the rights of children. This will form a recommendation at the end of this report.

Democratic Services Reporting Template

In the last 12 months the process through which policies, reports and service decisions are reported to Council has been adapted to consider the impact decisions made have on the rights of the child. This means that any policy or service decision made that directly or indirectly affects children, can be scrutinised by senior decision makers. It also means that any negative impact on children’s rights, where possible, can be mitigated.

Health & Safety Emergency Planning

Swansea Council Emergency Management Service (EMS) were contacted by Save the Children in March 2017 in order that we may assist them in a 'Take Care' project they were delivering within Trallwn primary school, Swansea.

The service engaged with the project by providing them with an opportunity to debate emergencies and in particular their chosen emergency 'Fire'. The children researched how fire affects them and how in an emergency, they may be evacuated to a place of safety provided by the local authority (Rest Centre).

The team at Swansea Council EMS were cognisant of the UNCRC and in particular Article 3 (Best Interests of the Child) and Article 12 (respect for the views of the child) where following the project, we have changed emergency plans in relation to listening to and understanding children's needs and involving them post-emergency where decisions have to be made in regards community recovery.

An excerpt from one emergency plan is outlined below. It refers especially to recovery after an incident, where 'adults' and 'officials' traditionally determine how a community is rebuilt:

"The children of Swansea will inherit any decision, so it is prudent to consider their wishes at every stage"

In July 2017, The Take Care project were invited to the Council Chamber at the Civic where they presented to an audience of professionals including Swansea Council, Fire, Police, Ambulance, Burns & Plastics specialist (Morriston Hospital), Natural Resources Wales and school governors.

The presentation was well received and the promise of change was made across the professional services so UNCRC would factor into policy and future decision-making.

Place Directorate

The last 12 months has seen an increased partnership approach to making use of Big Conversation mechanisms to engage children and young people in significant developments affecting the city centre. These include:

City of Culture

The UK City of Culture is a title given to a city for one year during which it creates a programme of local, national and international events that become a catalyst for investment, regeneration and economic growth. The team co-ordinating the bid have engaged children through the Big Conversation and Pupil Voice Forum, exploring what it is about the city is important to them. Conversations have included what activities, attractions and places are important to celebrate and what makes Swansea a special place?

City Centre Redevelopment

The Place directorate has been proactive in engaging children and young people in the ongoing redevelopments of Swansea City Centre. Contractors from London visited to specifically discuss with young people proposals being made for the city centre and to gain insight into what young people needed from the new developments.

Smoke Free Beaches

Swansea Council launched a smoke-free beach trial at Caswell Bay in April 2016. The aims of the voluntary ban on smoking at the beach was to help provide cleaner, healthier places for people including children and to reduce pollution on beaches caused by cigarette ends. Colleagues from Trading Standards worked in partnership with the Children's Rights Team to ensure that the associated Children's Rights articles were promoted within the campaign and "Dilly" the corporate children's rights logo present on beach signage, to promote that children's right to grow up and be healthy was being upheld.

Park Signage

Friends of Polly Park were successful in applying to the Swansea Welsh Church Act Trust Fund, which is administered by Swansea Council. They were awarded £1,500 for a project to work in partnership with the St. Thomas primary school, Police and Swansea Council to produce and make rights signs for the park and other appropriate local venues. This project was as a result of work between Pupils and the Lleisiau Bach Project at Swansea University, where children researched people's understanding of rights in their local community. On finding that people's understanding of children's rights was less than they had hoped, an initiative was set up to raise money for rights signs throughout St Thomas that would promote the UNCRC. This is a good example of partnership working can support the promotion of children's rights in Swansea.

People Directorate

Rights Respecting Schools

One of the commitments to ensure we mainstreamed and promoted children rights to ALL children and young people in Swansea was to embed a rights based approach within the school ethos through the UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools Award (RRSA). In 2013 we entered into a 5 year agreement with UNICEF UK to achieve this and ensure ALL schools in Swansea are engaged on their journey to achieve Level 1 Rights Respecting Schools status by 2017. As we come to the end of the journey some of the headline achievements over the past 5 years are listed below:

Reach of RRSA process 2013 – 2017:

- Approximately 48,358 children and young people
- Approximately 2052 teaching staff
- Approximately 1324 non-teaching staff

Achievements of the RRSA process 2013 – 2017:

- Number of schools achieving Level 2 award = 22
- Number of schools achieving Level 1 award = 43
- Number of schools submitted Record of Commitment/Action Plan (ROC) = 17
- Number of schools engaged and trained = 12
- Number of schools yet to engage = 2 (plans are in place to target these)
- 98% of schools engaged in the RRSA process
- 68% of schools achieving Level 1 or above

Expected Outputs at the end of contract in October 2017

- Number of schools achieving Level 2 award = 25
- Number of schools achieving Level 1 award = 51
- Number of schools submitted Record of Commitment/Action Plan (ROC) = 11
- Number of schools engaged and trained = 9
- Number of schools yet to engage = 0
- 100% of schools engaged in the RRSA process
- 79% of schools achieving Level 1 or above

Reports from schools who have adopted a rights based approach show how this has contributed to attainment, attendance and well-being outcomes for children and young people in Swansea through;

- Improved self esteem and feelings of being valued and listened to
- Increased levels of respect, leading to improved relationships with others
- A sense of security as rights respecting language and behaviour is used consistently throughout service received
- Improved attainment and attendance and a reduction in exclusions in school
- An understanding of religion, cultures, beliefs and abilities different to their own
- A wider and deeper understanding of the world in which they live
- Children can see that these rights apply everywhere not just in school
- Children are more confident to speak out, e.g. Safeguarding issues/ Increased no. of disclosures

Strategic Equality Plans in Schools

Schools face the same obligations as the local authority in terms of meeting the Public Sector Equality Duty for Wales, such as setting clear equality objectives. Building on the integration of the UNCRC objectives Officers from Education, Access to Services and Children's Rights are currently working on a refreshed SEP template, specifically to assist schools in Swansea.

A template and supporting guidance has been circulated to schools and completed SEPs are published at <http://www.swansea.gov.uk/staffnet/equalitiesinschools>.

School Council Audit

In September 2016, it was announced that the regulation of school councils outlined in the Schools Council Regulation 2005 would sit with Local Authorities, making responsibility for assuring quality across school councils a central one. The picture of school councils across Swansea was unknown and

during the 2016/17 academic year, the Children's Rights Officer for Schools has attempted to audit schools and their pupil voice opportunities.

To date 100% of secondary schools and 18% of primary schools have completed the audit. Work continues on this with a view to complete the audit by December 2017 with a full analysis to report on.

Corporate Parenting Strategy

The City and County of Swansea Corporate Parenting Strategy centres on developing positive outcomes for vulnerable children and young people. The Strategy is underpinned by the guiding principles of the UNCRC, outlining objectives that ensure children and young people who are looked after are able to access provision in an equitable way to others, have opportunity to thrive and develop and seeks to ensure that adults who making decisions about them act in their best interests.

The full participation, involvement and contribution of children and young people looked after and leaving care is very much at the heart of the Corporate Parenting Strategy. Specific objectives relating to supporting children and young people who are looked after to be listened to and inform service delivery have been developed.

Whilst the Strategy in its entirety underpins the holistic rights of a child, Objective 8 specifically focuses on the participation of children and young people in decisions that are made about them.

Work is being undertaken as a part of this Objective to develop an engagement strategy for Child and Family Services which:

- Supports and enables participative practice
- Clarifies arrangements and opportunities for participation
- Demonstrates the wealth of rights based practice that takes place within the service that will evidences due regard
- Provide opportunity to identify any areas where improvement can be made.

Best Start in Life

Swansea's Healthy City Early Years Strategy sets out how those working with children and families in Swansea plan to support every child to have the best start in life. The strategy prioritises investment and early intervention in the early years of a child's life (-9 months to 5 years) seeking to break the cycle of disadvantage of vulnerable young children and their families by changing children's life chances so that they are better able to make a positive contribution to society and be the best that they can be.

The strategy sets out clear objectives that support families in readiness for birth, and further, in enabling them to support their children to thrive and develop in readiness for nursery and school and ultimately to enjoy their rights.

The Early Years Strategy promotes 7 Best Start messages to children, parents and families. These messages promote every child's rights to play, to be healthy, to feel safe, to join groups and make friends, to be with their family if that is best for them, to learn and thrive and develop to be the best that they can be.

29 Staff awareness sessions have been run with over 600 multi-agency staff attending. Whilst these sessions have been to raise awareness of the Best Start messages, making clear links between them and the UNCRC has provided a dual role in promoting and embedding children's rights in Early Years work. It is recognised that the Best Start Swansea messages are for children as well as parents and families and work has been done to engage young children in the messages.

Various events across Swansea to engage directly with children and young people promoting the Best Start work, these have included Seaview Primary Schools rights respecting day, Health Visiting week in Gorseinon and 360, National Play Day which received over 4000 attendees, the Teddy Bears picnic, an event which specifically targeted the pre-school age, and the opening of the Penplas Family Centre in Portmead, where Best Start worked closely with the Life Stages Team to promote play with children and parents together. Over 100 children made play dough with the team on this day.

Best Start Story Book

Continuing work to promote Best Start messages to parents and young children, Early Intervention Services worked closely with two children's authors and a group of 17 young parents that work with the Jig-so team to write and illustrate a story book based around the importance of play and playing together. The book 'An Adventure with Gramps' was published to help parents understand the importance Play has in the life of very young children. The activity helped promote the right every child has to play.

The use of the story book by parents will promote the Best Start messages in everyday family life and aligns to the ongoing work around storytelling that promotes children's voice and emotional wellbeing.

Building on the Best Start Messages, a number of approaches have been commissioned to further embed a rights based approach in early years:

Healthy and Sustainable Pre-School Scheme

The Healthy & Sustainable Preschool Scheme is situated within the Council's Early Intervention and Prevention Service and aims to encourage healthy habits with children of pre-school age. The programme and activities that are commissioned within it are considered are ones that incorporate the rights of the child into the programme. The scheme supports a rights based approach as it

originates from a principle that by providing healthy environments for children we are supporting the UNCRC. 38 childcare settings across Swansea, hosting up to 1,384 children, are signed up to and work through the scheme, made up of seven health-based topics, which are underpinned by a child's right to access nutritious food, clean water and a healthy and safe environment. In terms of activities that encourage participation in early years, the Healthy & Sustainable Pre-school Scheme has delivered a number of activities that work from the principle that children are capable no matter what the age. These include:

Children Can Cook sessions focused on providing staff with the ability and equipment to encourage children to cook healthily and to be full participants in the activity. We provide special 'Dog Knives' that enable children from the age of 2 years to cut food. We also encourage the use of rotary graters to get children grating food items, such as potato, carrots, cheese. The recipes are ones that focus on using fresh ingredients, a high proportion of vegetables and fruit, no added salt and low/no sugar.

- 23 pre-school settings have attended sessions and have demonstrated the skills learnt on the training in practice
- Five sessions training 61 practitioners have been facilitated.
- Demonstrations of cookery skills using the equipment and principles have taken place at Best Start events across Swansea such as the Health Visitor week promotion event in Gorseinon. Linking with the Children's rights team and the Healthy Schools team, 120 children have also participated in cookery sessions at public events, e.g. fun days

Jabadao Movement and Play Sessions. The principles of Jabadao begin from birth, and focus entirely on the child's competency to know what its body needs in terms of movement. The principles are child led and non-verbal. The Developmental movement Play space becomes a safe place for children to lead the activity and essential show that their 'voice' is important, and to feel no pressure from adults. This principle is shown to work in many formats, but none more so than when the TIG came to Swansea. 16 staff from 12 settings accessed the original training and continue to use Jabadao to inform their practice. This continues to be observed in Healthy and Sustainable Pre School assessments.

The **TIG** is a large inflatable luminaire that provides a non-verbal child led play experiences. The TIG was based at Clwyd Primary school for a week allowing children and practitioners and children to access a number of sessions to explore and experience child led play, from a very young age, demonstrating that even before articulating voice, children are capable of expressing themselves and have something to say through movement. As well as for very young children, the TIG team supported sessions for children with additional needs, enabling professionals to further understand how movement spaces are of paramount importance and how children's right to expression can still be fulfilled without voice.

Over the space of 5 days:

- 27 sessions were facilitated
- 191 children under 5 visited
- 66 parents experienced the TIG
- 47 childcare workers/early years professionals visited the TIG

Little Magic Train is a music and movement storytelling activity that stimulates imagination and allows the children to lead the story at various points. The activity encourages young children to tell a story using music and nothing but their imagination, which again allows children to lead activity and to have

their voice heard. A two day training course provided learning and resources to 24 practitioners from 18 preschool settings.

Good Start Great Start

Good Start Great Start is a national study designed by Middlesex University to help understand the impact of school readiness interventions. The programme, piloted in Swansea consisted of six two-hour sessions where parents and their pre-school age children undertook various activities designed to help prepare them for school. The activities included super snack, make and do, story time, singing and also discussion time for parents. Part of the aim for the programme is to develop an element of social capital with the families that are involved. The team ran the programme in two flying start settings. Part of the appeal of the Good Start Great Start approach was that all of the activities had a rights focus, and compliment not only the UNCRC but also the Best Start messages. As an academic study, this also provides a sound assessment of the Best Start messages and rights based approaches.

An evaluation of the pilot outlining the impact of the programme on school readiness will be provided in due course. This will also offer a comparison with other settings across the UK.

Play Sufficiency Assessment

The Children's Play Team have looked to ensure that our statutory duty to ensure sufficient play opportunities (arising from the Child & Families Wales Measure 2010) is approached from a children's rights perspective. Following completion of the 2016 Play Sufficiency Assessment, a summary version intended for children & young people was produced that emphasised the right to play, as well as the right to be listened to on issues that affect them. It included a feedback section for them to complete, potentially as part of their rights respecting work in schools and an explanation of how responses would be used to identify gaps and priorities moving forward was provided in an accessible format to children and young people.

Young Peoples Services

Building on the UNCRC workforce development undertaken by Young People's Services, a clear role for Lead Workers over the past 12 months has been to develop work that demonstrates Swansea Young People Service's commitment to upholding the rights of children and young people and embedding the principles of the UNCRC in all of our work.

- Referral forms highlight our commitment to the UNCRC by highlighting to professionals Article 12 and 3 – to ensure that the young person is consulted at every stage and has agreed to the request for service being made.
- Swansea YPS request for service form - incorporates the young person's view at point of request.
- Once a Young person and/or family are allocated a Lead worker, an assessment is carried out with the Family and a separate assessment for the young person. This is to ensure that the Young Person's well-being needs are not overlooked and form part of the family plan.

- Young People inform the development of their Trajectory (Action Plan) and each trajectory is tailored to meet the needs of the young person and family
- Each Young Person is part of the completion of our newly developing wellbeing wheel (capturing distance travelled for the young person)
- Young People will always be encouraged and supported to attend the reviews held six weekly; it is encouraging and testament to the workers that this is more likely to be the case than not. At any stage should young people feel that this not an option for them, staff will tailor the meeting or find alternative ways to ensure that young people have a voice and shape the work moving forward

Evolve Young People Service Universal Youth Club Provision embed the UNCRC by:

- Displaying the UNCRC Charter
- From September facilitate at least one Big Conversation per term with Young People about matter that affect them
- Working with young people to develop changes to the building they attend and inform the termly plans.

Work will continue in 2017/8 to affirm the links between Youth Work and the UNCRC.

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Objective 3: Promotion and awareness raising of the UNCRC

Dilly Dragon

Progress of the development of a campaign plan to more broadly promote and raise awareness of Children's Rights across the City and County of Swansea is ongoing and we continue to look for opportunities to promote with partners and make explicit links.

In alignment with the Rights Respecting Schools Award approach, work has been done with children and young people to develop a County-wide rights mascot, known as Dilly the Dragon. Dilly acts as a brand and symbolises the Council's commitment to the UNCRC; the Dilly brand underpins the promotion campaign for children's rights in Swansea, examples of this includes:

- A Dilly the Dragon flag flies during planned periods from the Civic Centre Building;
- Any young person engaging in the Big Conversation or any adult engaging in UNCRC workforce development receives a Dilly pin-badge, with a view to promote and act as a champion for children's rights in the community.
- A #DillyDragon #DdraigDilly has been linked to the Corporate Facebook and Twitter sites; this means that any information promoted using this hash tag reaches the wider public as well as our targeted audiences.
- Dilly the Dragon is included on all Big Conversation and affiliated promotional material;
- Dilly promotional material is used and circulated at a range of public events. These include pens, headphones, water bottles and UNCRC posters.

In the last 12 months, work has been done with partners to make links between pieces of work and the UNCRC so that a rights message can be applied and promoted as widely as possible. Examples include promoting Dilly on 'Playful Schools' plaques and signage, 'Smoke Free Beach' and 'Smoke Free School Gates' signage and as a part of the Best Start Campaign. Regular posts have been made to the Children's Commissioner's 'Rights Hour' Twitter feed, which have been regularly picked up and circulated nationally by the Commissioner.

Work needs to be extended to more effectively promote rights work in Swansea online. This includes on the Council's website and via social media. This will form a recommendation at the end of this report.

Objective 4: Ensuring appropriate and robust mechanisms are in place to receive feedback and complaints in relation to the UNCRC.

Improving How We Work

The council is committed to making sure that our policies and functions have a positive effect on the children and young people in Swansea. Whilst as a Council we are confident that good foundations have been set to ensure due regard is paid to children's rights, it is important to acknowledge that as an evolving process, there is always room to improve and develop.

It is important to listen to those affected by council decisions and to receive feedback about when decisions have or have not worked well for children and young people. A UNCRC mailbox, UNCRC@swansea.gov.uk, has been set up for anyone who has a query or would like to offer feedback about the Children and Young People's Rights Scheme or children's rights more generally.

In addition to this, a clear and open process has been developed for any person who may require further support with their query or feedback to ensure that any issues can be addressed and that the Council can be the best it can be and that services operate in a way that is effective, efficient and result in the best outcomes for children, young people and their families.

A detailed process map, including escalation to complaints is outlined on the following page as **Figure 1**.

This process has been in place for 12 months and there has been no complaints received by Corporate Complaints Service around Children's Rights.

A more robust way of recording informal queries, which resolve the query before escalating into a compliant needs to be refined and is a recommendation for development in 18/19.

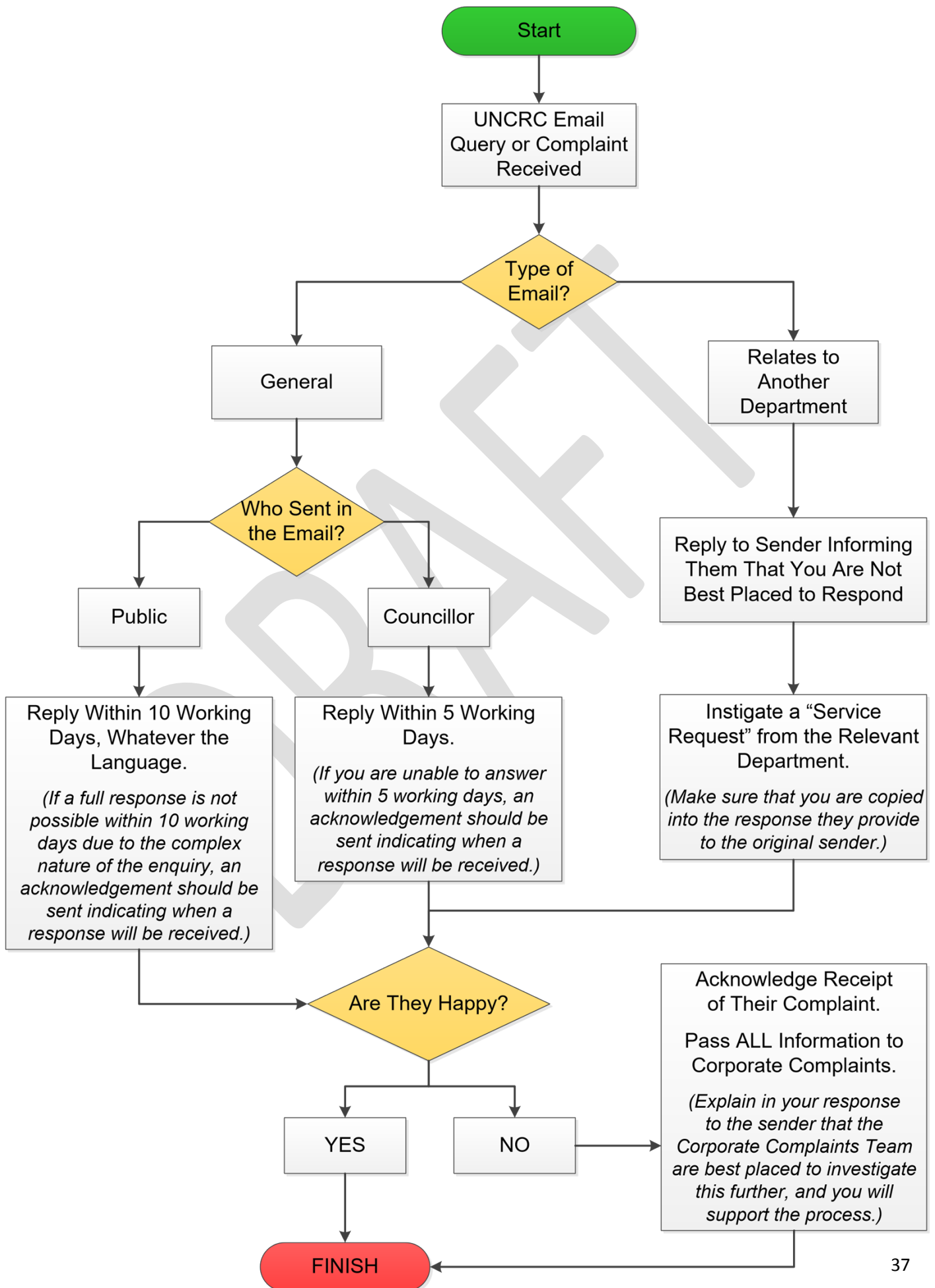


Figure 1

Objective 5: Ensuring compliance, accountability and impact of the UNCRC due regard duty that is evidenced based.

The Children's Rights Impact Assessment process

The Children's Rights Impact Assessment process was embedded within the Equality Impact Assessment process in November 2014, when the Children and Young people's Rights Scheme was formally launched.

The table below outlines the number of full Equality Impact Assessment reports completed and of those, the number of reports with a direct impact on children and young people in this reporting period.

Number of full EIA reports required as a result of screening forms received	22
Number of full EIA reports that had a direct impact on Children and Young People	17

Children's Rights Impact Assessments have been submitted from across the directorates of the City & County of Swansea and examples received have had both a direct or indirect impact on children and young people.

Embedding the Children's Rights Impact Assessment within the Equality Impact Assessment provides a platform for services, who may not do so as a matter of course, to be supported to consider how their service or policy decisions affect children and young people (considering age as a protected characteristic), and to be supported to engage with those service users to ensure decisions are made in their best interests and that they are effective in meeting their needs.

The impact of this work is difficult to measure, however by monitoring this the following outcomes are achieved:

- Equality outcomes are rarely quantitative in nature, and by undertaking EIAs early on in any process or development, we are able to mitigate / avoid any potential barriers / issues prior to design or implementation.
- The ultimate aim of the EIA process is to ensure that discrimination does not occur. By not seeing anything different, we are achieving our goal of addressing inequality, i.e. we would 'see' plenty without the process in place.
- Every EIA report is seen by at least 4 officers with expertise in equality, children's rights, tackling poverty and engagement – constructive criticism and advice is offered throughout the process which can increase officer knowledge and awareness. This can be measured and changes as a result of advice or support given will be measured using a new database moving forward.

An Equality and Inclusion Joint Working group has been developed to oversee and most effectively consider the impact of the EIA and CRIA. This group is made up of Officers who currently comment on EIAs.

Rights Respecting Schools Impact Assessment process

Our work to put the UNCRC at the heart of our school's culture and ethos has made the following impact to improve wellbeing and to develop every child's talents and abilities to their fullest potential.

Each school that undergoes a Rights Respecting Schools Award are asked to identify the degree of impact that this work has had against each of the following criteria.

- Children and young people have improved respect for themselves and for others.
- Children and young people are more engaged in their learning.
- Education achievement is enhanced.
- Children and young people develop positive relationships and behaviour, including finding their peers "kind and helpful".
- Children and young people demonstrate positive attitudes towards diversity in society and overcoming prejudices.
- There are reduced numbers of exclusions and less bullying.
- Increasing percentages of pupils like school.
- Children and young people feel empowered to respect the rights of others locally, nationally and globally, and to uphold their own rights.

Looking Ahead to 2017 – 2018

It is clear to see that in three years Swansea Council has made significant headway in developing a culture that recognises, respects and works toward fulfilling Children's Rights.

Swansea has cemented itself as an Authority that works together to achieve the best outcomes for children and young people, by working with them, listening to what they have to say, and supporting them to reach their potential; but there is more to do.

Broadening Our Approach

It is apparent from our Strategic Equality Plan findings, that across the Council, whilst there is likely to be a wealth of rights based practice, this is not recorded or evidenced.

Therefore in 2017/18 we will;

- Provide bespoke workforce development to departments across the Council so we can further evidence a whole Council approach
- Ensure the embedded process of promoting Dilly is defined and implemented across the Council

Extending Our Offer

Engagement with children has continued to grow in the last 12 months, though little progress has been made to extend the offer of opportunity to children aged under 10 years in a consistent way. There are pockets of good practice in engaging very young children, in extending the age range of children who are looked after and offering a pupil voice opportunity to year 6 pupils, though there is a gap in engagement of primary school children aged 3-10 years.

Equally, work needs to be done to broaden the demographic of participants at the Big Conversation to involve young people who may not be in school.

Therefore in 2017/18 we will;

- Explore ways to offer consistent opportunities to children of Primary School age 3 – 10 years
- Extend the Corporate Parenting Challenge to include children and young people aged 7-21 years.
- Increase engagement of young people not in school in Big Conversations sessions.

Being More Visible

It is important that officers, councillors, children, young people, families and others are able to easily find information about how to access their rights, participate or receive information about how the Council has paid due regard to the UNCRC. We must also get better at how we share and promote the breadth of rights work that takes place in Swansea.

Therefore in 2017/18 we will;

- Establish and promote Swansea Council's Children's Rights work through Social Media
- Ensure the Council's web pages are up to date, relevant and accessible.

Assessing Impact

Demonstrating the impact of the Council's due regard to the UNCRC is the next step and challenge for the City and County of Swansea.

Therefore in 2017/18 we will;

- Map all monitoring processes in place to understanding the impact of embedding a Child Rights approach on children and young people in Swansea. This includes undertaking an authority wide self-assessment for embedding children's rights in the Wellbeing Plan, assessing the impact of Swansea's CRIA and monitoring the use of and impact of the Council's process to hold themselves to account in terms of paying due regard.
- Further understand the impact of the rights respecting schools approach and continue to work with schools to ensure the rights respecting work continues after the contract with UNICEF ends.