



This report offers an update of the progress the Council has made of embedding children & young people's rights-based work and engagement in Swansea over the past 2 years.

(September 2021- 2023)



If you have any questions regarding the content of this report, please contact UNCR@swansea.gov.uk



Swansea Councils Children and Young People Rights Scheme Progress Report

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Background

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) sets out the rights all children aged 0-18 years have to make sure they are healthy, happy and safe. In September 2013, Swansea Council agreed that children's rights should be embedded within the Council policy framework, and that a duty be placed on the Council's Cabinet to have 'due regard' to the UNCRC when making decisions. This means that when Swansea Council develop new policies or strategies, review or change existing policies and strategies, or develop or change Council services, thought must be given to how those decisions affect the rights of children in Swansea.

Remodel of Children & Young People's Rights work

The original Scheme was published in 2014, with a second version published in 2021, which was updated following public consultation and ensures the revised scheme compliments the 'Right Way' '[The Right Way](#)' principled approach that is being embedded nationally and led by the Children's Commissioner for Wales.

The "Right Way" approach is framed around five Human Rights principles and includes Participation; Empowerment; Embedding; Accountability; and Non-Discrimination. Alignment to the National process means opportunity to provide clear guidance, and tangible benchmarks for council departments to embed a whole council approach and evidence outcomes. It was agreed that Swansea Council would use the 5 principles to report progress made in relation to upholding the Children's Rights commitment.

A copy of the 'plan on a page' which outlines what the Council will do to ensure that Children's Rights are at the heart of decision making is included in **Appendix A**. (Recognised as good practice in terms of its accessibility and usability by the Children's Commissioner for Wales)

County wide priorities for Children & Young People

As part of the Children's Rights Scheme, Children and Young People identified six County wide priorities to be addressed by Swansea Council and its partners of the Public Service Board. Progress relating to many of the priorities is captured throughout the report through the five principles and progress is shared with children and young people at Universal Children's Day in November each year. Priorities are:

- ✓ Protecting the Environment and Green Spaces
- ✓ Quiet Voices
- ✓ Supporting Disabled Children
- ✓ Equality for LGBTQ+ Children & Young People
- ✓ Politics
- ✓ Listening to Learners

Progress via the “Right Way” five principled approach

Section 1: Participation

Participation means making sure good quality arrangements are in place to ensure children and young people (CYP) are listened to, and that their opinion is heard in decisions that are being made that affect them. Ensuring that mechanisms for participation are in line with the National Participation Standards.

Swansea Council has committed to:

- ✓ Involve children directly in the design, monitoring and evaluation of services they receive.
- ✓ Learn how other organisations are doing this and develop plans that meet the needs of children and young people in Swansea.
- ✓ Develop clear targets to listen to children and young people from marginalised groups.
- ✓ Involve children in the recruitment of staff who have responsibilities that impact on children.

In Swansea, meaningful and inclusive opportunities for children and young people to be heard in decisions that affect them is a priority. Since 2014, the county mechanism to ensure this has been called the Big Conversation and over the years has offered thousands of children and young people aged 5–25 year opportunities to engage in accessible and meaningful sessions to shape services and have a voice on issues that impact their lives.

The pandemic meant that thought had to be given to how and where we engaged with children and young people and so the “Big Conversation” model was temporarily put on hold during this reporting period. Teams reverted to more regular and direct group work within schools and community settings as evidenced within this report.

The “Big Conversation” has recently been reviewed and remodelled to provide an overarching structure with a mix of opportunities to facilitate participation and feedback to children and young people in relation to how their voice is being heard and influencing decisions. (Due to be launched at the end of November 23).

Future pages display examples from each Directorate across the Council of the work they have undertaken to uphold the first principle of **participation**.

Section 1: Participation

Social Services Directorate

Universal Children's Day:

Swansea's Commitment to Children's Rights is celebrated annually with an event for all Swansea schools on Universal Children's Day. The celebration in November 2022 focussed on the importance of hearing the voices of children and young people and providing a "You said, we did" section to feed back to children and young people about what Swansea had been doing in relation to the priorities they had set.

In total 152 children and young people attended from primary and secondary schools, along with 23 organisations who provided interactive stalls that the children and young people could look around, receive information, and take part in various activities.



Votes @ 16 and Democracy Grant Partnership with Swansea MAD:

Throughout 2022 Swansea Democratic Services and the Partnership & Involvement Team worked together to ensure young people aged 14+ years were aware that laws had changed in Wales enabling young people aged 16+ years to vote in Welsh elections. Swansea MAD were procured to run sessions to ensure young people had the tools to enable them to a) register to vote and b) understand how to access information about politics and how to participate in the voting process.

The program saw 19 Young Ambassadors recruited from 10 Secondary Schools as "Votes at 16 Ambassadors" and a film produced by young people to show the voting process. The role of the ambassadors was to promote and encourage their peers to register to vote for the forthcoming elections. Ambassadors were supported in schools and youth settings to promote votes at 16 and registration to vote.

A Swansea "Votes @ 16" film was produced bilingually by 30 pupils from Ysgol Gyfun Gwyr and Ysgol Bryn Tawe who participated in several workshops supported by Swansea MAD, to generate film ideas, storyboard, write scripts, act, direct and edit a short film to promote Votes at 16. The video can be found at: <https://www.swanseamad.com/vote/>



In June 2023 Swansea Council partnered with Swansea MAD to access a "Democracy Grant" from Welsh Government Democratic Engagement Fund, which will support school and community sessions continuing the work of how to register and how to vote but also exploring the need for new Voter ID. Sessions will be done through creative means such as DJing, Virtual Reality and Stop Motion for example.

Junior Safeguarding Board (JSB) – A regional partnership

Established in January 2019, the Junior Safeguarding Board (JSB) comprises of representatives from secondary schools and community groups from across Neath Port Talbot and Swansea, including schools for children and young people with additional and complex needs.

The purpose of the JSB is to provide a platform for children and young people to have the opportunity to participate and have their voices heard regarding safety at school, at home, online and in their communities.

In 2021, young people highlighted ‘Equality & Discrimination’ as an issue and decided to focus on raising awareness and championing LGBTQIA+ rights. The JSB which consisted of 26 young people made the decision to develop a resource that could be shared with schools, community groups and key stakeholders and with the support of staff, the ‘Equali-Tea’ resource was produced. The resource pack included a quiz; conversation starter teapots and scribble pads. In 2022 the resource pack was hand delivered to all secondary schools across NPT and Swansea and workshops were delivered to school pupils, community groups and those who work with young people.

During January and February 2022, 7 young people delivered online training sessions to 29 decision makers from across Swansea and Neath Port Talbot, and during Safeguarding week in November 22 a further 3 training sessions were delivered to 50 participants who worked with CYP.

Throughout events and sessions in 2022 young people shared that they want the Local Authority, Children’s Commissioner and the Police to prioritise “Young Women’s Safety” and more broadly “Safe Spaces” in their work.



Setting the JSB Priority for 2023: 17 Young people from the Junior Safeguarding Board came together to choose the theme for 2023. They met in Climbing hangar where they took part in a climbing session alongside creative brain storming. The theme set by the young people for the JSB for 2023 is Sexual Harassment. Young people have since been working on projects across Swansea that look at reducing gender-based violence, sexual harassment in schools, and safe spaces.

White Ribbon Day:

Every year on White Ribbon Day (November 20th) young people are invited to various events to raise awareness. November '21 focused on “All men can” 15 young boys came together to discuss what they could do to reduce gender-based violence.

White Ribbon Day 2022 saw 14 young people from Swansea come together to make a plan and a pledge on what we can do. After a number of workshops young people created a TikTok video displaying silhouette images of themselves with messages around young women's safety.



Throughout 2022 and 2023 a joint project with the Partnership and Engagement Team (Community Safety) saw the co-design and facilitation of a series of workshops with young people across Swansea, aimed to address and explore concerns that young people had raised in relation to Hate Crime, Discrimination and the Safety of Women and Girls.



Sessions involved key note speakers, creative outputs, opportunities for discussion, critical thinking and problem solving around these topics, all of which helped to promote and uphold children and young people's right to education, receive information that they can access in an understandable way, be involved in decisions that affect them, as well as their right to grow up in a safe and healthy environment in which they can thrive.

Feedback during "White Ribbon Day" sessions and at workshops on "Celebrating Similarities and Understanding Differences" (Countering Right Wing Extremism and Hate Crime) where 27 young people from across Swansea attended, was that the issue of Violence Against Women, Sexual Violence and Domestic Abuse is increasing in prevalence among younger communities and that young people wanted opportunities to discuss the issues in a safely facilitated, controlled environment with a view to creating lasting change for themselves and others.

Plan UK – May 23

A funded opportunity which directed the work towards younger teenage boys aged 13-14 to highlight and explore some of the avenues of masculinity (positive and toxic) that young people are exposed to. The 10 young men who participated in the project have requested to showcase their learning and display the work at an exhibition for an invited audience to continue the promotion of everyone's human right to be kept safe. This exhibition will take place in November '23 for White Ribbon Day.



Corporate Parenting

Corporate parenting pledges - Children and young people who are open to child and family "Permanence Teams" have engaged with the Corporate Parenting Board (CPB) to understand the role the CPB have in the lives of care experienced young people. Young people worked with the "Participation & Children's Rights Worker" to establish a set of 7 pledges they would like the board to make, to help them live their best life. The pledges are based on children's rights and were signed off by CPB in July 23 and will be used to measure against in future decisions made by the CPB.

The 6 areas

Area
Happiness - Articles UNCRC Article 12 – You have the right to be listened to and taken seriously Article 15 – You have the right to meet with friends and join groups Article 6 – You have the right to grow up and reach your full potential
Good mental health - Articles of UNCRC Article 24 – You have the right to clean water, healthy food, a clean environment and good health care Article 8 – You have the right to an identity
Love, family and friendship – Articles of UNCRC Article 15 - Article 15 – You have the right to meet with friends and join groups Article 18 – You have the right to be brought up by both parents if possible Article 20 – You have the right to be looked after properly if you can't live with your own family Article 21 – If you <u>cant</u> live with your <u>parents</u> you have the right to live in the best place for you
A safe place to live – Articles of UNCRC Article 19 -You have <u>rhte</u> right to be protected from being hurt or badly treated Article 21 – If you can't live with your <u>parents</u> you have the right to live in the best place for you
Good education/good job – Articles of UNCRC Article 28 – You have the right to an education
Having enough money and games and access to technology "no barriers to opportunity" – Articles UNCRC Article 6 – You have the right to grow up and reach your full potential

Children and young people engaged in a series of 3 podcasts to discuss the ways in which the pledge areas will influence their lives and associated rights. Young people will soon present the podcasts for the CPB to discuss and hold a “You said, We did”.

Lost Voices Project

The Lost Voices project has been creatively empowering the lost voices of young people who have not traditionally been heard. Young people with experience of the care system, young people experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness, young people experiencing mental health and young people struggling to find their path. This creative opportunity has been supporting young people to find their voice, develop, shape and create their own large-scale artwork.

Young people connected to Llamau and Swansea Children’s Services have worked alongside artists to explore in depth their own lives, experiences, thoughts and feelings. This final artistic experience will amplify the participants voices and ensure they are heard. The young people hope this experience will change the way you see and support young people in your work and wider lives.

The interactive project took place over 2 sessions in June 2023 and decision makers attended to listen to the real-life experiences of the young people who took part.

Swansea Accommodation Pathway (SAP)

Young people/young adults views have been explored via a what matter’s conversation (WMC) into the way that young people are referred and assessed for supported accommodation in Swansea. Findings of the WMC have been delivered to the Strategic SAP panel with the aim of young people working co productively with officers to develop new referral and assessment forms.

Child & Family Services Interview Panels

Young people across child and family services have participated in young person interview panels for leadership and management jobs. Young people have been provided with in house training based on interview techniques. Young people's decisions are weighted and final decisions largely based on what the young people want from workers within the teams.

When I’m Ready Scheme

What Matters Conversations - Children, young people and providers are involved in the “When I’m Ready Scheme” to ascertain what matters to them regarding life after leaving care whilst in a WIR placement.

Special Guardianship Order

What Matters Conversations - Children, young people and Special Guardianship carers are involved throughout the process to ascertain what matters to them regarding experiences of kinship care.

Early Help Hubs

All Early help assessment processes and planning of work specifically captures the ‘what matters’ and voice of the child throughout its intervention. Children and young people are fully integrated. Once Gillick competent, young people are encouraged to make their own decisions on support that involves them.

Evolve Youth Service

The Evolve Youth Service undertook a large consultation with YP in 2022 which helped design and shape our “Youth Work offer. Each Evolve Youth Club has a youth committee that oversees and has decision making responsibilities on our youth work offer inclusive of summer of fun, winter of wellbeing and other activities as well as educative programmes of work throughout the year.

Evolve Youth Service have recently completed a consultation, with young people on what they would like to see, from the creation of “Teen Spaces” across Swansea parks, where young people can go and hang out with their friends with equipment for them to enjoy.

Service Quality Unit



For care experienced children within the service quality unit, there are regular participation events with the participation officer to listen to young people and use this information to help achieve better outcomes.

Staff encourage children and young people to attend meetings if they want to, so that they are central to decision making. This includes meetings to discuss their looked after care plans or attend child protection conferences and children's voices are captured in the written paperwork produced.



Appreciative enquiries with care experienced children are completed to listen to and learn from their experiences of having an independent reviewing officer.

Children and young people over 5yrs old are supported if they would benefit from an advocacy or an independent visitor and promote this in our practice.

Young people have also been part of interview processes to recruit new staff and have been supported to build different skills like asking questions and building self-esteem. One young person shared, “I have never interviewed or offered someone a job before, it has made my day”.

Play Sufficiency

As part of the Play Sufficiency Assessment 22 (PSA) engagement sessions facilitated across several schools (Glais/Clwyd/Hafod/Sketty) to measure and consult on various issues around play and access to play opportunities.

Childcare Sufficiency

As part of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 22 (CSA) - Engagement sessions were undertaken at schools, day nursery and Flying Start settings to gain an understanding of what children enjoy about the childcare they attend. These comments and observations were feed into the CSA.

Play Area Improvement Programme

Swansea Council has pioneered a programme of inclusive play facility improvements that will benefit children and young people for many years to come. A policy commitment was made to recognise the importance of offering free and safe spaces for all children and young people It comes on top of further investment to a new generation of skateboard and BMX facilities for Swansea too.

Since the end of the pandemic almost 50 new play areas have been installed or upgraded in neighbourhoods across the city. Funding has been secured by Swansea Council with support from ward members and, where available, funding from community groups and other organisations, s106 agreements with developers and Welsh Government play sufficiency grants. [A new generation of play areas for our children - Swansea](#)

Engagement sessions help inform us and reflect the play needs in the community and have been held both onsite and within schools and have included Brynmill, CwmLevel, Hafod School, TirCoed, Dunvant, Gypsy/Traveller Community and Pontlliw.

Engagement sessions with young people in Brynhyfryd areas were carried out with teenagers to gain views on what would make a good space for older children.

A consultation session was held at Clwyd School 'Play Through a Child's Eye'. This was to help understand how children view play.



Supporting the work of the Friends of Morryston Part a consultation took place with Morryston Comprehensive school. This gave year 8 and 9 pupils the opportunity to share the type of space they feel is needed within the park.

Good Vibes LGBTQIA+ consultation sessions have been carried out to explore the play experiences and/or barriers to play that the LBBTQIA+ young people may have experienced. 10 young people took part in these in-depth consultations.

National Play Day

An annual event which celebrates children's right to play and allows partners a platform for engagement and consultation. The event in 2023 was held at the Waterfront Museum with the theme "Play on a Shoestring". Activities included circus skills, arts and crafts, sports, lots of different types of games, a toddler zone and Welsh language led songs and rhymes.

There were over 2500 attendances by children, young people and families who all benefitted from the launch of Swansea's tackling summer hunger scheme where over 1000 packed lunches were provided to children in attendance.



Early Years

Planning in the moment - Planning in the Moment training, emphasises the critical role of the adult in promoting child-led learning, giving early years practitioners the confidence and insight to work and plan in the moment. Planning in the Moment with young children maintains a strong link to practice and examples of how practitioners can integrate spontaneous planning and rich adult-child interactions into their everyday practice. This training session is for practitioners who work with children aged between 2 and 4 years of age and has been delivered to over 250 Swansea practitioners.

Education Directorate

Hearing the voices of children and young people is detailed as a step to meet the Education & Skills well-being objective in the Corporate Plan 2022/23, which highlights 'Pupil Voice and stated the need to "Continue to involve children and young people in their education and community through Schools Councils and engagement events". The importance is detailed under '*Involving People – by involving learners in their education through a range of engagement mechanisms to demonstrate we value these key stakeholders*'. Specific strategies also detail this, e.g., the Inclusion Strategy will promote learner participation in decision-making. Please see a recent report to the Education Scrutiny Performance Panel here: [Education Scrutiny Performance Panel Apr 23 - Hearing the voices of CYP](#)

Post-16 Learner Voice

During March 2023 – June 2023 the Education Directorate, with support from University Wales Trinity St. David's (UWTSD), took part in learner voice engagement with post-16 learners, and those in years 10 and 11, as part of its Post-16 Strategy for Curriculum Collaboration. A wide range of learners across Swansea were consulted through an extensive questionnaire survey for post-16 learners, and smaller focus groups for years 10,11 and 12. We wanted to understand their experiences of the provision on offer at post-16, to make sure it meets the needs of all learners.

317 questionnaire responses were obtained, which is approximately 20% of the sixth form cohort in Swansea. The survey was complemented by focus groups of 10 to 15 learners in years 10, 11 and 12 from both 11-16 schools and 11-18 schools.

Education Inclusion

A temporary and seconded post has been created to provide creative solutions for vulnerable learners at risk of non-engagement with education. Learner voice is pivotal in providing bespoke educational experiences. The post is pivotal to providing early identification and prevention of non-engagement in education. This role is unique as it brings together a host of agencies to ensure engagement and lifelong learning.

Secondary School Network Group

Led by Bishopston Comprehensive School for pupil voice. The Network meets twice a year with representatives from every secondary school. This network aims to share best practice, pass on key information and discuss pupil voice.

Personal Education Plans & Person Centred Meetings

Involving Children who are Looked after within their Personal Education Plan - The Personal Education Plan (PEP) is a record of the child's education and training. It documents the agreed actions to help them to fulfil their educational potential, it is an integral part of the care and support plan. The PEP is a key mechanism through which pupil voice around education can be captured and monitored. Cross-directorate working is robust and is embedded through PEP quality assurance processes which are undertaken every school term.

Children and young people were consulted on the redesign of the PEP and requested a version of their own to keep. The 'my PEP' was developed as a result and is now an embedded process.

Looked after children who were previously identified as having "Special Educational Need" (SEN) or who are currently identified as having an "Additional Learning Need" (ALN) have their views, wishes and feelings gathered during the person-centred meeting/review process and this enables schools and the LA to identify the best way of supporting their progress.

Hearing the Voice of Learners within Safeguarding in Education

The Local Authority safeguarding audit includes a section on learner voice. Officers meet with children both in planned sessions and in a more ad-hoc way as they complete the audit, which provides assurance that learners feel safe and have the opportunity express their views clearly.

Pupil Referral Unit

Maes Derw PRU has a very active school council where learners are involved in decision making. Most recently learners at Maes Derw have been invited to share their views on the education provision they receive to inform potential plans to review the offer available.

Accessibility Strategy

The Education Directorate is currently redeveloping its statutory Accessibility Strategy which sets out plans and priorities to improve access to schools for disabled learners. As part of the initial scoping exercise the views of disabled learners have been gathered via a questionnaire which was circulated to Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinators in schools. These views, together with those of parent carers and schools have been used to inform the draft strategy.

School Organisation Proposals

The Education Directorate is currently consulting on the future of Special Schools in Swansea. Ensuring the views of learners are captured and carefully considered is an absolute priority within the consultation process. A bespoke, easy to read pupil consultation paper has been created, and an online pupil survey has been made available. Pupils have been encouraged to feed back in any form that they feel comfortable with. We are working closely with the schools to ensure that all pupils have the proposal explained to them in a way they can understand by their class teacher, with whom they are familiar and are able to communicate with fully. For pupils with the most significant special needs, the schools have well embedded communication strategies, and use their own bespoke communication tools so that even learners who are non-verbal can communicate their feelings around the proposal.

Place Directorate

Community Sport Team

The Community Sport Team co-ordinate the Young Ambassador scheme across the city. Pupils voice in primary and secondary schools is used to steer the sports and activities children wish to participate in.



Engagement days at schools, and opportunities at festivals and events are used to consult with young people regarding their views on sport and activity. This practice continues into the school holidays, where we ask the children that attend holiday camps to have an input into activities that are provided at future sessions.

Dylan Thomas Centre (DTC)

Children & young people attending workshops at the Dylan Thomas Centre have opportunities to provide feedback on sessions and inform future plans. Work with partner organisations such as Unity in Diversity, National Autistic Society, Kids in Museums and Platform increases opportunities for discussion and shaping of future programmes.

Highways - Road safety



The Road Safety Team has delivered Kerbcraft (Child Pedestrian Training) in Swansea since 2001, approx. 1,500 Year 2 pupils across the county receive training each academic year. Over a 10 week course, with assistance from school staff and volunteers, pupils participate in short weekly sessions covering three set modules; finding a safer place to cross, crossing between parked cars and crossing at junctions at locations near to their school.

Road Safety Awareness Sessions - Year 6 pupils attended Crucial Crew during June 2023 - a multi-agency event held at the Waterfront Museum. Hundreds of pupils benefited from a road safety session delivered by the team entitled “expect the unexpected”. Pupils answered questions on how they intended to travel to their new secondary school in September and voiced their experiences of crossing roads within small groups.

Libraries

In November 2022 a children’s survey was conducted in all libraries to find out the views of children who attend libraries in Swansea. Children were asked to select aspects of the library service that they thought were good, to rate the service out of 10 and tell us about their library. The survey results were used to report to Welsh Government but also to identify development needs for the service. The Summer Reading challenge, DofE and Welsh Bac volunteering opportunities benefit young people as these enable young people to have more insight into the library service and see how it functions and contribute to feedback for improved provision.

Glynn Vivian Art Gallery

All workshops and events for families are shaped around the feedback received from participants. Sessions are free and the Glynn Vivian provides pre-paid bus tickets for people on low incomes and those seeking Asylum and Refugees.

The Schools Programmes offer visits and workshops linking to the new national curriculum, allowing groups of school children to explore and respond to an exhibition or a specific piece of work and linking it to their own experiences. We seek feedback on these sessions both during the session and after and use this to shape future sessions.

Swansea Museum

During 2023 a consultation was held with the public including children regarding content of a new permanent gallery to replace one of the two temporary exhibition spaces. Educational activities were also piloted with schools and feedback obtained will help shape future sessions. Annually a customer survey is carried out with a prize draw for children taking part.

Housing Service

There are some specific actions contained within the new Engagement and Participation Strategy relating to encouraging participation of underrepresented groups such as young people. One of the objectives contained within the strategy, which is yet to be formally launched, is to *'obtain and consider young people's views on current housing issues to help influence service improvements and to support young people.'* The housing service aims to hold housing sessions at future "Big Conversation" events and consider other ways in which young people can be consulted on housing related issues.

Nature Conservation Team



Over the past three years the Council's Nature Conservation team have initiated, undertaken and supported a number of activities that help to engage children and young people in learning about, appreciating and helping to care for their natural environment and this has included:

Supporting biodiversity, green infrastructure improvements and food growing initiatives within school grounds, along with support for Eco Schools, KWT, Woodland Trust, Trees for Cities and other school environmental programmes.

The Nature Conservation Team have provided opportunities for school children to visit explore, learn about and take part in practical conservation and biodiversity enhancement work within a local wildlife site or Nature Reserve.

Nature Conservation staff led field studies visits to Bishops Wood Local Nature Reserve and Caswell beach and have providing a programme of family and public awareness raising events such as Sea Shore Safaris, Fungi Forays, bat walks, butterfly surveys etc..... Through supporting initiatives such as Forest School SNPT and Swansea Community Farm that provide opportunities for children and young people to experience and enjoy outdoor activities in the natural environment.



The Nature Conservation Team also provide volunteering opportunities for young people such as wildflower planting and tree planting along with training opportunities eg biological recording, how to enhance local green spaces, building bat boxes and bug hotels

Section 2: Empowerment

Empowerment means promoting rights to children and young people so that they feel able to exercise them. Swansea Council committed to:

- ✓ Give children and young people the training or information they need to do this properly.
- ✓ Give children the information they need to influence decisions that affect them (e.g., simple language reports).
- ✓ Give children the opportunities they need to influence decisions that affect them (e.g. giving young people the chance to ask questions directly to a key decision-maker) ·
- ✓ Establish relationships with groups of young people to allow them to consistently scrutinise work. E.g., youth groups/forums

Below are examples from each Directorate across the Council of the work they have undertaken to uphold the second principle of **empowerment**.

Social Services Directorate

Children's Rights and Participation Sessions

"Children's Rights and Participation" workshops have been run across primary & secondary schools allowing children & young people (CYP) to expand their knowledge of Children's Rights and take part in discussions about what rights mean to them, how rights are embedded through school, home and community life, how we ensure CYP have a voice on issues that impact their lives and what can be done if they feel their rights are not being upheld.



Over the reporting period between February & July, 2354 Children took part in Children's Rights workshops delivered in Swansea Schools.



Schools from across Swansea have been visiting the Council Chambers along with meeting some local Councillors. In July '22 34 children met with Cllr Gibbard and Cllr Gwilliam where they asked lots of questions about the council. In June '23 24 children visited with Cllr Gwilliam and took part in their own debates which included topics such as School Uniform and Single use plastic.

These opportunities provide children and young people opportunities to learn about their rights, democracy and see where and how decisions are made in Swansea Council.

Human Rights

In 2021 Swansea's Public Service Board (PSB) declared their intention to become a Human Rights City. Early engagement took place to gather a baseline knowledge of Human Rights awareness of the residents and visitors of Swansea and to establish the Human Rights City priorities. In December 2021 an invitation was sent via schools and the Children's Rights Network offering an opportunity for children and young people to meet with Cllr. Gibbard and members of the Partnership and Involvement Team to discuss what a "Human Rights City" would mean to them. 133 children and young people from 2 secondary schools and 7 primary schools took part and shared their views.



In June 2023, once the Human Rights City priorities were established and Human Rights City status had been declared, an action plan engagement event took place to consider the potential actions under each Human Rights City priority. People with lived experiences, community members and leaders, business and 3rd sector leaders were invited to the event, along with 20 young people from secondary schools at this in-person event. The results from the engagement event fed directly into the Human Rights City Action plans which are due to be published on the 10th of December 2023.



Early Help

Embedding Children's Rights Within Early Help - All interventions with young people in Early Help build on developing resilience with YP, giving them the tools/strategies or knowledge to feel confident in knowing and exercising their rights.

Evolve Youth Services

Evolve have run a 12-month calendar on various themes aimed at empowering young people, these subject matters have included sexuality, identity and issues around LGBTQ+, wellbeing and mental health, sign language, Black History, sustainable living and recycling.

Contextual, Missing, Exploited & Trafficked (CMET)

The Contextual, Missing, Exploited & Trafficked (CMET) Youth Panel - Have been working on a language guide which considers victim blaming language and the impact this has. The CMET youth panel have shared this with local councillors and the Children's Commissioner for Wales, they have created a video to share their views with their presentations planned to be shared on the commissioner's website.

CMET Language guidance for professionals - The young people from the CMET (Contextual Missing Exploited Trafficked) youth panel in Swansea have been working extremely hard over the last few months in developing a “changing the narrative” guidance for professionals that focusses on the language we use to discuss young people in our everyday work. The young people have delivered a short presentation at a local level to our elected members in Swansea and feedback was well received.

The video can be found here: [Youth Panel Language Hearing 2.mp4 \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

CMET Youth Panel: The CMET Youth Panel meet monthly and discuss issues that affect young people who have and are at risk of extra familial harm, the purpose of the panel is for young people to have a voice in the services and support that Swansea young people receive. The youth Panel will support with the co-design of aspects of projects. They help us to understand the worries in Swansea from their perspective and support us in understanding what they feel will work and not work regarding intervention.

Celebrating Similarities and Understanding Differences



29 Young people from Swansea joined together in March 2023 to undertake discussions and activities that aimed to celebrate the group's similarities, respectfully discuss differences and promote shared values.

Workshop sessions were arranged based on requests from young people to discuss topics within a safe facilitated environment.

School staff also requested opportunities for young people to be able to respectfully express differing views and raise their awareness of the risks of radicalisation. Young People were happy with the opportunity to discuss hard topics such as right-wing extremism, discrimination, and gender stereotyping in a safe environment.

Anti-social Behaviour Scrutiny Inquiry

CMET along with Evolve Youth Service supported young people in having an input into a public scrutiny inquiry into anti-social behaviour. The feedback from the scrutiny panel will be given back to the young people and is an example of young people being supported to have their voices heard on issues impacting their lives in the necessary formal structures within local authority and supports their understanding in relation to how their voices are impacting decision making processes.

Education Directorate

Many schools embrace the principles that underpin the work of the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). As a result, most pupils know their rights. School leaders use this knowledge to plan worthwhile activities that aim to further support the rights of children. For example, some school-based pupil voice groups support staff to plan work centred around the celebration of the Right's Articles in right of the month. Class charters are used to further promote and develop this work. Rights respecting mascots are used well for younger pupils to help them make sense of their rights and responsibilities.

Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion Team (ALNIT)

The Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion Team (ALNIT) has a team of caseworkers who play an important role in promoting children's rights and ensuring communications between schools, the local authority and families are open and solution focussed. Person centred approaches are central to the work of the Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion Team with all decisions being centred around children's needs. Children's views and voices are central to decision making.

UNCRC Training

UNCRC Training to Schools is targeted and provided to teachers around the rights of children and young people, and several quality checks are in place which provide assure that schools are promoting the UNCRC and Children's Rights effectively.

Awareness of Children's Rights

Direct support is provided to children and their families if a child is excluded, and their right to appeal is advised upon. Safeguarding and child protection training supports the rights of the child, and the Local Authority safeguarding audit provides reassurance that schools are committed to the promotion of these rights. Advice and support to children and families is provided by the Education Welfare Service to ensure children are aware of their rights at all stages.

Advocacy within Educational Settings

Advocacy information has been provided to schools via the education newsletter. Schools in turn display this information so that children who are looked after are aware of their right to advocacy and can exercise that with the support of their staff. The PEP is also quality assured to provide oversight that the rights of the child is being promoted by the school.

Place Directorate

Sport and Health

“Us Girls” holidays camps have empowered girls aged 8-14 to try new sporting activities alongside consultation sessions to find out which activities they enjoy. These have taken place every half term, Easter and Summer holiday periods. Thus, upholding Article 31” Right to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities etc.

Road safety

The Road Safety Team coordinates Level 1 and Level 2 National Standard cycle training in Primary schools. Targeting Year 6 pupils, the set syllabus encourages independent decision making whilst cycling on and off the highway. Qualified cycle instructors pass on their cycling knowledge and experiences to over 600 pupils each year.



During PSE sessions in secondary schools, pupils have been given a range of information to influence their decision making and behaviour when travelling on foot or by car. Sessions are delivered to pupils in Year 7, 9 12 and 13.

Road Safety out in the community with pupils from Pentrehafod Comprehensive School

Libraries

Swansea libraries support Empathy Labs - This involves work with schools to deliver information skills and opportunities for young people to talk and express themselves. Empathy Lab workshops assist young people to try to listen and understand where people’s feelings and views are coming from. This is achieved through a reading programme and activities and profiling empathy related reading titles.

Glynn Vivian Art Gallery

Young Art Force silvers group (12-16) plan deliver and assess sessions as part of their arts award's projects, with support and mentoring from GVAG staff, the group have gone on to take up higher education and developed leadership skills while undergoing their arts award.

Swansea Museum

A new session on the history of children’s rights was piloted on International Children’s Rights Day. A full pilot of the session will take place autumn 2023.

In the past year the museum has secured a Kids in Museums audit grant. This resulted in changes to make museum more accessible and enable further opportunities to receive feedback from children and young people.

Section 3: Embedding

Embedding means having systems in place to write down and evidence how we give thought to the impact of decisions on children's rights. Making sure workers understand the UNCRC and how their work impacts on children's rights.

The Council has committed to:

- ✓ Make sure that leaders and staff have a good knowledge of children's rights (UNCRC) and help them understand how it can benefit our organisation's work.
- ✓ Use our resources to deliver training on children's rights, set up a network of champions with responsibility to promote children's rights and set targets for how to embed children's rights in all work.
- ✓ Make sure there are HR/financial resources to support and promote children's rights.

The Children's Rights Scheme has changed how we work. We have one shared approach to making sure the UNCRC is part of all our plans and policies. This includes thinking about how decisions may affect children and young people's lives.

Extending learning from children's rights-based approaches more broadly to think about every person's human rights by involving children and young people within the Human Rights City developments and action planning, ensuring Swansea is a city for all, where every person has the opportunity to have the best start in life and live and age well.

Below are examples from each Directorate across the Council of the work they have undertaken to uphold the third principle of **embedding**.

Corporate Services Directorate

Across the Council we have worked together to consider how rights-based approaches underpin practice by ensuring children's human rights are included in key policies such as:

- ✓ PSB Well Being Objectives
- ✓ Strategic Equality Plan Consultation
- ✓ Swansea Co-production and Engagement Strategy
- ✓ Human Rights City Action Plan

Access to Services

The council's Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process incorporates the Council's commitment to the UNCRC by having a designated section within the IIA which fully examines the impact of the proposed initiative on children and young people. It also ensures that children and young people are involved in decision making, including engagement and consultation on council proposals.

The partnership and involvement team are involved in the IIA process by offering support and advise to officers on how to engage with children and young people to seek their views on new initiatives.

Social Services Directorate

Embedding the “Right Way Approach”

In April '22 work began with Pen y Bryn school who were supported with staff training on the Right Way approach, and they supported us on how to better improve our practice of working with children and young people with additional needs. The partnership started with no formal sessions within the school but opportunities to get to know the pupils informally.



This included joining them for their THRIVE breakfast sessions where staff met with 13 young people, then attending summer fairs and open evenings in 2022 and 2023. Work has included structured sessions such as “Children’s Rights” workshops, “Keeping Safe” sessions run by Safer Swansea, “Observation” sessions and “What Matters” sessions.

Observation of school classes we’re made in May 2023 where staff visited 12 classes and met with 90 children and young people which was an opportunity to see how lessons were formed and how staff adapted the setting and the sessions to suit the needs of all those in their classes. Conversations had with pupils at Pen y Bryn sparked the summer programs that run during the summer school holidays of 2022 and 2023.

Children’s Rights Training for Early Years Practitioners

During September 2022 the Partnership & Involvement Team facilitated 4 workshops to 43 early years workers which was delivered as part of an Early Years Conference. These workshops helped practitioners learn about rights and gather ideas on how they can embed rights into their settings,

Child & Family Services Measuring Outcomes and Staff Training

All work is evaluated in terms of the using a distance travelled tool to measure young people’s outcomes, this is their score their voice.

Staff undertake all mandatory training and the Evolve Youth Service Team have their own specific youth training which embeds the 5 pillars of youth work approach, throughout their engagement, with young people, via their blended model of youth work.

Early Help

Early Help teams undertake Quality Assurance measures to ensure that children's rights are being embedded in practise. Monthly QA meetings which are assisted by the learning and innovation team ensure the voice of the child is captured.

Contextual, Missing, Exploited & Trafficked (CMET)

The CMET panel ensure that Children and young people's Voice is central to the project and their views are considered throughout the project time frame. The multi-agency purpose was developed based on a system review that was carried out with young people who have experienced Extra Familial Harm. One young person shared that what's important is for "Me and My Family to have the information and advice that can keep us safe form Extra Familial harm, At the right time, in the right place, from people we trust".

Play Sufficiency

To ensure play sufficiency work continues with various schools about play related objectives e.g. Article 31. Which impacts on play times, access to school grounds and advocating good play practices (eg Loose Parts) and the right to play across the school team and its pupils.

Education Directorate

Historically a Service Level Agreement with UNICEF paid for Swansea schools to be accredited as "Rights Respecting Schools" via the UNICEF award. The Award recognises a school's achievement in putting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child into practice within the school and beyond. Swansea Council was the only local authority to take this approach which has now provided a strong foundation for a new curriculum model with children's rights embedded throughout.

"The Curriculum for Wales" has four purposes at its heart. These are the starting point for all teaching and learning. The four purposes of the curriculum are that children and young people develop as:

- Ambitious, capable learners, ready throughout their lives
- Enterprising, creative contributors ready to play a full part in life and work
- Ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the World
- Healthy, confident individuals ready to lead fulfilling lives as valid members of society.

The four purposes are described through key characteristics contributing to developing ethical informed citizens who 'understand and exercise their human and democratic responsibilities and rights' and 'respect the needs and rights of others, as a member of a diverse society'.

As a result, schools will be embedding Human Rights Education and a rights-based approach into their school-level curriculum design and development. Individual schools can still decide to apply for the Rights Respecting Schools Award, at their own cost.

The UNCRC is embedded in all local and national policy and guidance. It underpins all values, is covered in training and quality assured through several quality assurance methods.

Personal Education Plans quality assurance is robust and cross directorate working ensures learner voice is embedded in the process.

Safeguarding processes are checked via weekly meetings, and decisions / audits are quality assured.

Welfare issues are quality assured during supervision sessions.

Admission applications are scrutinised at a weekly inclusion panel to ensure that all decisions are made in the best interest of the child.

Additional Learning Needs

Children who are either supported by the SEN legislation or who have transferred to the new ALNET legislation have their thoughts, wishes and feelings gathered and considered during person centred meetings and reviews of their IDPs.

Place Directorate

Sport and Health

All new staff receive information regarding the rights of the child through their induction period.

Young Ambassadors

The recruitment of young ambassadors has provided a workforce of young people who deliver sporting activities underpinned by children's rights and through leadership and coaching of other pupils in their individual schools. Since Oct 2021 over 260 young ambassadors have received training, gained qualifications and have taken part in CPD workshops in a variety of leadership skills and sports specific coaching courses. The Silver YA's have planned school transition events and produced termly written reports on their progress.

Dylan Thomas Centre

Staff attend specialist training offered through Kids in Museums Training. Recent sessions from Kids in Museums Cymru were based on the New Curriculum for Wales and in particular the addition of Black History as a compulsory element which focused on the rights of children in learning and heritage settings.

Highways - Road safety

Over the past two years all new cycle instructors have completed a 1st4Sport Level 2 Award in Instructing Cycle Training. The award sits on a regulated framework and is delivered only at recognised delivery centres. The training has ensured that the skills and knowledge developed through the qualification by instructors supports, inspires and builds confidence in young riders.

Swansea Museum

The Learning and Outreach Officer at Swansea Museum has a background in children's rights and ensures the museums policies and practises are aligned to the UNCRC and that Children's Rights are embedding within initiatives and activities provided. Swansea Museum has undertaken a review of sessions in view of the new curriculum. Changes have been made to several sessions and new sessions developed.

Housing Service- Estate Management Strategy

The Housing Service has a Housing Estate Management Strategy in place which was refreshed in 2021. The overall aim of the strategy *“is to ensure that council housing estates are safe and clean, with spaces for children to play, where people feel they belong and where anti-social behaviour is not tolerated.”* There are some specific actions in place in relation to children’s rights.

- Housing staff work with other services and agencies to protect young people and vulnerable adults. Services and agencies also work together to identify potential harmful settings outside of the family home and work to create safety within those environments (contextual safeguarding).
- Housing is represented on the Swansea Play Network forum, the objectives of which include ensuring there are high quality, appropriate, accessible and resourced play opportunities for all children and young people within the Swansea area.

Housing Service- More Homes

The council builds energy efficient homes ensuring that children have a safe and warm home to grow up in. The design of the homes are governed by Welsh Government WDQR and WHQS principles to ensure that the home environment is comfortable, spacious and safe. The homes are particularly spacious with a large footprint and gardens. The flexible designs allow the homes to be used in a way that suits families with children, with large bedrooms and flexible living space. Each home will have a private fenced garden and additional external storage to store cycles for example.

The housing department also works closely with colleagues from Planning and Placemaking when developing its new sites to ensure that core principles are followed including that the master-planning of a site takes into consideration the aspirations and development of children when planning and designing its schemes. These principles and policies include consideration of: -

- New places should link to existing communities and be busy with shops, schools and parks all within an easy 15-minute walk.
- Blue/ Green infrastructure means living with nature and having parks close to all our homes for children to play safely in.
- It is important to be able to walk and cycle or take public transport without always having to use a car. This is important children’s health and the environment.
- All new places should have areas for adults and children to relax, to do sports and for all ages to have fun playing. These areas need to be easy to get to and must feel safe for everyone.
- Streets as places - Many streets can be busy places filled by cars but we need to make sure they are safe and green with trees, so people feel safe to walk, cross the street, cycle or even sit and chat.
- Inclusive places - We all have different needs, so it is important that new places and homes and parks are open and safe for everyone including children.
- Community Safety - New developments need to feel safe. This can be done by making sure there are lots of windows facing streets and parks, plus good lighting allowing children to play outside safely.

All new developments in Swansea have followed the principles set out above.

Section 4: Accountability

Accountability means having systems in place to report on what we are doing to make children's rights a reality in Swansea. Swansea Council have committed to:

- Publish an accessible annual update showing how we've worked towards making children's rights real in Swansea.
- Feedback regularly to children in a suitable format.
- Provide children with accessible information on how to provide feedback about what we're doing well or what we could improve, make complaints, or hold staff to account.

"Right Way" Approach as a Framework to Monitor & Reporting Progress as a "Whole Council"

The "Right Way" approach provides a framework to monitor and report on the "We will" element of the scheme (Easily set out within the plan on a page – Appendix A embedded at the end of the report) Across the Council we have worked on agreed actions and fed these into other strategies like the Strategic Equality Plan and the action plan of the "Human Rights City" work therefore making it robust across the Council's "Rights based" work.

Using the "Right Way" National model has enabled us to set a benchmark "We will" for each principle that can be shared across all teams and ages, which allows this to be transferred into the "Human Rights City" work. Monitoring progress against these actions will fall to the cross directorate working group on "CYP Rights & Participation" as well as the "Human Rights City Steering Group" to monitor performance. Use of the Children's Commissioners Office "Right Way" Matrix resource will enable us to establish the status of each action by directorate and will merge with the Human Rights City monitoring, so it aligns and doesn't cause duplication.

Accountability through the Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)

The Integrated Impact Assessment which is supported by the **Corporate Services Directorate** clearly and separately identifies impact on Children's Rights, so this encourages all teams to pay due regard to the UNCRC and also ensure cyp are engaged as stakeholders.

Providing Feedback to Children & Young People

Swansea Council have a duty under the Children's Rights Scheme to report on how children's rights are being made a reality in Swansea and this is carried out in several ways:

Progress reports are produced every two years and shared through formal processes within the local authority, via partnership forums and networks and to children and young people via the development of an accessible version. (Planned for development following this report)

Feedback on progress around the commitments of the children's rights scheme and the identified priorities are shared throughout the year at the various forums and networks and at an annual event to mark "Universal Children's Day on the 20th of November each year.

The following pages share examples from each Directorate across the Council of the work they have undertaken to uphold the fourth principle of **accountability**.

Social Services Directorate

2023 saw the creation of a “Children’s Rights & Participation” cross directorate working group to:

- ✓ Support the Children’s Rights commitment & contribute to a Children’s Rights Scheme Implementation Plan
- ✓ Assist in the co-ordination of the statutory responsibility of Local Authorities to promote and facilitate participation by children and young people in decisions which might affect them. (Section 12 of the Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010)
- ✓ Review and Refresh the “Big Conversation” model for a cluster/area model to hear the voice of CYP within their communities – linked in with early help hubs, youth provision, Primary & Secondary schools as well as wider community groups & forums etc.

This working group has established a model that includes opportunities for community and school-based priorities for children and young people to be heard. The group will co-ordinate the feedback of progress to children and young people via multiple mechanisms and forums across Swansea.

Evaluation following Funded Activities

After the COAST (Creating Opportunities Across Swansea Together) funded sessions in Summer 2023, children, young people and families who attended were asked for feedback; this information was fed back to the Commissioning Team to evidence impact and need for increased ALN specific holiday provisions and to also help shape future work. See below quote:

"It was really lovely to be able to take part in activities as a family, we felt welcomed and included. My children were able to engage at a level that was comfortable for them and still felt like they had achieved something by the end of the session. We were able to laugh, learn and play together in a way we would have afforded to if it wasn't for the session. " Parent Carer

UNCRC in Commissioning Teams

The UNCRC is embedded in all contracts as a requirement. This means any service that is funded can be held to account to ensure they are including children and young people’s voice within their service planning, delivery and development. This is also a method statement question when assessing tenders and a part of the ongoing evaluation and monitoring.

A number of reviews are currently taking place and these include additional learning needs, Youth Homelessness prevention and the schools counselling service and children and young people will form part of the review, to ensure they inform changes and recommendations going forward.

Childcare and Play Sufficiency

We facilitate the production of the Play Sufficiency Assessment and Childcare Sufficiency Assessment every 3 years and annual review update and action plans. This is a statutory duty by Welsh Government that requires the assessment of play sufficiency across the authority and children, young people and families are involved within the process. 22 surveys gave CYP the opportunity to feed back about what is going well, what could be improved and any further ideas that they have to do with play and childcare opportunities in Swansea.

What Matters in Autism Conversations



Colleagues in Child and Family and within the Partnership & Involvement Team have worked alongside The National Autistic Society, and the parent carer forum to hold What Matters in Autism conversations – gaining feedback from parents/carers, young people and professionals on how to improve the What Matters in Autism conversation through meetings, events and forms.

This work will feed into and help shape strategic policy within the Local Authority. In March 2023 we met with

7 professionals to start the ‘What matters in Autism’ Conversation. Since then, conversations have been had with 70 parent/carers and 40 Children and Young People. The finding so far will be discussed with the National Autistic Society before being reported along with further in-depth What Matters Conversations with CYP with Autism.

Quality Mark in Youth Work

Evolve is going through the application of gaining a Quality Mark in Youth Work which is an opportunity to share and report on what we do, as well as being part of Estyn inspections.

Youth Club Committees

Evolve Youth Service has youth club committees established, young people are consulted, minutes of meetings produced from their meetings, evaluations and reflective sessions recorded. The same applies for Early Help and CIW inspections.

Education Directorate

Outcomes of the post-16 learner voice review have been discussed with sixth form leaders through a working group. This gives the group the opportunity to discuss what is working well and what needs to be improved. Learner responses will help to shape curriculum provision and delivery methods during the academic year. Informing the following:

- ✓ Admission forum to oversee the admissions arrangements.
- ✓ Section 135 evaluation to feedback safeguarding information.
- ✓ WGSB

Education Directorate/Disabled Learners

The Accessibility Strategy seeks to progressively improve access to schools for disabled learners. The draft strategy is currently under development and includes key priorities which have been informed by the views of a number of stakeholders including the voice of disabled learners. The draft strategy will be subject to consultation this autumn.

Corporate Services Directorate

Involving Children & Young People in Council Budget proposals

Budget consultations are circulated to schools for input by pupils, teaching staff and wider school community. Where there are specific budget proposals that directly impact children and young people then this is incorporated within “Big Conversation” sessions and engagement or consultation events within schools and community settings dependant on proposals, in order to inform spends, purchase of goods (like playground equipment) and shape initiatives.

Place Directorate

Sport and Health School Sports Survey 2022

5704 pupils completed the school sports survey providing pupil voice across the whole of Swansea. Pupils reported their activity levels in school and in extra-curricular time, enjoyment levels, demographic status, barriers to participation, latent demand for sports activities and other relevant information. Teachers also provided their views on physical literacy, confidence to teach and support levels. The Sport and health team utilise this data to plan their work and projects to ensure the service meets the needs of the young people.

Dylan Thomas Centre (DTC)

The DTC has specially designed feedback forms for children to share their opinion on the exhibition and engagement activities. An easy read version is available. In 2023 the DTC was shortlisted as one of the Best Family Friendly Museums in the UK thanks to feedback from children, young people and their families who act as undercover judges. All feedback is provided to us to act upon.

Road Safety

The Road Safety Team sends a post course questionnaire to all schools who participate in cycle training to identify any areas for improvement and that the course objectives have been met. Class teachers complete the questionnaires after discussing the training with their pupils.

Libraries

Libraries are required by Welsh Government to conduct a children’s survey every 3 years. The results of the survey are fed into a return to the Welsh Public Library Standards, which assesses the performance of each individual library service in Wales.

Glynn Vivian Art Gallery (GVAG)

GVAG conduct Community Learning panel meetings bi-annually to discuss the progress, success and areas of improvement with all groups that the gallery works with, including young people and families that attend community programmes. This information is used to further develop the learning programme and apply for funding to support these initiatives.

Section 5: Non-Discrimination

Non-discrimination means making special efforts to ensure children and young people who may be less likely to access their rights, have an equal opportunity to be able to do so.

The Council have committed to:

- ✓ Provide information to children in a language or format appropriate to their age and maturity, culture, or disability.
- ✓ Make sure staff have up-to-date knowledge of the Equality Act and receive regular training to increase their awareness of different groups of children and young people's needs.
- ✓ Use information we have about children and young people's need to consider whether our services reach all groups of young people.

Below are examples from each Directorate across the Council of the work they have undertaken to uphold the fifth principle of **non-discrimination**.

Social Services Directorate

Disability equality and Inclusion

Feedback from Children and young people (CYP) with additional needs has been that the school summer holidays can be long and boring. Young people felt there is lack of suitable places that they can go that will be adaptive and accepting of them. Families shared that they find it difficult to find suitable spaces for them to go and spend time as a family.

Funding from the Summer of Fun grant was received to run a pilot program for CYP with additional needs during Summer 2022. A total of 9 sessions were run with 40 children and young people taking part.

As a result of positive feedback further funding was applied for from COAST funding to run further sessions between July and September 2023. A total of 20 sessions were held with 68 families attending, which included 125 children and young people along with 64 adults.



Homophobic Language Sessions

During January 2022 Homophobic Language sessions we're held with 137 young people to enable discussions around what is homophobic language, what are its impacts and what we can all do to stop it.

During February 2023 a large event was held at the Waterfront Museum in partnership with Sadie's Butterflies to raise awareness of Trans issues and offer support to those in the Trans and LGBTQIA+ Community. The event saw 951 visitors which included many children, young people and their families.

During summer 2023 COAST funding was received to hold intergenerational LGBTQIA+ Family sessions.



Sessions were primarily arts and craft sessions, where participants were encouraged to explore their identity and their community. A total of 6 sessions we're held 107 participants.

At the end of Summer an LGBTQIA+ Pizza Party was held for the families involved to have fun and feel secure to ask questions, while enjoying pizza and crafts and allowed for the safety & inclusion for quiet voices with 27 participants attending.

Officers within the Partnership & Involvement Team have regularly been attending "Good Vibes" youth club held at the YMCA to build relationships with the staff and young people and to ensure all voices in the community are heard.



There are approximately 30 young people that regularly engage in the Youth Club and staff have recently supported a trip with the club to St Fagans to attend a queer tour of the site with 16 young people attending this trip.

Child & Family Services

All of the work in child and family services is underpinned by equal opportunities. Work is bespoke to the needs of each child, ensuring their plans of work meet their needs.

Evolve Youth Service

All youth work is inclusive and where required we have developed specialised opportunities for young people (YP) if they feel marginalised e.g targeted work with YP who have neurodiversity, gender or other protected characteristics. e.g we run a specific group for YP with neuro diverse issues. There are also partnerships in place with external agencies, ensuring all young people get the same opportunities across the city

Play Sufficiency

Communication Boards - Through requests and listening to CYP and families, a partnership project with the Swansea Bay Health Boards bought about the creation of communication boards using symbols to point in English and Welsh.

Through the project a request was raised for BSL boards which have also been created in English and Welsh. The Communication Boards are being placed in every play area across Swansea to support the communication needs of CYP and families.



The feedback has been positive with boards being donated to schools that specialise in additional needs ...upon their request.

“The children’s parks are looking amazing, there’s a little one near our house in Sketty Park on Parkway...and it has a communication board. My son goes to it every time he enters the park, he’s only 3, he is delayed but in his short life has been through so much, Kawasaki disease, heart

failure and a heart transplant. He’s been hospitalised for so long he has global delay but these boards are a god send...and he does exactly that...he communicates with us with these boards...I’d love to know if they are available in print for our own home?”

Play Access Group - This group of parent/carers, officers and 3rd sector partners meet regularly and ensures the voices of CYP with additional needs are given a voice and heard.

Play Area Improvement Programme - Whilst working on the on-going Play Area Improvement Programme it was recognised that additional grant funding was needed to meet inclusivity and accessibility needs across play areas.

The additional grant funding and cross directorate partnership work throughout the programme has supported increased inclusive and accessible play opportunities. More than 50 playgrounds have been upgraded so far, taking inclusivity and accessibility into account wherever practicable. This has included flush roundabouts, trampolines, mirage (bucket) swings, basket swings, easier access routes onto multi-units and wide slides wherever possible along informed by local consultation and engagement with children, young people and families.

Commissioning Teams

The Commissioning Teams support various organisations across all themes of work including EYST/ACC/SASS/Race Council Cymru for example...advocating the right to play as well as article 12 and 15 wherever appropriate in their delivery and practice.

Education Directorate

Post-16 Learner Voice Review

The review consisted of an online questionnaire and smaller focus groups. Learners were able to participate through these different mechanisms in order to gain a broader response.

Personal Education Plan (PEP)

Differentiated by need and age, the PEP co-ordinator monitors all returns to make sure they are within timeframes and that they are appropriate to need. Officers will make home visits to provide additional support where necessary. The Education Inclusion Officer provides bespoke engagement opportunities to ensure the plan meets the needs to the learner.

Child Centred Involvement

Schools and the LA have a range of strategies to enable children and young people to contribute to their person-centred meetings and reviews. These include learning passports, ICT options, adult support etc.

Most schools use a range of innovative strategies to ensure that all pupils have equitable opportunities to develop an understanding of their rights. For example, pupil voice groups, rights mascots, class charters and displays, all help to support a rights respecting model. For some of the most vulnerable learners, schools have made effective use of digital technology to ensure they can access work to develop a better understanding of their rights. E.g. specialist applications using tablets.

Minority Ethnic and Multilingual Learners

Ensuring the voice of learners who are from minority ethnic and multilingual backgrounds are gathered to inform development of provision is promoted through evaluation and improvement work with schools. Schools have access to interpreting and translating services to support communication with learners and parents/carers who have limited skills in English. Translation apps and tools are promoted within schools to support day-to-day access for learners who have limited skills in English.

A number of schools also run the Young Interpreters Scheme which trains up children and young people to act as buddies and interpreters for learners who are new arrivals and new to English.

The Schools of Sanctuary award scheme encourages schools to listen and act upon the voice of refugee and asylum seekers learners.

The Education Directorate is currently developing a number of workstreams linked to the vision of anti-racist Wales 2030 which will be formulated into an action plan. The voice of those with lived experience is central to current training opportunities for Education Directorate and school staff and will inform workstreams and developments moving forwards.

Place Directorate

Sport and Health

Wheelchair Users within Schools - Public Service Groups within schools have attended sessions which educate them on wheelchair users within schools. They have taken part in wheelchair basketball sessions for enjoyment alongside finding accessible routes around their schools. This has provided a greater understanding of how wheelchair users feel in their school and the surrounding area.

Pupils identified inaccessible routes which raised discussions and ideas from them to overcome barriers faced by wheelchair users. A summary of the project can be found here: [Wheelchair Basketball Snapshot - Updated.docx](#)

Disability Sport Festivals



2 Disability sport festivals have taken place over the past year to engage with clubs and groups to provide signposting opportunities to young people. The Sport & Health Team have also supported the para tri event held in Swansea this year.

Funded Opportunities

As per an annual agreement with Sport Wales the Sport & Health Team have funded the following:

- ✓ BAME Sport Swansea programme led by EYST
- ✓ Support community sports clubs to become more inclusive through the implantation of INSPORT for clubs and other community organisations.
- ✓ Dylan Thomas changing facilities configuration was made possible following a Sport Wales grant – resulting in greater attendance in PE lessons and more engagement in extra-curricular sports sessions.
- ✓ Year 9 girls from Dylan Thomas school took part in 6 sessions of consultation identifying barriers to sport and physical activity leading to sessions being set up for them to take part. They spoke about their environment, their likes and dislikes, the influence of social media and family influences. The girls who were previously disengaged took part in physical activity, confidence workshops and were provided with opportunity to engage in “Us Girls” holiday camp sessions.
- ✓ Climbing sessions in Flashpoint for disengaged children– Penyrheol/ Pontarddulais – identified by the young people.
- ✓ Climbing sessions in LC for pupils from Maes Derw / basketball / badminton – identified by the young people.

Peer Led Engagement

Young Ambassadors consult with children in their school to assess what activities children want. This is based on discussion and allowing all children to put forward ideas. Mentored by Sport and Health staff.

Dylan Thomas Centre

In partnership with National Autistic Society and Your Voice Advocacy, the DTC has developed sensory backpacks and sensory area to enhance enjoyment of the exhibition for those with additional sensory needs. We're trialling a pre-bookable Quiet Workshop during autumn half term and have been invited to present our work as a case study for Kids in Museums at a sharing day in November.

Highways - Road Safety Team



Road Safety School Assembly at St Helens Primary School - The road safety team has worked with its partners, schools and colleges to develop inclusive road safety assemblies, lessons and events for children and young people across the county.

During Gower College Fresher Fayres students with additional learning needs were encouraged to enter a multiple-choice competition and discussed challenges faced when crossing a road with the road safety team.

Libraries

The library service is actively working towards "Library of Sanctuary" status for Swansea Central Library. Central Library have committed to consulting with those seeking sanctuary in Swansea, including children and have provided story times and crafts in other languages, held drop-in sessions, offered library tours for all newcomers to Swansea. Our aim is to ensure that our library spaces are a safe and welcoming space for all.

Glynn Vivian Art Gallery

The Glynn Vivian Art Gallery work with partners across Swansea to ensure that diversity and accessibility are prioritised. Currently working with the African community centre on projects that promote young people's mental wellbeing, while delivering high quality workshops that promote a diverse range of artists and careers within the creative sector.

The Gallery are also working with Disability Arts Cymru, promoting the work of disabled artists and ensuring that programmes are representative of all communities. Work includes a long term 5 year project with GS artists to develop a network for artists who are deaf, improving access, awareness and opportunities.

Theatres

Currently engaging with commercial and community partners to facilitate the provision of free and discounted tickets for cultural events for children, especially those who are disadvantaged.

Working with partners to facilitate the engagement and participation in cultural activity for children with additional learning needs.

Partnership with community and arts organisations to host ethnically diverse cultural events. Currently participating in the World Re-imagined project, hosting young people's exhibits and promoting culturally diverse arts.

Provision of assisted performances eg BSL, captioned, audio described and relaxed.

Swansea Museum

The museum regularly participates in themed months and days via social media. Project work with specific targeted groups have included work with:

- ✓ World Reimagined – school-based project on Black History.
- ✓ Mixtup – video project working with 11 – 25-year-olds of mixed ability on their own museum concept.
- ✓ YMCA - legacy project working with young people from young cares and Good Vibes the LGBT youth group.

Libraries

Libraries stock books that represent all our communities positively including LGBTQ + community members and those with physical or hidden disabilities etc...

All libraries are working towards being autism friendly and have purchased equipment such as ear defenders and fidget toys for parents and children to loan while in the library to improve and help their experience in the library. We are working on providing social stories for our libraries so that parents can prepare their children in advance of their visit to the library.

Recommendations

In order to clearly identify development needs, recommendations have been separated via the 5 “Right Way” principles that shape the Children’s Rights Scheme in Swansea.

1. Participation:

- 1.1. The refresh and remodel of the “Big Conversation” to provide a Countywide infrastructure, to enable improved communication of opportunities for children and young people to be heard locally, regionally and nationally and provide a platform for regular feedback and updates to take place.
- 1.2. Develop on-line opportunities to engage with children and young people in this ever-increasing digital age via increased use of social media & seeking opportunities to develop a “Have your Say/Participation” page on Hwb to enable the reach of young people via school-based platforms.
- 1.3. Further develop opportunities to involve children and young people in the recruitment of officer with responsibilities that impact the lives of children and young people.

2. Empowerment:

- 2.1. Engage with Welsh Government regarding the soon to be launched Children’s Rights Training and on-line resources to continue to promote Children’s Rights and support services to embed within practise.
- 2.2. Continue to seek opportunities to increase accessibility of decision makers to children and young people.
- 2.3. Explore opportunities for greater use of simple language/accessible reporting to ensure children and young people can engage in opportunities to shape local services.

3. Embedding:

- 3.1. Continue to raise awareness and increase knowledge of children’s rights (UNCRC) within Council Teams by developing an on-line training module and linking with the wider “Human Rights City” work.
- 3.2. Re-establish the “Children’s Rights Network” as a “Children’s Rights Information Network” with use of MailChimp to allow for monthly news updates and signpost to local, regional & national opportunities for practitioners.

4. Accountability:

- 4.1. Improve opportunities for children and young people to get in touch with the Council to share thoughts and ideas or to share if they feel their rights are not being met.
- 4.2. Follow the Welsh Government model of reviewing the Children’s Rights Scheme which is based on a 5-year cycle with progress reporting midway through the cycle and at the end of the five years.

5. Non-Discrimination:

- 5.1. Ensure Children’s Rights is embedded throughout the refreshed “Strategic Equality Plan” in Swansea.

Appendix A – Children & Young People’s Rights Scheme Plan on a Page

 	
<p>This Means:</p> <p>Making sure good quality arrangements are in place to ensure children and young people are listened to, and that their opinion is heard, in decisions that are being made that affect them.</p>	<p>Participation</p> <p>We Will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve children and young people directly in the design, monitoring and evaluation of services they receive. • Learn about how other organisations are doing this, and develop plans that meet the needs of children and young people in Swansea. • Develop clear targets to listen to children and young people from marginalised groups. • Involve children and young people in the recruitment of staff who have responsibilities that impact on them. • Adopt the National Participation Standards, to make sure when children and young people participate, their experience is a quality one.
<p>Promoting rights to children and young people so that they feel able to exercise them.</p>	<p>Empowerment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give children and young people the information they need to influence decisions that affect them (e.g. simple language reports). • Give children and young people the opportunities they need to influence decisions that affect them (e.g. opportunities to scrutinise decision makers e.g. giving the chance to ask questions directly to a key decision-maker and/or co-produce work). • Establish relationships with children and young people to allow them to consistently scrutinise work. • Give citizens the training or information they need to do this properly.
<p>Having systems in place to write down and evidence how we give thought to the impact of decisions children's rights.</p> <p>Making sure workers understand the UNCR and associated treaties, and how their work impacts on children's rights.</p>	<p>Embedding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure that leaders and staff have a good knowledge of Children's Human Rights, and help them understand how it can benefit our organisation's work. • Use our resources to deliver training on children's human rights. • Set up a network of champions with responsibility to promote the rights of children and young people and set targets for how to embed this in all work. • Make sure there are HR/financial resources to support and promote the rights of children and young people
<p>Having systems in place to report on what we are doing to make rights a reality for children and young people in Swansea</p>	<p>Accountability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish an accessible annual update showing how we've worked towards making rights real for children and young people. • Feedback regularly in a suitable format. • Provide accessible information on how to provide feedback about what we're doing well or what we could improve, make complaints or hold staff to account.
<p>Making special efforts to ensure children and young people who may be less likely to access their rights, have an equal opportunity to be able to do so.</p>	<p>Non Discrimination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure staff have up-to-date knowledge of the Equality Act and receive regular training to increase their awareness of different groups of children and young people's needs. • Use an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) to consider how individual decisions (e.g. projects/services) could impact different groups of children and young people. • Use information we have about the needs of children and young people to consider whether our services reach all groups, particularly those who possess protected characteristics. • Provide information in a format appropriate to people's age and maturity, culture, or disability