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for Children's Care and Protection

Child Protection
Committees
Scotland



Child Participation in Child Protection Processes

Child Protection Committees Self-Evaluation

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Introduction and Context:

This report presents the main findings of a self-evaluation survey that looked at the arrangements in place in local areas to support child participation in formal child protection processes in Scotland. The report includes examples of promising practice and learning identified by local areas.

The self-evaluation was developed as part of the workplan for CPCScotland, to contribute towards the following area of work:

"Understanding the experiences of children, young people and families of formal child protection systems AND supporting meaningful involvement and engagement of families in the system, particularly in relation to decision-making."
(CPCScotland, 2019-2020 Workplan)

The self-evaluation survey focused solely on child participation, due to the high complexity of the matter (detailed in the next section of the current report).

The results of the survey also contribute towards Recommendation 12 of the Child Protection Systems Review and Action 34 of the Scottish Government's Child Protection Improvement Programme:

"Child Protection Committees should ensure children, parents and wider families are part of the decision-making processes and explore a range of strengths-based participatory approaches to Child Protection Case Conferences to achieve this."
([Systems Review](#))

"We will work with Child Protection Committees (CPCs) to get a picture of current participation work with children and young people – with a view to collectively sharing good practice and learning" ([Child Protection Improvement Programme](#))

The survey was carried out with support from CELCIS – Centre for Excellence for Children's Care and Protection, at the University of Strathclyde – particularly in relation to designing the methodology, collecting and analysing the data, and drafting the report.

The survey was designed not only as a data collection activity, but also as a way to support self-assessment and facilitate a local exploration process. Child Protection Committees were thus encouraged to consult their local multi-agency workforce in order to obtain a fuller picture of child participation in child protection formal processes. We hope that Child Protection Committees have found the exercise valuable, with the potential of being repeated (even outwith a national survey) or adapted for other local explorations.

Methodology

Conceptual Frameworks

The current evaluation is rooted in the vision and principles of the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child, which also underpin GIRFEC¹. It looks at key stages of the child protection process described in the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland, and is informed by concepts and content specific to the field of Implementation.

A 'Rights of the Child' approach - Child Participation Principle:

Participation goes further than eliciting information from children (such as part of professional assessment or analysis of child's experiences) and is not just about attendance of children at meetings (when this is appropriate).

Child participation is one of the four core principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child – article 12 states that children have **the right to express their views in each and every matter affecting them** and requires that those **views be heard and given due weight**, in line with child's age and maturity, and their best interests. The UN Convention refers to 'evolving capacity' for decision-making and sets no minimum age for it, thus acknowledging that children can and do form views from a very early age. For child participation to be relevant and meaningful, **the right to information** and the **right to protection** also need to be ensured.

The 'rights of the child' lens indicates that children need support not only in the context of the decision-making meeting, but also before and after the meeting. This led to the following **three steps**, which contribute equally to meaningful participation, to be referenced throughout the survey:

- **Before the meeting:** informing and preparing children to take part in the child protection decision making process;
- **During the meeting:** making sure that children's views and perspectives are heard and reflected in the child protection decisions, irrespective of whether the child attends the meeting or not;
- **After the meeting:** providing feedback and support to children about the decisions made and the outcomes of the child protection meeting.

Information and support thus has to be accessible, in a format and manner consistent with child's age, maturity and needs, and reinforced by checking for and supporting understanding².

¹GIRFEC is the national approach in Scotland to improving outcomes and supporting the wellbeing of children and young people. It supports them and their parent(s) to work in partnership with the services that can help them. See: www.gov.scot/policies/girfec/

² Sending a leaflet or a letter, or asking the child to sign their protection plan might not be the most appropriate method of informing a child, in the absence of additional ways of checking and supporting understanding and offering feedback.

Child Participation in Child Protection Processes:

Given the complexity of child protection processes and taking into account the right of the child to express their views in all matters affecting them, the survey looks at child participation at **key stages within the child protection journey**. These were the initial child protection case conferences, the review child protection case conferences, and also the core group (or equivalent) meetings, including in the development of child protection plans.

We are nevertheless mindful that there are other relevant decision-making moments within the child protection process, but the reasons influencing our selection are related to greater consistency of their definitions across local areas, and the fact that they are more likely to allow the above three steps for meaningful child participation to take place.

The Implementation Lens:

The growing body of Implementation literature and evidence guided the development of the self-evaluation survey, especially the exploration of the level of detail and specificity of the guidance and tools available at local level, the clarity of roles, the level of support available to professionals and the use of data regarding child participation in child protection processes.

To achieve significant outcomes, one of the key requirements is to have innovations or practices that are *teachable, learnable, doable, and assessable*, hence well defined. This is an important element that contributes to the 'Formula for Success' used in the field of Implementation ([Fixsen, Blase, Metz, & Van Dyke, 2015](#)):



With the innovation described in sufficient detail, effective implementation methods can be applied to develop the competency of staff (e.g. through selection, training and coaching), to use data to continuously improve the innovation, to ensure that leadership and administrative/ organisational supports are in place, and build enabling contexts for the practice ([Metz, 2016](#)). Enabling contexts might include aspects such as supportive infrastructure, hospitable policy and regulatory environments or adequate resource allocation.



The Self-Evaluation Methodology

Tool and Methods:

The data was collected between April and August 2019, using a self-evaluation questionnaire³ that combined open and closed questions (see [Annex 1](#)).

The questionnaire was completed by Child Protection Committees (CPCs), who were encouraged to consult their local multi-agency workforce (e.g. by convening a staff group discussion or other types of staff consultation), in order to obtain a fuller picture of child participation in child protection formal processes.

The questions were informed by a concise analysis of the relevant local policy, guidance documents and tools provided by 15 Child Protection Committees, during the second half of 2018.

The data was collated and analysed during July and August 2019.

Response Rate:

The survey was made available to all Child Protection Committees. A total of 28 CPCs/areas submitted their responses, whilst the remaining three did not respond (*note*: two areas governed by the same Public Protection Committee considered their practice distinctive enough to prepare individual responses). (see [Annex 2](#))

Limitations:

The questionnaire is based on self-reporting and thus the findings reflect solely the perception of individual CPCs and the data cannot be used to make individual comparisons between areas.

Although descriptors were provided to support consistency of rating, significant variation was still noticed. For example, scores varied even where CPCs provided very similar descriptions in the comments accompanying their rating.

The answers to some of the self-evaluation items, especially those regarding the use of data and the arrangements put in place to support professionals, showed a tendency to report on broader local arrangements, which were not necessarily specific to child participation in child protection processes.

³ The questionnaire was completed either online (on Qualtrics survey platform) or through the return of an MS Word document.

Summary of Key Findings

The quality of child participation was assessed as being 'good' by the majority of the respondents (16-19 CPCs out of 28). Only a very small number (two-four CPCs) rated it as 'very good', whilst **not a single CPC considered that the quality of child participation was 'excellent' in their local area.** This was seen at all three stages of the child protection process covered by the survey – 'initial child protection case conference', 'core group meetings' and 'review child protection case conferences'. One quarter of the respondent CPCs noticed important room for improvement in this regard, by choosing lower ratings such as 'adequate' (four or five CPCs, depending on the stage of the child protection process), 'weak' (two CPCs) and unsatisfactory (one CPC).

The self-evaluation data indicated **a need for more detailed guidance and tools specific to child participation in child protection processes,** but also that improvements have been already considered in this regard. Almost two-thirds of the respondent CPCs (18 out of 28) indicated that, although the child participation principles underpin their local child protection procedures and guidance, the latter were not complemented by detailed practice guidance and tools specific to child participation. The information provided by six CPCs mentioned that efforts to improve the guidance and tools have been planned or already started.

More than half of respondent CPCs said that those involved were 'almost clear' and had a reasonable understanding of their roles and responsibilities, but some confusion, overlaps or omissions can be noticed at times, such as when dealing with situations that are less common.

The dissemination of guidance documents and the use of supervision were the most common arrangements for professional development and support, each being mentioned by 15 CPCs. These were followed by periodic training and feedback cycles (12 CPCs each). Induction processes were mentioned by a third of the respondent CPCs (9 out of 28). These figures come with the caveat that some of the CPCs described broader arrangements, where participation was an overarching principle, rather than the specific focus.

Most CPCs expressed **moderate levels of confidence regarding professionals having the right supports and conditions** (such as time, tools, procedures or specific arrangements), **to ensure child participation.** The confidence increased slightly for 'review case conferences', compared to 'initial case conferences', and was the lowest for 'core group meetings'. CPCs commented that, by the time of the review case conference, it was more likely to see intensive relationship building and work with family and children, as well as role overlaps or omissions being addressed.

Advocacy for children involved in child protection processes was highlighted as an area that requires further development across Scotland, both in terms of availability and accessibility. **Only nine CPCs (a third of a total of 28 responses) said that most children involved in child protection processes were provided with advocacy services.** According to **11 CPCs, advocacy, although available, was provided to less than half of children.** The remaining **eight CPCs reported the absence of advocacy** for children involved in child protection process.

The self-evaluation included a section about the **various methods and tools used locally for data collection** *mostly* regarding the quality of child participation in child protection processes (a caveat is required, as some CPCs' answers reflected a wider focus than solely child participation). **Case file audits are widely used**, being mentioned by 24 out of 28 respondent CPCs. They are followed by thematic reviews/evaluations and collecting feedback from children and parents, each selected by 16 CPCs. Feedback of professionals and observation of practice were mentioned by 11 CPCs each. In addition, five CPCs listed other methods and tools, such as the use of electronic data systems/tools (performance management information) or quality assurance tools. Two CPCs indicated that no tools were available locally to collect specific information about the quality of child participation in child protection processes.

The majority of CPCs stated that data and evidence on child participation in child protection processes are scrutinised and discussed on a regular basis: quarterly by nine CPCs, at least every six months by two CPCs and annually by five CPCs. However, **almost a third of the CPCs noted that such data and evidence are not routinely discussed**, although the theme has been considered from time to time. In addition, four CPCs mentioned that although they regularly look at data and evidence, these do not include information on child participation in child protection processes.

Most of the CPCs identified all three steps that contribute to meaningful participation (informing and preparing children, making sure that children's views and perspectives are reflected in the child protection decisions, and providing feedback and support to children about the decision made) as being high or mid-level priorities for local improvement.

Main Findings

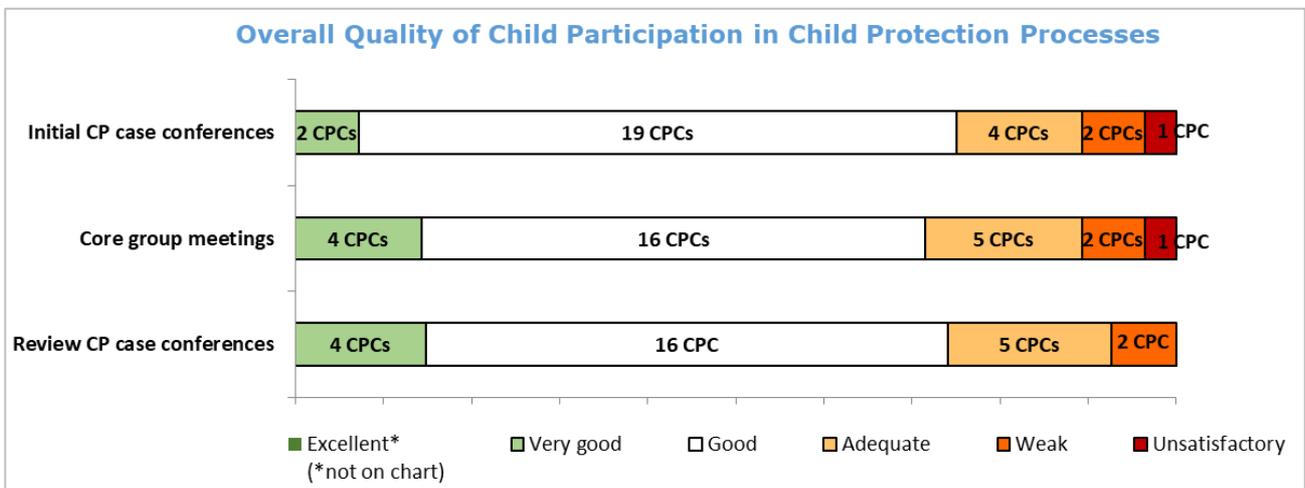
The Overall Quality of Child Participation in Child Protection Processes

The self-evaluation showed that **no CPC considered that the quality of child participation was 'excellent' in their local area.** This was valid for all three key stages of the child protection process covered by the survey.

Only a very small number (i.e. 2-4) of CPCs marked the quality of child participation as being 'very good', with a slight increase regarding 'core group meetings' and 'review child protection case conferences', each rated as 'very good' by four CPCs, compared to 'initial child protection case conference' (two CPCs).

The quality of child participation was assessed as being 'good' by the majority of the respondent CPCs: the 'initial child protection case conferences' by 19 out of 28 CPCs; the 'core group meetings' by 16 out of 28 and the 'review child protection case conferences' by 16 out of 27 CPCs.

One quarter of the respondent CPCs noted important room for improvement: 'adequate' was given by four or five CPCs (depending on the step of the child protection process) and 'weak' by two CPCs; one CPC reported that the quality of child participation in their area was unsatisfactory for both 'initial child protection case conferences' and 'core group meetings'.



[Note: one missing response regarding the 'review child protection case conferences'; the chart presents data in stacked bars, thus allowing visual data comparison]

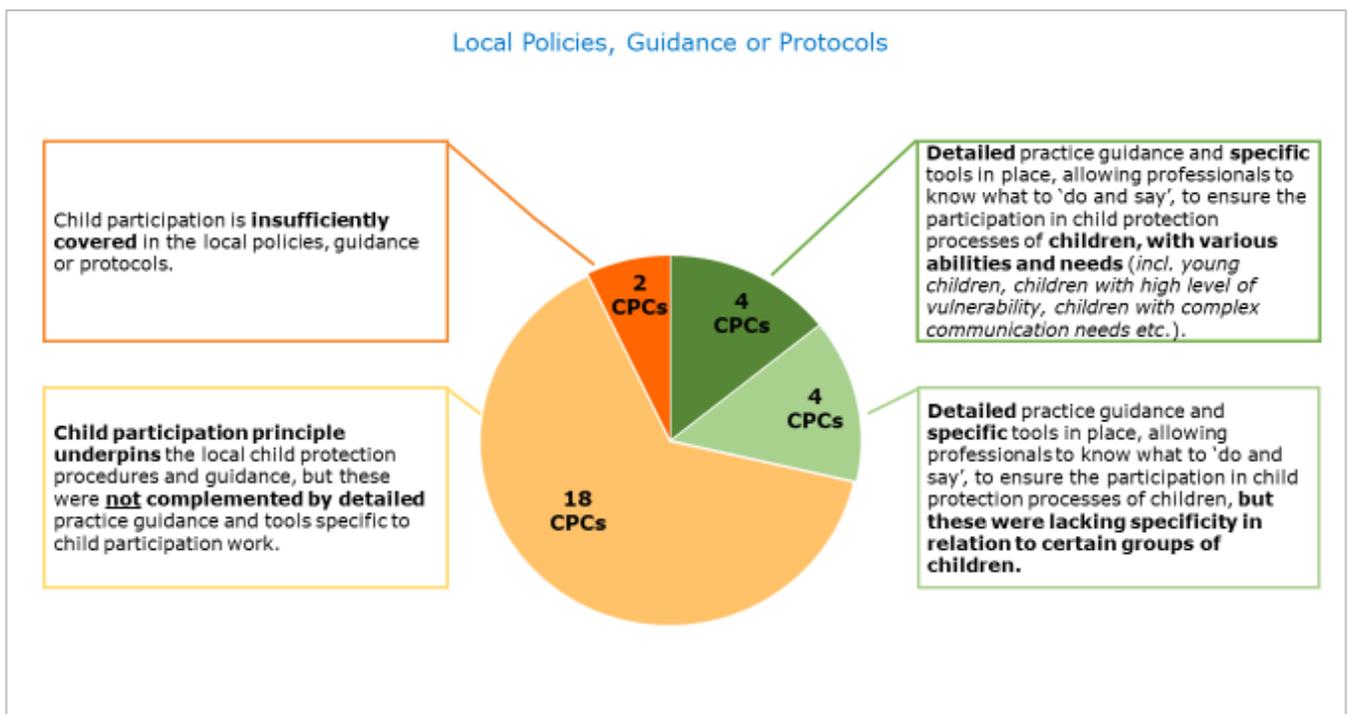
Clarity of Guidance and Practice

Level of Detail and Specificity of the Local Policies, Guidance or Protocols

Local areas reported that they were using a combination of national guidance (particularly GIRFEC and the National Guidance for Child Protection), local guidance, protocols and tools (including some developed by the third sector).

However, almost two-thirds (n. 18) of the CPCs indicated that, although child participation principles underpin their local child protection procedures and guidance, the latter were not complemented by detailed practice guidance and tools specific to child participation. Moreover, two other CPCs recognised that child participation was insufficiently covered in their local policies, guidance or protocols.

From eight CPCs that rated their practice guidance and tools as being adequately detailed in relation to child participation in child protection processes, four mentioned that these were nevertheless lacking specificity in relation to certain groups of children. Only four CPCs rated their current guidance and tools sufficiently detailed to support the participation of children with various abilities and needs (including young children, children with complex communication needs, children with high level of vulnerability etc.).



The self-evaluation data thus indicate a need for more detailed guidance and tools tailored to child participation in child protection processes.

The information provided by six CPCs nevertheless showed that significant developments have been planned or already started, aiming to improve the guidance and tools in this area.

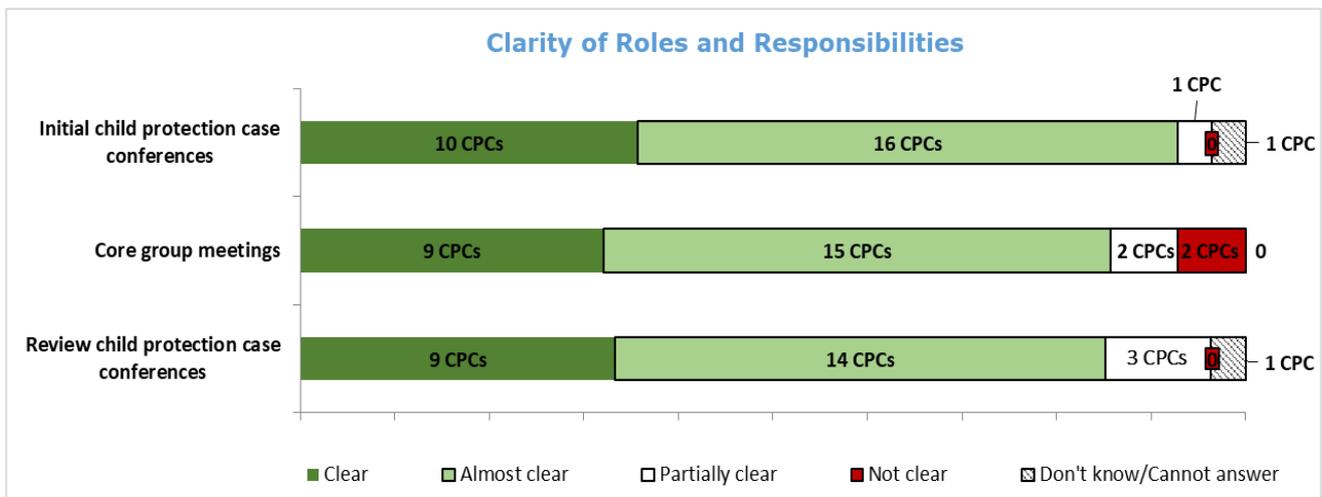
Clarity of Roles and Responsibilities

More than half of respondent CPCs said that those involved were 'almost clear' and have a reasonable understanding of their roles and responsibilities, but some confusion, overlaps or omissions can be seen at times, such as when dealing with situations that are less common. This was the case for all three key stages – 16 out of 28 CPCs chose the 'almost clear' rate for the roles and responsibilities during 'initial child protection case conference', 15 out of 28 CPCs said the same for 'core group meetings' and 14 out of 27 CPCs for 'review child protection case conferences'.

Approximately a third of the CPCs (9 or 10, depending on the key stage) said that there was a 'clear' understanding of who is doing what, together with a proven track record of swiftly addressing any confusion or misunderstanding.

At the other end of the scale, the 'partially clear' (recurrent confusion, gaps or unnecessary overlaps) and 'not clear' (no understanding of who is doing what, or allocation of roles on an ad-hoc, arbitrary or inconsistent basis) were also used, but by a small number of CPCs:

- One CPC opted for 'partially clear' in relation to 'initial child protection case conference'.
- A slightly lower confidence was noted regarding the 'core group meetings', with 'not clear' and 'partially clear' being chosen by two CPCs respectively.
- The roles and responsibilities regarding 'review child protection case conferences' were 'partially clear' for three CPCs.



[Note: one missing response regarding the 'review child protection case conferences'; the chart presents data in stacked bars, thus allowing visual data comparison]

The details provided in the answers showed consistency of roles throughout the three key stages of the child protection process for three-quarters of the respondent CPCs.

Support for Practice

Arrangements for Professional Development and Support

The self-evaluation examined the arrangements for professional development and support, specific to the area of child participation in child protection processes. The most common arrangements were: dissemination of guidance and the supervision, each used by approximately half of the CPCs, followed by periodic training and feedback cycles built into practice.

Arrangements put in place to support professionals:	Number of CPCs:
Dissemination of guidance documents	15
Supervision arrangements [specifically supporting responsibilities around child participation]	15
Periodic training sessions [specifically covering child participation]	12
Feedback cycles built into practice [specifically covering child participation]	12
Induction processes [specifically covering child participation]	9
Other (ad-hoc training, introduction of various tools or partnership with third sector)	6
No such arrangements in place	2

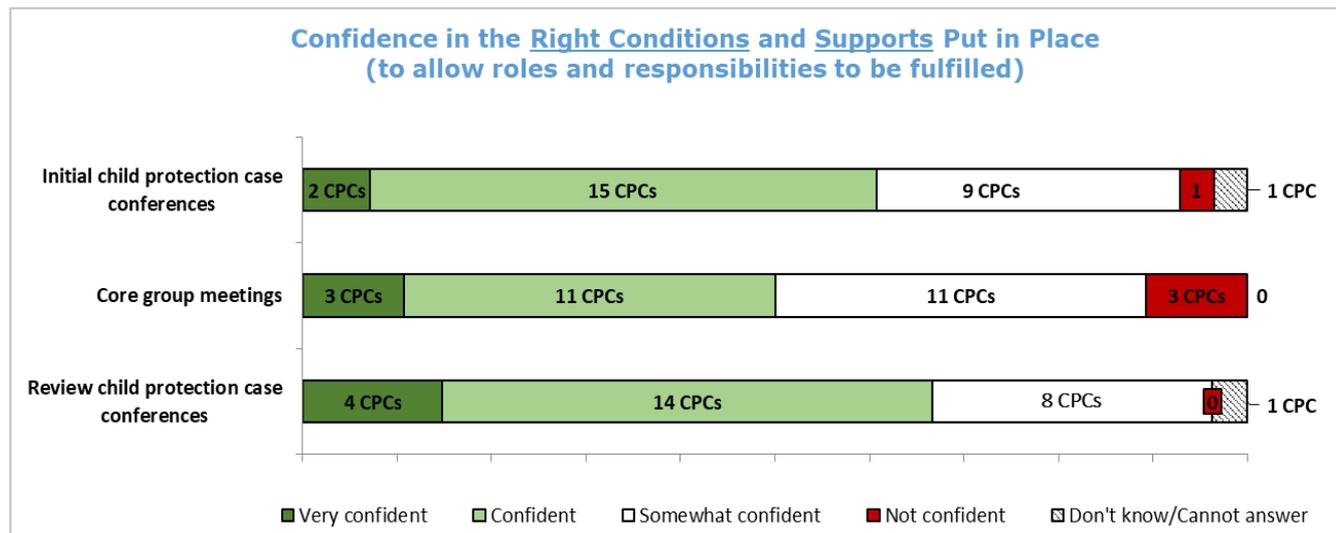
[Note: multiple options possible]

Caution should be taken in reading the results set out in the table above given that the additional details provided by some of the CPCs described broader arrangements, where participation was threaded throughout or figured as an overarching principle, such as:

"Different support is available to different staff groups but across the partners all are provided to a greater or lesser degree. While we do not offer a multiagency training session specifically on child participation, keeping the child at the centre is at the heart of all training in relation to child welfare and protection."

Confidence in the Right Conditions and Supports for Practice

Child Protection Committees were asked how confident they were that the right conditions and supports, such as time, tools, procedures or specific arrangements, were in place locally, to allow professionals to fulfil their roles and responsibilities for ensuring child participation at different key stages in the child protection process. The questionnaire returns showed **moderate levels of confidence**:



[Note: one missing response regarding the 'review child protection case conferences'; the chart presents data in stacked bars, thus allowing visual data comparison]

The above chart sets out that in relation to **initial case conferences**, only 2 out of 28 CPCs rated themselves as 'very confident', whilst **approximately half (n. 15) of the respondent CPCs were 'confident' that, most of the time, professionals have the right conditions and/or can identify and access further support to fulfil their role in child participation**. A further nine CPCs (one third of the total respondents) opted for 'somewhat confident', considering that efforts were made to ensure adequate conditions and supports for professionals, but these are not easily accessible and/or available. One CPC reported that they were 'not confident', meaning that professionals were lacking access to support or the basic conditions to fulfil their role related to child participation.

The answers specific to **core group meetings** showed 3 out of 28 CPCs being 'very confident', **11 'confident' CPCs, a further 11 'somewhat confident' and three 'not confident'** that the right supports and conditions were in place for professionals.

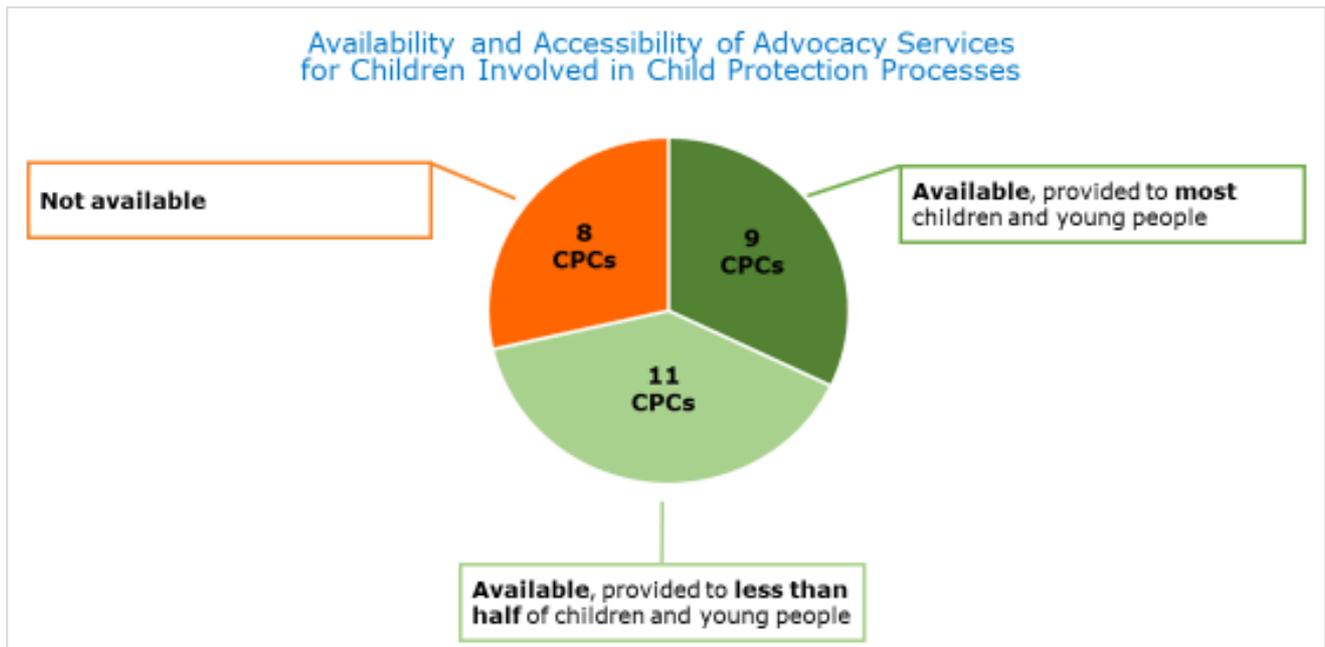
The increased confidence in relation to **review case conference** meant that, out of 27 CPCs who answered this question, **four were 'very confident', approximately half (n. 14) were 'confident' and eight 'somewhat confident' that professionals have the right supports and conditions to ensure child participation** (therefore, the lowest option on the scale was not used in this case).

The chart shows that **CPCs' confidence** that professionals have the right supports and conditions to ensure child participation **increased slightly for 'review case conferences', compared to 'initial case conferences', and was the lowest for 'core group meetings'**. CPCs commented about the significant time constraints at play for initial case conferences. However, by the time of the review case conference, it was more likely to see intensive relationship building and work with families and children, as well as addressing role overlap or omissions.

Availability and Accessibility of Advocacy Services

Advocacy for children involved in child protection processes requires further development across Scotland, both in terms of availability and accessibility.

Out of 28 responses, only nine (approximately a third of the total) said that most children involved in child protection processes were provided with advocacy services. For 11 CPCs, advocacy, although available, was provided to less than half of children. The remaining eight CPCs reported the absence of any advocacy for children involved in child protection process.



Advocacy for children comes in various formats across the country, through statutory services and/or third sector services:

- Statutory services taking the advocacy role (through child's social worker, education staff, health professional or children's rights officer): eight mentions;
- Who Cares? Scotland: 11 mentions (out of which, six made specific reference to looked after children);
- Barnardo's (Hear 4U Advocacy service): five mentions;
- Children 1st (Meeting Buddy and Family Group Decision Making): four mentions;
- Women's Aid (Children's Workers): two mentions;
- Quarriers: one mention;
- Other local advocacy services: Western Isles Advocacy (Children and Young Persons Independent Advocacy); Advocacy Orkney.

Several CPCs highlighted **challenges in obtaining parental consent** for advocacy and/or child participation.

The survey returns showed **variations in terms of accessibility**, with the following criteria mentioned:

- Ages and stages of child development:
 - Age 5+ (but flexible based on young person's capacity): seven mentions;
 - Age 8+, in exceptional circumstances they will support younger children: one mention;
 - Age under 16: two mentions;
 - Child with a learning disability: one mention;
 - Service not available for children who have profound needs: one mention.
- Category of risk / support needed:
 - Children involved in child protection process or integrated assessment: nine mentions;
 - Care experienced children/young people: six mentions;
 - Children involved in the children's hearing system: one mention;
 - Children affected by domestic abuse: two mentions;
 - Emotional and mental health: two mentions.

Use of Data at Local Level

Data Collection and Analysis

The following table presents the use, at local level, of various **methods and tools** for data collection *mostly* regarding the quality of child participation in child protection processes (a caveat is required, as some CPCs' answers reflected a wider focus than solely child participation).

Case file audits are widely used, being mentioned by 24 out of 28 respondent CPCs. They are **followed by thematic reviews/evaluations and collecting feedback from children and parents**, each selected by 16 CPCs. Feedback of professionals and observation of practice⁴ were mentioned by 11 CPCs each. In addition, five CPCs listed other methods and tools, such as the use of electronic data systems/tools (performance management information) or quality assurance tools.

Two CPCs indicated that no tools were available locally to collect specific information about the quality of child participation in child protection processes.

Methods and tools:		Number of CPCs	
Case file audits		24	
Thematic reviews or evaluations		16	
Collecting children's feedback	Child feedback questionnaires (only)	7	16
	Child feedback discussions (only)	5	
	Used together	4	
Collecting parents' feedback	Parental feedback questionnaires (only)	7	16
	Parental feedback discussions (only)	4	
	Used together	5	
Collecting professionals' feedback	Professionals feedback questionnaires (only)	2	11
	Professionals feedback discussions (only)	5	
	Used together	4	
Observation of practice		11	
Other (system management data)		5	
None of the above		2	

[Note: multiple options possible]

⁴ Observation of practice is a valuable method not only for data collection, but also for supporting professional development (discussion of feedback from observation can support reflective practice and reciprocal professional learning).

Challenges were highlighted in using feedback questionnaires, due to a low return rate and the difficulty to make them accessible to various ages, abilities and needs. Semi-structured discussions with parents and children, sometimes used in conjunction with feedback questionnaires or other bespoke tools, were mentioned, but only by a third of the CPCs.

The majority of CPCs stated that data and evidence on child participation in child protection processes are scrutinised and discussed on a regular basis: quarterly by nine CPCs, at least every six months by two CPCs and annually by five CPCs.

Almost a third of the CPCs noted that such data and evidence are not routinely discussed, although the theme has been considered from time to time, for example, when issues came to CPC’s attention, or when thematic analysis or reports were commissioned (sometimes a few years apart). Moreover, **four CPCs mentioned that although they regularly look at data and evidence, these do not include information on child participation in child protection processes.**

Data and Evidence on Child Participation in CP Processes – the Frequency of Analysis and Discussion within CPC:	Number of CPCs
At least quarterly	9
Every six months	2
Annually	5
Not specified/ Not routinely	8
None (currently)	4

[Note: multiple options possible]

Examples of Specific Indicators or Evidence Used Locally

The following indicators and/or evidence collected and analysed by CPCs were identified as being specific to child participation in child protection processes:

- **Children's perception of their experiences and outcomes** related to child protection case conference (various examples were provided by CPCs, such as through empathy maps, or young people over 12 consulted as part of an auditing exercise, or discussions with children whether they think their situation has improved);
- Evidence of **the report being discussed with the child/young person** prior to the conference;
- Percentage of children over 5 subject to initial or review conferences **where a Child's report was submitted**
- Evidence of **child's views being recorded in the child's plan/assessments /minute**;
- Percentage of children and young people whose **views are represented at case conference**
- **Attendance** at case conferences:
 - Numbers of children attending, by age;
 - Percentage of children over 8 years of age involved in child protection case conferences;
 - Percentage of those invited to attend for all or part of the meeting (this will be replaced with a more meaningful indicator of child participation);
- **Use of advocacy services**
 - Number of referrals for advocacy for children on the Child Protection Register;
 - Uptake – number of children supported;
 - Percentage of children over 5 on CPR who have accessed advocacy service;
 - Child Protection Buddy provided (for children over 5);
- **Use of various tools**:
 - Numbers on the use of Viewpoint;
 - Number of 'Tell People What You Think' Reports submitted and recorded;
- **Number of conferences** (children over 5);
- **Quality Indicator Framework** (Care Inspectorate) – specific indicators regarding child participation.

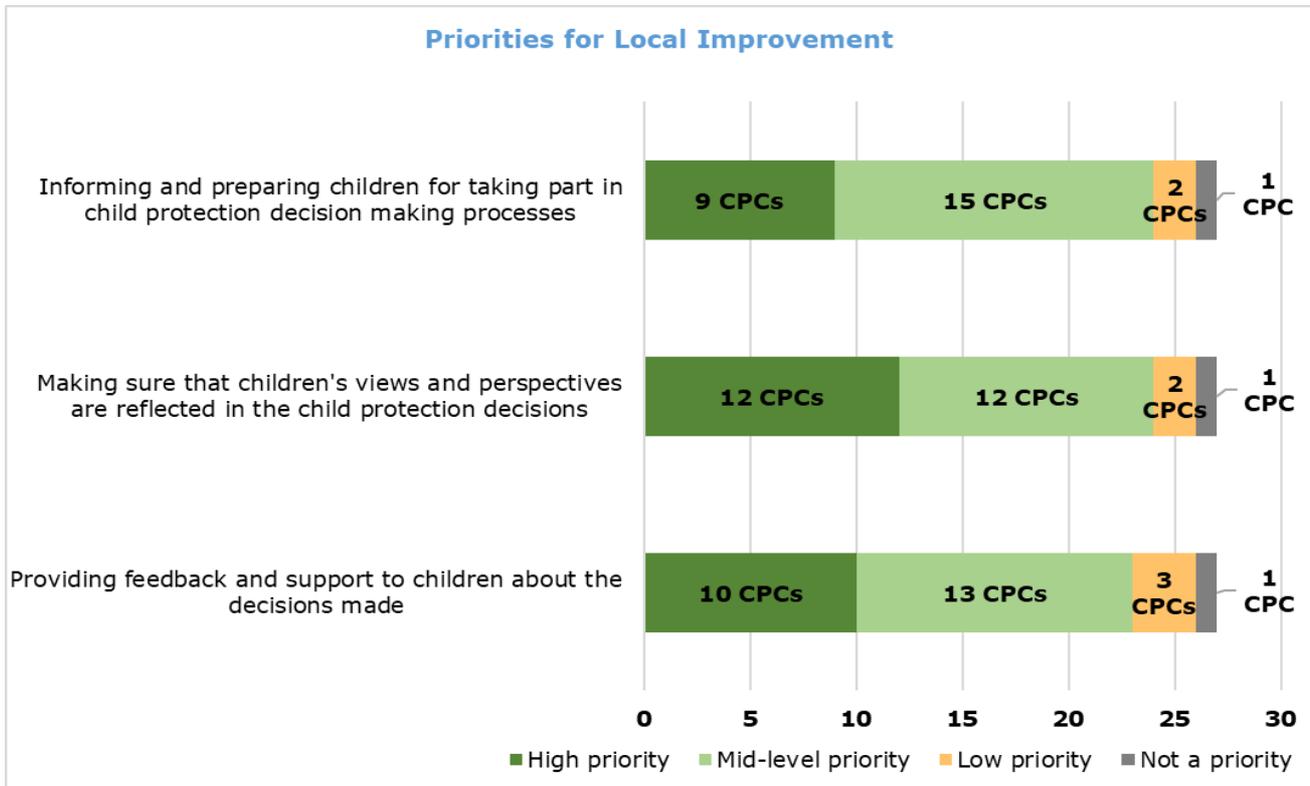
Understanding How Children and their Families Experience the Formal Child Protection System

The issue of how children and their families experience the formal child protection system was briefly explored as part of the self-evaluation exercise and the CPCs listed arrangements such as:

- **Views** of families and children (including on how they feel about the quality of the support they are getting) are **sought and included in the case conference reports** (especially at the review case conference);
- **Feedback of parents:**
 - Feedback is sought from parents who attended in the week post conference. This feedback is via telephone and is facilitated by the administrator who took the minutes at the conference.
 - Phone calls undertaken following attendance at Case Conference;
 - Phone survey with parents who are willing to provide feedback after the three-month review and following de-registration;
 - Baseline information due to be gathered for implementation of 'Signs of Safety'. Discussions had with families following each stage and during meetings
- **Feedback of children:**
 - An audit of the child protection case conferences to evaluate and measure participation; it includes meeting with young people over 12 to discuss the case conference, their experiences and outcomes;
 - A review run in one local area, to ascertain children's views on the review process (not just child protection);
 - A CPC mentioned working in partnership with the Children's Rights and Information Officer to engage with young people directly about their experiences of child protection;
 - Viewpoint feedback questionnaire;
 - engagement with care experienced young people;
- **Feedback of Review Officers;**
- Periodic **surveys;**
- **Thematic evaluation** report;
- The CPC practitioners forum will take part in a **local children's rights award** that will have a focus on participation, and ensure planning and partnership working can be utilised to review and improve methods of participation and inclusion of young people in the improvement of processes and the overall service;
- **Follow up of complaints;**
- Recruiting **parental advisor** (with lived experience).

Priorities for Local Improvement

The following chart shows that all **three steps**, which contribute to meaningful participation, **were identified as high priority or mid-level priority for local improvement by most of the CPCs**:



[Note: one missing answer]

Some of the CPCs provided **examples of arrangements implemented at local level to improve child participation in child protection processes**:

- Conducting in-depth audits, self-evaluation activities: five mentions;
- Investing in and promoting advocacy services for children: four mentions;
- Developing child friendly paperwork and information materials: four mentions;
- Including the work in the CPC business plan and/or other local improvement plans: three mentions;
- Piloting new tools, such as checklist for chairs, de-registration tools, consultation tools: three mentions;
- Conducting tests of change: two mentions;
- Exploring various approaches and tools used elsewhere, with a view to assess their suitability for the local context: two mentions;
- Revising child protection processes at local level, by paying attention to child participation: one mention.

Challenges, Areas for Improvement and Promising Practice

Challenges

- The existing set of guidance, protocols and tools was considered, by some CPCs, insufficiently detailed, with **no explicit description of 'very good' practice** across agencies, and **scarce content tailored to the participation of children with additional needs**:
 - "(...) the principles were explicit but not necessarily what it would mean for a teacher, a nurse for schools, and a social worker. There may be a lack of clarity given the range of resources and approaches";*
 - "the expectation to ascertain the views of the child is clear [but] the reality is this doesn't always happen";*
 - "[practice] varies from case to case and team to team";*
- **The roles and responsibilities were seen as being more explicit only for some professionals** (such as social worker, meeting chair, review officer or advocacy worker) **or only for some of the steps** to support participation (e.g. discussing child's plans with children and supporting them to be part of the development of their own plans was an area identified as needing more attention);
- Whilst an expectation was noted about the role in ensuring participation of various professionals, dependent on their relationship with the child, **the coordination between the different roles** (and professionals) was loosely described. This was seen as leading to challenges, **making assumptions and not having clear communication lines**;
- **The lack of data and evidence** to determine compliance with agreed procedures:
 - "Instructions are clear about expectations but there are no reliable monitors in place to evaluate if it happens and how effectively";*
 - "We do not record any data on this [child participation in child protection processes]. However, anecdotally, we feel that there are structures in place to support participation";*
- Several CPCs mentioned **the need to strengthen the skills and confidence of staff** in relation to child participation, by emphasising the role of supervision, to complement training:
 - "The support and tools are in place in terms of training, guidance, support. There can be extenuating circumstances which affects best practice. Confidence and ability plays a role. One to one sessions are essential in supporting our workforce";*
 - "Professionals can be risk averse or overly protective in supporting children to participate. Particularly if the area of concern is sexual abuse or domestic violence";*

- **Time constraints**; these were more evident in relation to providing support for child participation at the initial case conference and for building trusting relationship with families and children:

"Child protection is often perceived as threatening to families. Gaining a families and or child's trust to get sufficient engagement to get a child's views can take time";

"There is a practice standard that child and family will meet in advance of conference with chair to go over process and content of reports, however, recently there have been issues in respect of meeting agreed timescales, which have led to information being submitted without adequate time to effectively include child or parent".

Areas for Improvement

CPCs identified the following areas for **local** improvement:

- Improving the **information and support provided to children before meeting** (e.g. Making assessment and planning documents available in child friendly versions; Ensuring that rooms/facilities are child/family friendly) – six mentions:
 - "I think our [assessments] are not written in a way that would be particularly easy for a child to read. Producing child friendly [assessments] which adequately cover the required information would be very challenging. There is not enough time to produce an adult and separate child [version]";*
 - "(...) we have inconsistent approaches to children having visual copies of their plans in a manner that best meets their needs";*
- Addressing the need for more **practice consistency** and making improvements to have a **fully joined up approach** – five mentions:
 - "(...) quality [of child participation] varies from case to case. We would expect higher numbers of children to participate in the decision making and show their understanding of the plan. The contribution of independent advocacy is not routinely offered. Preparing with the Chair of the Review does not always happen sufficiently in advance";*
- **Strengthening the advocacy services for children**, including their accessibility, considering referrals earlier in the child protection process, but also increasing the uptake (when parents are reluctant to accept advocacy for their children) – five mentions;
 - "(...) advocacy services are no longer available, they had the time and skills to develop great working relationships with children and help the child express those views (...) The ending of this service is concerning (...) they were seen as different from social work and this made families less wary of them";*
- **Drawing on the experiences of other processes**, such as GIRFEC, Looked After Children reviews or hearing processes – five mentions;
- Strengthen the **child-centred approach** – four mentions:
 - "More needs to be done to put the child in the centre"; "Child's voice can be lost in the processes"; "(...) However, what the child might choose to have said might be less relevant to the safety agenda of the core group meeting";*

- Addressing the **low attendance of children** at case conference (which, in some areas, is under 50% and is mostly of older children), when this is in the best interest of the child – four mentions:
 - “Our greatest area of development is how we support practitioners in being innovative in supporting children to attend their [case conferences]”;
 - “In my experience it is rare to have a child attending their own core group. This might be related to child or parental reluctance for the child to participate;”
- Putting in place explicit **mechanisms to record children’s views for core groups and review child protection case conferences** – two mentions:
 - “Explicit mechanisms to record children’s views for core groups are not in place”; (...) It was clear that views of children should, at [Review] stage, be more readily available through the longer term [interaction]. However, ‘Having Your Say’ forms are just beginning to be used more routinely and child’s views are not explicitly requested as a section of the [Review Child Protection Conference Minute template]”;
 - “(…) there could be improvements in terms of how their views are recorded in terms of level of detail”.

Asked what else would support local areas in making improvements in child participation in child protection processes, CPCs suggested the following developments that could potentially be supported at a **national** scale:

- Giving consideration, **within the refreshed National Guidance for Child Protection**, to **specific details around participation at each stage of the process** (in order to assist workers further) and to reflect an **improved understanding of the child’s rights approach**:
 - Developing the structure of case conferences so they can be more fluid in responding to the attendance of a child;
 - Modifying the whole child protection process, conference and meeting format, language, report formats and planning processes to make them more accessible to children and to enable greater participation; Consistency of children having the same chair for their meetings;
- Developing **national resources**:
 - Producing information about the child protection process in formats tailored to ages and stages of child development and various abilities and needs;
 - Toolkit for participation, specifically resources including visual guides to discuss processes;
 - Skill development and resources for chairs of meetings;
- Exploring ways of **facilitating the sharing of positive/promising practice** (e.g. website/library resource, presentations at CPCScotland meetings);
 - “For example, in the hearing system they have removed the table during panel meetings and provide people with trays to use for writing – can learning be shared for the purpose of child protection conferences?”;
- Supporting the **development of advocacy services for children** involved in child protection processes; exploring ways of **addressing barriers to obtaining parental support** for independent advocacy.

Promising Practice and Recommendations

CPCs highlighted the following promising practice and recommendations:

- Using **a mix of innovative and creative ways** to support children to express their views, **including through technology and associated conversation** with the child – seven mentions:
Examples include the use of short videos or audio messages, drawings, 'Avatars', 'Talking Mats', 'Empathy Maps', 'Having Your Say' forms, 'Viewpoint', 'Mind Of My Own' app for young people, 'My Voice', Makaton (for children with communication difficulties) or the 'Three Houses' (Worries/Good Things/Dreams - Signs of Safety tools); having someone else (a worker or other family member) to present child's views, when attendance of children is not considered to be appropriate due to the age of the children involved and the nature of the discussion of significant harm;

Spotlight

"We have recently produced several short videos of different methods of engagement with children and young people and these are to be used in the first year with newly-qualified social workers and as a training and supervision resource (8 short videos aimed at social work professionals). We are about to launch a short animation on using the (...) Wellbeing Web tool with children and young people"

- **Using checklists, monitoring forms, a standard meeting agenda** item regarding child participation, as well as **other administrative processes** – six mentions:
"A [Child Protection Case Conference] Monitoring Form is completed for each [meeting], which records if the child's views were clearly available to the Chair"; "There is an administrative process in place to ensure [that the discussion with the child] happens – a senior education officer follows up if this has not been done";
- **Setting an explicit task and clear responsibility** for supporting child participation; these should be **included in the child's plan or even earlier** in the child protection process – five mentions:
"The IRD process was highlighted as a key stage to identify who might have the role in ensuring the child's voice is at the table and to make appropriate actions if needed. We will review our local IRD recording template and staff guidance to consider prompts and recording of actions";
"The Child's Plan makes it very clear who has what responsibility";
"(...) plans should give absolute clarity on tasks and who contributes to gathering child's views. The Core Group should have this as a critical agenda item";
- Trying to build **relationships with families** and use a **strengths-based approach** – five mentions:
"Practitioners understand the need to give relationships and participation high priority. It's a mindset and an approach, rather than an action and a task";

"[we were] able to illustrate very good practice [in the context of review meetings] – children seen at home or nursery multiple times and their social worker having a thorough understanding of their views and relaying this";
"Viewpoint is the agreed tool to be used and it's the discussion and relationship with the social worker, who is generally the worker completing it with the child that counts";

"There are good examples [which include] testing of several changes in each site designed to promote improved family engagement with services and better joint working";

- **Providing the child with the option to choose** who they want to speak with or receive support from. **Strengthening the involvement of those with a relationship with the child or young person** (e.g. family support workers, school staff, school nurse, health visitors, Meeting Buddies etc.), to address the time constraints that social workers and chairs face:
 - "(...) family support workers can be in a position of having time to be with the child, time to check things out with them";*
 - "The child's preference would be taken into account as they may prefer to speak with someone they have known for a longer time, e.g. a teacher, or with someone 'new' if they would find this easier rather than sharing personal information with someone they already have a relationship with, which they may find embarrassing";*
- Good results were observed when children were supported to participate by **advocacy services** – two mentions:
 - "Staff focus group felt when the child has an independent advocate the child's voice is actively at core group meetings";*
- **Using an 'opt-out' system for referrals to advocacy** – one mention:
 - "[an] 'opt-out' system was put in place meaning that referrals were made automatically and that children could decide whether they wanted to take this up or not";*
- **Strengthening the interlink between guidance, training and supervision, direction from chairs of meeting and feedback from quality assurance;**

Spotlight

"Specifically, within the multi-agency child protection training, (...) participants are guided through group exercises such as:

- ✓ *Matching the articles of the UNCRC to the sections of the wellbeing wheel to increase understanding of the rights of children and the correlation between this and GIRFEC;*
- ✓ *Listening exercise using a story and true/false questions to highlight the importance of really listening to children and not sanitising information.*
- ✓ *An exploration of roles before, during and after the case conference highlighting the social workers role in preparing the child and the family (...), ensuring they have their views recorded and ensuring understanding of the decisions made;*
- ✓ *Introduction to a bespoke tool to assist communication with children;*
- ✓ *In addition an input to the training is provided by [third sector] where the importance of child's views and participation is central."*

- **Exemplifying what 'very good practice' looks like**, describing the most essential and indispensable components of practice, whilst also encouraging creativity, flexibility and a child rights-based approach:
 - "We want to focus on culture change and rights respecting agendas";
 - "Case Conference Chairs have visited the child/young person at school or home, prior to the Conference, to ensure their views are known and alleviate any anxieties";
 - "Removing barriers to participation might include altering the style of conferences to allow a more child friendly environment";
 - "The better the time spent on preparation the better likelihood of creating a successful, risk reducing plan".

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Annex 1: Self-evaluation Questionnaire

CHILD PARTICIPATION IN CHILD PROTECTION PROCESSES SURVEY OF CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEES

Context:

As part of the current workplan for CPCScotland, members wished to undertake a scoping survey to gather information about the arrangements in place in local areas to support participation in formal child protection processes. CELCIS agreed to support this work by designing the scoping survey and analysing the results of this.

The survey is **focused solely on child participation** and has been informed by the information submitted by Child Protection Committees (CPCs) to CELCIS in July and August 2018, as part of stage one of this work.

Child participation principle

Child participation is one of the four core principles of the **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child** – article 12 states that children have **the right to express their views in each and every matter affecting them** and requires that those **views be heard and given due weight**, in line with child's age and maturity, and their best interests. The UN Convention refers to 'evolving capacity' for decision-making and sets no minimum age for it, thus acknowledging that children can and do form views from a very early age. For child participation to be relevant and meaningful, **the right to information** and the **right to protection** also need to be ensured.

Child participation in child protection processes:

Children need support not only in the context of the decision-making meeting, but also before and after the meeting. This leads to the following **three steps** contributing equally to meaningful participation, hence being referenced throughout the survey:

- **Before the meeting:** informing and preparing children for taking part in the child protection decision making process;
- **Meeting:** making sure that children's views and perspectives are heard and reflected in the child protection decisions, irrespective of whether the child attends the meeting or not;
- **After the meeting:** providing feedback and support to children about the decisions made and the outcomes of the child protection meeting.

Given the complexity of the child protection processes and taking into account the right of the child to express their views in all matters affecting them, the survey looks at child participation at **key stages within the child protection journey**: initial case conferences, review case conferences, but also core group (or equivalent) meetings, including in the development of child protection plans. We are nevertheless mindful that there might be other relevant decision-making moments, but the reasons influencing our selection are related to greater consistency of their definitions across local areas, and the fact that they are more likely to allow the above three steps for meaningful child participation to take place.

Information and support has to be accessible, in a format and manner consistent with child's age, maturity and needs, and reinforced by checking for and supporting understanding. (E.g. sending a leaflet or a letter, or asking the child to sign their protection plan might not be the most appropriate method of informing a child, in the absence of further ways of supporting understanding and offering feedback.)

EXPLORATION OF PRACTICE

Child participation in decision-making within the context of initial case conferences (please think about all three steps – pre-meeting, in meeting, and after meeting – mentioned in the introduction)

1. Which individuals and/or professionals have roles and responsibilities in ensuring child participation at <u>initial case conferences</u> ?	2. Please briefly describe what (each of) these individual(s) and/or professionals do in terms of ensuring child participation at <u>initial case conferences</u> :

3. How clear are these roles and responsibilities to all those involved? (tick one option)			Comments
Clear	<i>There is a clear understanding of who is doing what; and there is a proven track record of swiftly addressing any confusion</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Almost clear	<i>There is a reasonable understanding of roles and responsibilities, but some confusion, overlaps or omissions can be noticed <u>at times</u>, such as when dealing with situations that are less common)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Partially clear	<i>Roles and responsibilities are only partially clear, there are <u>recurrent</u> confusions, gaps or unnecessary overlaps in the work to ensure child participation</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Not clear	<i>There is no understanding of who is doing what; some roles might be taken/allocated, but this happens on an ad-hoc, arbitrary or inconsistent basis</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Don't know / Cannot answer		<input type="checkbox"/>	

4. Overall, how confident are you that the right conditions and supports (e.g. time, tools, procedures, specific arrangements) are in place locally, to allow these individuals and/or professional(s) to fulfil their roles and responsibilities for ensuring child participation at <u>initial case conferences</u> ? (tick one option)			Comments
Very confident	<i>Very confident that the right conditions and supports are always in place to allow professionals to fulfil their role related to child participation</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Confident	<i>Confident that, most of the time, professionals have the right conditions and/or can identify and access further support to fulfil their role related to child participation</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Somewhat confident	<i>Efforts were made to ensure adequate conditions and supports for professionals to fulfil their role related to child participation, but these are not easily accessible and/or available</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Not confident	<i>Professionals can't access support or they are lacking the basic conditions to fulfil their role related to child participation</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Don't know / Cannot answer		<input type="checkbox"/>	

5. Bearing in mind your responses above, how would you rate the overall quality of child participation in your local area at <u>initial case conferences</u> ? (tick one option)			Comments
Excellent	<i>Outstanding</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Very good	<i>Major strengths</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Good	<i>Important strengths, with some areas for improvement</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Adequate	<i>Strengths just outweigh weaknesses</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Weak	<i>Important weaknesses</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Unsatisfactory	<i>Major weaknesses</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Child participation in decision-making within the context of core group (or equivalent) meetings, including the development of child protection plan (please think about all three steps – pre-meeting, in meeting, and after meeting – mentioned in the introduction)

6. Which individuals and/or professionals have roles and responsibilities in ensuring child participation at <u>core group (or equivalent) meetings, including the development of child protection plans</u> ?	7. Please briefly describe what (each of) these individual(s) and/or professionals do in terms of ensuring child participation at <u>core group (or equivalent) meetings, including the development of child protection plans</u> :

8. How clear are these roles and responsibilities to all those involved? (tick one option)			Comments
Clear	<i>There is a clear understanding of who is doing what; and there is a proven track record of swiftly addressing any confusion</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Almost clear	<i>There is a reasonable understanding of roles and responsibilities, but some confusion, overlaps or omissions can be noticed <u>at times</u>, such as when dealing with situations that are less common)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Partially clear	<i>Roles and responsibilities are only partially clear, there are <u>recurrent</u> confusions, gaps or unnecessary overlaps in the work to ensure child participation</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Not clear	<i>There is no understanding of who is doing what; some roles might be taken/allocated, but this happens on an ad-hoc, arbitrary or inconsistent basis</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Don't know / Cannot answer		<input type="checkbox"/>	

9. Overall, how confident are you that the right conditions and supports (e.g. time, tools, procedures, specific arrangements) are in place locally, to allow these individuals and/or professional(s) to fulfil their roles and responsibilities for ensuring child participation at <u>core group (or equivalent) meetings, including the development of child protection plans?</u> (tick one option)			Comments
Very confident	<i>Very confident that the right conditions and supports are always in place to allow professionals to fulfil their role related to child participation</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Confident	<i>Confident that, most of the time, professionals have the right conditions and/or can identify and access further support to fulfil their role related to child participation</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Somewhat confident	<i>Efforts were made to ensure adequate conditions and supports for professionals to fulfil their role related to child participation, but these are not easily accessible and/or available</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Not confident	<i>Professionals can't access support or they are lacking the basic conditions to fulfil their role related to child participation</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Don't know / Cannot answer		<input type="checkbox"/>	

10. Bearing in mind your responses above, how would you rate the overall quality of child participation in your local area at <u>core group (or equivalent) meetings, including the development of child protection plans?</u> (tick one option)			Comments
Excellent	<i>Outstanding</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Very good	<i>Major strengths</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Good	<i>Important strengths, with some areas for improvement</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Adequate	<i>Strengths just outweigh weaknesses</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Weak	<i>Important weaknesses</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Unsatisfactory	<i>Major weaknesses</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Child participation in decision-making within the context of review case conferences (please think about all three steps – pre-meeting, in meeting, and after meeting – mentioned in the introduction)

11. Which individuals and/or professionals have roles and responsibilities in ensuring child participation at <u>review case conferences</u> ?	12. Please briefly describe what (each of) these individual(s) and/or professionals do in terms of ensuring child participation at <u>review case conferences</u> :

13. How clear are these roles and responsibilities to all those involved? (tick one option)			Comments
Clear	<i>There is a clear understanding of who is doing what; and there is a proven track record of swiftly addressing any confusion</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Almost clear	<i>There is a reasonable understanding of roles and responsibilities, but some confusion, overlaps or omissions can be noticed <u>at times</u>, such as when dealing with situations that are less common)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Partially clear	<i>Roles and responsibilities are only partially clear, there are <u>recurrent</u> confusions, gaps or unnecessary overlaps in the work to ensure child participation</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Not clear	<i>There is no understanding of who is doing what; some roles might be taken/allocated, but this happens on an ad-hoc, arbitrary or inconsistent basis</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Don't know / Cannot answer		<input type="checkbox"/>	

14. Overall, how confident are you that the right conditions and supports (e.g. time, tools, procedures, specific arrangements) are in place locally, to allow these individuals and/or professional(s) to fulfil their roles and responsibilities for ensuring child participation at <u>review case conferences</u> ? (tick one option)			Comments
Very confident	<i>Very confident that the right conditions and supports are always in place to allow professionals to fulfil their role related to child participation</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Confident	<i>Confident that, most of the time, professionals have the right conditions and/or can identify and access further support to fulfil their role related to child participation</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Somewhat confident	<i>Efforts were made to ensure adequate conditions and supports for professionals to fulfil their role related to child participation, but these are not easily accessible and/or available</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Not confident	<i>Professionals can't access support or they are lacking the basic conditions to fulfil their role related to child participation</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Don't know / Cannot answer		<input type="checkbox"/>	

15. Bearing in mind your responses above, how would you rate the overall quality of child participation in your local area at <u>review case conferences</u> ? (tick one option)			Comments
Excellent	<i>Outstanding</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Very good	<i>Major strengths</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Good	<i>Important strengths, with some areas for improvement</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Adequate	<i>Strengths just outweigh weaknesses</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Weak	<i>Important weaknesses</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Unsatisfactory	<i>Major weaknesses</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Advocacy Services

16.1. Are there advocacy services provided to children involved in child protection processes? <i>(tick one option)</i>		
Yes, provided to most children involved in child protection processes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Go to Q16.2
Yes, provided to less than half of children involved in child protection processes	<input type="checkbox"/>	
No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Go to Q17
16.2. Please specify who provides these advocacy services in your local area:		
16.3. Are there any criteria on which children can access these advocacy services (e.g. age, place of residence, type of need etc.)?		

Identifying Support

17. What would support your local area in making improvements in child participation in child protection processes?

LOCAL POLICIES, GUIDANCE OR PROTOCOLS

18. Please read the following statements and select the one that best reflects your local context <i>(tick one option)</i>		Comments
a) We have detailed practice guidance and specific tools in place, allowing professionals to know what to 'do and say', at each step, to ensure the participation in child protection processes of children, with various abilities and needs (including young children, children with complex communication needs, children with high level of vulnerability etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
b) We have detailed practice guidance and specific tools in place, allowing professionals to know what to 'do and say', at each step, to ensure the participation in child protection processes of children, but these are lacking specificity in relation to certain groups of children	<input type="checkbox"/>	
c) Child participation principles underpin our local child protection procedures and guidance, but these are not complemented by detailed practice guidance and tools specific to child participation work	<input type="checkbox"/>	
d) Child participation is insufficiently covered in our local policies, guidance or protocols	<input type="checkbox"/>	
e) None of the above	<input type="checkbox"/>	

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

19. How are relevant professionals in your area supported to fulfil their responsibilities for ensuring high quality child participation in child protection processes? <i>(multiple options possible)</i>		Comments
a) Induction processes specifically covering child participation	<input type="checkbox"/>	
b) Periodic training sessions specifically covering child participation	<input type="checkbox"/>	
c) Supervision arrangements specifically supporting responsibilities around child participation	<input type="checkbox"/>	
d) Feedback cycles built into practice, specifically covering child participation	<input type="checkbox"/>	
e) Dissemination of guidance documents	<input type="checkbox"/>	
f) Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
g) None of the above	<input type="checkbox"/>	

SELF-EVALUATION AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

20.1 What <u>methods and tools</u> do you use locally for collecting information about the quality of child participation in child protection processes? <i>(multiple options possible)</i>		
a) Observation of practice	<input type="checkbox"/>	
b) Case file audits	<input type="checkbox"/>	
c) Child feedback questionnaires	<input type="checkbox"/>	
d) Child feedback discussions	<input type="checkbox"/>	
e) Parental feedback questionnaires	<input type="checkbox"/>	
f) Parental feedback discussions	<input type="checkbox"/>	
g) Professionals feedback questionnaires	<input type="checkbox"/>	
h) Professionals feedback discussions	<input type="checkbox"/>	
i) Thematic reviews or evaluations	<input type="checkbox"/>	
j) Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
k) None of the above	<input type="checkbox"/>	
20.2. Please list any <u>indicators and/or evidence</u> collected and analysed by your CPC, specific to child participation in child protection processes:		
20.3. How often are data and evidence on child participation in child protection processes <u>analysed and discussed</u> by your CPC? <i>(multiple options possible)</i>		Comments
a) At least quarterly	<input type="checkbox"/>	
b) Every six months	<input type="checkbox"/>	
c) Annually	<input type="checkbox"/>	
d) Once every few years (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
e) Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
f) None of the above	<input type="checkbox"/>	

21. Please describe any arrangements in place locally to gain an understanding of how children and their families experience the formal child protection system:

Please take a few moments to read the introduction about 'Child participation in child protection processes' and reflect on the discussions you have had so far, then proceed to the remaining questions:

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

22. To what extent have the following been identified as areas for local improvement?			Comments
22.1 Informing and preparing children for taking part in child protection decision making processes	High priority for improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Mid-level priority for improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Low priority for improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	No extent/none	<input type="checkbox"/>	
22.2 Making sure that children's views and perspectives are reflected in the child protection decisions	High priority for improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Mid-level priority for improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Low priority for improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	No extent/none	<input type="checkbox"/>	
22.3 Providing feedback and support to children about the decisions made and outcomes of the child protection meetings	High priority for improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Mid-level priority for improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Low priority for improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	No extent/none	<input type="checkbox"/>	

GOOD PRACTICE

23. What works well locally in relation to:	
23.1 Informing and preparing children for taking part in child protection decision making processes	
23.2 Making sure that children's views and perspectives are reflected in the child protection decisions	
23.3 Providing feedback and support to children about the decisions made and outcomes of the child protection meetings	

Learning from promising and good practice

Please send us supporting materials about promising or good practice in relation to ensuring child participation in child protection processes (e.g. tools for engaging children /eliciting children's views, child-friendly leaflets, check-lists for chairs and other tools for professionals, training materials, information about relevant programmes/approaches/models implemented at local level etc.), unless previously sent in stage one of this work.

Email: cpscotland-liaison@strath.ac.uk

OTHER COMMENTS

24. Any other comments or reflections in relation to child participation in child protection processes?

Thank you!

Annex 2: Child Protection Committees who took part in the self-evaluation

Aberdeen City CPC

Aberdeenshire CPC

Angus CPC

Argyll & Bute CPC

Clackmannanshire and Stirling CPC

Dumfries & Galloway PPC

Dundee CPC

East Ayrshire CPC

East Dunbartonshire CPC

Edinburgh CPC

Outer Hebrides CPC

Falkirk CPC

Fife CPC

Glasgow CPC

Highland CPC

Inverclyde CPC

Midlothian

Moray CPC

North Ayrshire CPC

North Lanarkshire CPC

Orkney PPC

Perth and Kinross CPC

Renfrewshire CPC

Scottish Borders CPC

Shetland PPC

South Ayrshire CPC

South Lanarkshire CPC

West Lothian PPC

About CELCIS

CELCIS is a leading improvement and innovation centre in Scotland. We improve children's lives by supporting people and organisations to drive long-lasting change in the services they need, and the practices used by people responsible for their care.

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