

The Common Core: Shared Values and Knowledge for everyone who works with children and young people in Scotland

What is the Common Core?

The Common Core sets out shared values and knowledge for everyone in Scotland who directly works, or volunteers, with children or young people.

The Common Core:

- is built on what children, young people and families say matters to them most – being respected, listened to, heard, and included.
- is underpinned by [Getting it right for every child](#) (GIRFEC) and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).
- supports the vision that Scotland will be the best place in the world for children and young people to grow up; and
- highlights the responsibility we all have to work in a way that upholds rights and supports positive outcomes.

A skilled and well-supported workforce is crucial to upholding children's human rights and ensuring that Scotland gets it right for every child; safeguarding, supporting, and promoting the wellbeing of children and families across Scotland. This was highlighted as part of the work needed so that Scotland will Keep the Promise and is reflected in the [Scottish Government Promise Implementation Plan](#).

The Common Core provides the foundation for all organisations and individuals involved in providing support to children, young people, and their families.

Who should use the Common Core?

Everyone whose role (paid or unpaid) has an impact on the lives of children, young people and their families should use the Common Core. This includes organisations and individuals whose role may not work directly with children or young people, but has an impact through their work with parents, carers, or other family members.

The Common Core should be used by those working, or volunteering, in:

- social care
- education
- community learning and development
- justice and police
- housing
- health
- asylum services
- childminders, cultural
- leisure

- sports
- community groups
- clubs
- advocacy and rights organisations and others.

How to use the Common Core

Workers and volunteers should use the Common Core as a key resource to:

- reflect on the way you work
- inform how you engage with children and families
- support discussions with colleagues

Employers should use the Common Core to inform your approach to:

- values-based recruitment
- training and workforce development.

The Common Core

Guiding principles

The Common Core is guided by the values and principles of Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) and the rights set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child ([UNCRC](#))

This includes working in a way that:

- Is non-discriminatory (UNCRC Article 2)
- Is in the best interests of the child (Article 3)
- Upholds the right to life, survival, and development (Article 6)
- Respects the views of the child (Article 12)

Shared values and approaches

- Appreciate and value every child and young person as a unique individual
- Actively seek out and listen to the views of children, young people, and families, and show these have been acted on (or give a clear explanation why this is not possible)
- Demonstrate respect in how we communicate, behave and act
- Be kind and show genuine care
- Respect and protect the rights of children and young people
- Promote wellbeing by providing the right support at the right time
- Prioritise early help and prevention and make sure action is taken to protect children from harm
- Embrace whole family support
- Be strength-based, and trauma-informed, enabling children and families to reach their full potential and recover from adverse experiences
- Do 'with' not 'to'
- Encourage and model working together with children and families and other agencies and services
- Share information in a proportionate and appropriate way in line with legal duties and the GIRFEC information sharing charters for parents/carers and children/young people

Shared knowledge and commitment

The Common Core supports our shared national commitments to:

- The principles and values of [Getting it right for every child \(GIRFEC\)](#), Scotland's national framework for promoting, supporting and safeguarding the wellbeing of all children and young people
- Respecting, protecting and fulfilling children's rights, now enshrined in the [UNCRC \(incorporation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2024](#)
- [Keep the Promise](#) to Scotland's care experienced children and young people
- Provide [holistic whole family support](#) based on the route map and national principles
- Tackle [Child Poverty](#) and other inequalities
- [National Trauma Training Programme](#)

Essential Understanding for everyone working or volunteering with children, young people, and families in Scotland

<p>Children’s Rights</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the full range of rights in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. • Understand how to respect, protect, and fulfil these rights.
<p>Understand Uniqueness and Influence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise that the needs and strengths of children, young people and families are unique and influenced by their individual. environment, backgrounds, and circumstances • Consider the context in which they live, or have come to live, in Scotland and their important relationships.
<p>Effective Communication and Adaptation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand and be aware of how you communicate with children, young people, and families and the impact this can have. • Adapt your tone, language, and behaviours to suit the circumstances. • Ensure access to communication and translation support where required.
<p>Child Development and Resilience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be aware of how children and young people grow and develop, and what creates the conditions for wellbeing to flourish. • Be aware of what can impact on this, including adverse experiences or trauma, and work in ways that reduce risks of harm and support recovery. • Seek to promote resilience and put measures to mitigate against vulnerability.
<p>Child Protection</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand appropriate child protection procedures and act accordingly, raise concerns and take action. • Understand safe practice which protects children and how to respond where there is a concern. • Contribute to assessing, planning for, and managing risks in partnership with others.
<p>Collaboration and Support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be aware of who to go to if more help is needed. • Identify and work with the strengths of parents, carers, and wider networks of support. • Take steps to understand how your role and the roles of others can provide support. • Work in partnership and respect and value the contribution of children, young people, families and workers. • Recognise that timely, appropriate, and proportionate action is appreciated by all stakeholders.

Effective Information Sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Know what information should be shared and when and whom it should be shared with.• Respect confidentiality and understand its limits.
Supporting Parents and Carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work in partnership with parents and carers recognising their key role in providing support to children and young people.• Be aware of opportunities to support parents or carers to identify their own needs or strengths.• Consider who can provide help, where this is needed.