

# CHILD RIGHTS AND WELLBEING IMPACT ASSESSMENT (CRWIA) OF CYRENIANS' FIVE YEAR PLAN, 2020-2025

## Introduction and Overview

Cyrenians is committed to ensuring we meet our legal duties and international obligations in respect of human rights. In terms of our work with children and young people, this requires respect for and the promotion of children's human rights as set out in the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\) \(PDF\)](#).

In relation to the [Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#), Part One places children's rights duties on Scottish Ministers and public authorities, with duties to report every three years on the steps they have taken to give better or further effect to the requirements of the UNCRC. The 2014 Children and Young People (Scotland) Act also places in statute key elements of Getting It Right for Every Child ([GIRFEC](#)). GIRFEC is Scotland's national approach to improving the wellbeing of children and young people and is linked to children's rights through the Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA).

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill (the 'Bill') aims to incorporate the UNCRC as far as possible within the legislative competence of the Scottish Parliament. The Bill aims to ensure that:

- children's rights are respected and protected in the law in Scotland;
- public authorities are legally required to respect and protect children's rights in all the work that they do.

This would mean children's rights are legally protected. Children, young people and their representatives could use the courts in Scotland to enforce their rights. The Bill further seeks to make sure children's rights are part of everyday life. To improve understanding of children's rights, the Scottish Government has also created a 20 minute [UNCRC Training Tool - An Introduction to Children's Rights](#).

All UNCRC rights are underpinned by the four general principles: non-discrimination (Article 2); the best interests of the child (Article 3); the right to life, survival and development (Article 6); and the child's right to have their views given due weight (Article 12).

It's everyone's job to safeguard, support and promote the wellbeing of children and young people in their area, with wellbeing defined by eight indicators. The indicators are: Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible, and Included, known and referred to as [SHANARRI](#).

This Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) will assist Cyrenians to fulfil existing UNCRC international obligations and specific duties under the 2014 Act, and to promote the wellbeing of children and young people through our policies and services. Ensuring rights are respected and upheld is at the heart of everything we do. It provides a cornerstone for our policies, practice and approach to our work.

Cyrenians provide direct and indirect support to children, young people and families through a range of services and provisions. In respect of Cyrenians' services that are not specifically for children and young people, all have the potential to be involved with families, and thus children and young people. Our services are diverse and to this end they will develop and review their own individual Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessments (CRWIA). This CRWIA is therefore in place for our organisation and overarching for all our service provision. Our services and projects also undergo training and complete their own CRWIA, which details how they ensure this in practice and in conjunction with policy and procedures.

## Purpose of Cyrenians' Five Year Plan

Our strategic aims 2020 - 2025 are to:

- Reduce the number of people who experience homelessness or its root causes
- Seek system change through the introduction of values-led, trusted relationship-based services across all sectors
- Build community and communities in all we do
- Keep the voice of lived experience at the heart of our decision-making and our contributions to public debates
- Grow our resilience by investing in nurturing our people and increasing the diversity of our supporters and income

We will achieve this through:

- Investing in our staff by nurturing and developing our values-led, relationship-based way of working
- Growing the organisation, increasing our fundraising and trading income and decreasing our dependence on public sector funding
- Increasing awareness of our brand to maximise our support and the opportunity for working in collaboration with others

We are committed to:

- Adherence to human rights obligations enhanced through children's rights and safeguarding training
- A commitment to review our policies and practices, to ensure they are consistent with human and children's rights and our duties regarding the UNCRC

The [UNCRC](#) has 54 articles, those noted below most closely align with Cyrenians' current programme of work:

<p><a href="#">Article 1</a> (the definition of the child)</p>	<p>We recognise that everyone under the age of 18 has all the rights under the convention (UNCRC). In the case of young people with care experienced backgrounds, we undertake to apply best practice to the principles, processes and practices of our CRWIA beyond the age of 18. This will include the young people we work with in continuing care up to the age of 21 and for those young people in aftercare up to the age of 26.</p>
<p><a href="#">Article 2</a> (non-discrimination)</p>	<p>We recognise that the UNCRC applies equally to all children and young people regardless of race, sex, gender, disability; all appropriate measures are taken to ensure that the child/young person is protected against all forms of discrimination.</p> <p>All Cyrenians' services operate on the basis of non-discrimination and are fulfilling this article of the Convention. We have an Equal Opportunities policy and robust procedures in place to ensure compliance. In addition, we have an Inclusion and Diversity Working Group, part of our commitment to non-discrimination and inclusion, and a way of maintaining a focus on issues connected to equality, inclusion and diversity across Cyrenians. We have developed a draft Human Rights and Equality Impact Assessment for use when we review existing, or identify the need for new, policies or practice. This tool aims to ensure that equality, social inclusion and community cohesion issues are considered.</p>
<p><a href="#">Article 3</a> (best interests of the child)</p>	<p>The best interests of the child are a primary consideration in all actions taken for or on behalf of the child; all relevant standards and protocols ensure this is adhered to. All services are focused on the best interests of children and young people involved and are consistent with the Convention. We have a Child Protection policy and Safeguarding Statement in place, along with a Key Worker policy. Staff working directly with families and</p>

	young people are trained in child protection, safeguarding and work within the principles of SHANARRI and GIRFEC (see section below 'How will the policy/measure contribute to the wellbeing of children and young people in Scotland?').
Article 4 (implementation of the Convention)	Cyrenians is committed to best practice and ensuring rights are respected and upheld. Through our learning and development programmes, staff know and understand the steps to take so that children, young people and the adults who work with them know about the UNCRC. Our work is person-centred and rights-informed.
Article 5 (parental guidance)	Cyrenians recognise the responsibilities and duties of parents and that the family is fundamental for the growth and wellbeing of children and young people, where the family is a safe place for a child/young person to live and grow. Some of our services offer a 'whole family' approach.
Article 6 (life, survival and development)	We value the life-long development and survival of all with whom we work and support them to lead their own transformation.
Article 9 (separation from parents)	Our services work with children and young people in care, or on the edges of care, and also where a relationship has broken down and where there is a risk of homelessness. Through our work we assist them to maintain contact, build positive relationships and return home where it is safe to do so, if that is what they would like to see happen.
Article 12 (respect for the views of the child)	The views of all children and young people who use our services are highly valued and form a fundamental building block of our approach, underpinned by our Service User Involvement and Key Worker policy. We actively seek the views of children and young people through a variety of means, ensuring that their voices and views are heard through youth participation/engagement work and provide support, translators and advocacy where required.
Article 13 (freedom of expression)	We work to ensure information is accessible and easy to read, and, where needed, provide translators. We also work to address the impact of digital exclusion and provide young people with training and equipment to support their education and transition into work. Children and young people can also express themselves via blogs, newsletters and through artistic expression and music. In addition, we have accessible websites that meet industry standards hosting multi-media digital content for users to access.
Article 14 (freedom of thought, belief and religion)	Cyrenians respect the beliefs and religions of all people with whom we work and actively promote their spiritual wellbeing in whatever manner suits them.
Article 16 (right to privacy)	We acknowledge the rights of children and young people to privacy in all matters relating to them and seek their consent. In line with our Confidentiality and Data Protection policy, only information that is relevant should be shared with those that need it. In so doing, we ensure the need for: confidentiality, protection and safeguarding of their interests and the sharing of relevant information that is necessary, proportionate, adequate, accurate, timely, and secure. We adhere to The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) legal framework and guidelines.
Article 18 (parental responsibilities and state assistance)	Cyrenians recognise the responsibilities and duties of parents and what they must do to look after a child. We respect that the family is fundamental for the growth and wellbeing of children and young people, where this is not detrimental to their safety or wellbeing. When needed or required to do so, we also work alongside, for example, Housing,

	Education, Department of Work and Pensions, Social Work, Criminal Justice and Health and Social Care.
Article 19 (protection from violence, abuse and neglect)	We recognise that children and young people have the right to be protected from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse. All staff who work directly with children and young people are trained in child protection, with robust safeguarding and child protection policies and reporting systems in place. Our Board of Trustees has also received safeguarding training.
Article 20 (children unable to live with their family)	Cyrenians is aware that children and young people who are looked after or accommodated have a right to special protection and assistance. The organisation is committed to keeping The Promise and driving the change that is needed, internally and externally, to ensure all children grow up safe, loved and respected, enabling them to realise and reach their full potential.
Article 22 (refugee children)	Children and young people who are refugees have the right to special protection and help whether they come to Scotland unaccompanied or with other people. They have the right to be: safe and to receive medical treatment, education, and shelter. We provide accommodation and support for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children.
Article 23 (children with a disability)	In line with our Equal Opportunities policy, children and young people are treated with respect, dignity, and included and cared for in a way that takes any disabilities they have into account. We support them to choose what they do and to have a say in choices about their lives. Our work is person-centred, self-directed and relationship-based. In addition, we have an Inclusion and Diversity Working Group, part of our commitment to non-discrimination and inclusion, and a way of maintaining a focus on issues connected to equality, inclusion and diversity across Cyrenians.
Article 24 (health and health services)	Cyrenians recognise that health and access to health services for the children and young people with whom we work is a fundamental aspect in the promotion of their wellbeing. They have the right to the highest attainable standard of health and to facilities for the treatment of illness and rehabilitation of health. They should have a say in how they get this and be able to say what they like and dislike.
Article 25 (review of treatment in care)	Some of our services are subject to the relevant inspectorate bodies for the service provided. We are also committed to 'The Promise' (referred to in Article 20) and some services are specifically focused on 'Keeping the Promise'. The opinions of the young people we work with are sought and taken into consideration when their care is being assessed, their opinions and views are taken seriously.
Article 26 (social security)	Some of our services specifically support families, children and the young people they work with to maximise their income or benefit entitlements as part of our holistic support.
Article 27 (adequate standard of living)	We work with many people who face, or have faced, tough realities. We recognise that poverty and inequalities are a significant driving force for the difficulties they endure/have endured. We regularly participate in public and political debate to address inequalities and provide services to alleviate poverty in all its forms.
Article 28 (right to education)	Cyrenians acknowledge the importance of children and young people's right to education regardless of race, sex, gender, or disability; if they are in detention or if they are a refugee. We believe education, in its widest sense, is essential to their development and reaching their fullest potential. We work with young people who have disengaged from school to

	improve access to future employment, education and training opportunities, and support them to address conflict at home, in schools and in their communities.
Article 30 (children from minority or indigenous groups)	Cyrenians' values (compassion, integrity, respect and innovation) guide our way of working and we believe all children and young people have the right to enjoy their own culture, religion and language.
Article 31 (leisure, play and culture)	We recognise the importance of relaxation and play and breaking down barriers. We support the children and young people we work with to shape what we provide and what they wish to participate in, providing for example: quiet space, toys, books, soft play, music, art, sports, hobbies, theatre, trips to the Zoo, etc.
Articles 32-36 (child labour; drug abuse; sexual exploitation, abduction; sale & trafficking; and other forms of exploitation)	We are committed to ensuring we uphold rights, with safety and protection paramount in relation to the issues in articles 32 – 36. We recognise that children and young people have a right to be protected from dangerous work, drug use, sexual exploitation and trafficking. We take all necessary measures to protect children and young people, we have a Disclosure and PVG policy and additional policies to cover child protection, safeguarding, drugs and alcohol, with clear reporting and recording procedures in place. Our services also support over 18's into recovery, many of whom have children who have been affected by their caregiver's addictions.
Article 37 (inhumane treatment and detention)	We have services that work with, and provide support for, those within secure care and the justice system. Staff are trained and supported so that those whom we support will be treated with respect and compassion to ensure that they treated humanely and, where appropriate, able to maintain contact with their family.
Article 39 (recovery from trauma and reintegration)	We have a staff training programme in place, in line with NHS Education for Scotland's Transforming Psychological Trauma Framework, to ensure that our staff and volunteers are trauma-informed. We share the Scottish Government's belief that 'trauma is everyone's business' and seek to embed trauma-informed practice across our organisation so as to support individuals in their recovery and transition back in to the life they wish to lead.
Article 40 (juvenile justice)	Cyrenians is aware of the requirement to uphold human rights in the field of juvenile justice and the need for extra protections where their liberty is at stake. Children and young people should have the right to legal help and receive this without being discriminated against in any manner. They also have the right to privacy. One of our services is specifically targeted at supporting young people in secure centres to re-build relationships with their families.
Article 42 (knowledge of rights)	In line with our commitment to The Promise, and our rights-based approach which is aligned with the UNCRC, GIRFEC and SHANARRI, we raise awareness and share our learning and approach among staff and adults through child rights training and CRWIA assessments. We also talk to children and young people about their rights through service provision, training, workshops and our youth participation and engagement activities.

## What impact will the policy/measure have on children's rights?

Cyrenians' Five Year Plan will have a positive impact on all the articles outlined above. Our work is subject to internal and external review to ensure that we are delivering on our stated aims and objectives. Respecting the rights of children and young people is an integral part of our service delivery which will continue throughout the duration of the plan. We also have a Children's Rights Monitoring Group that oversees implementation, monitoring, and

auditing, as well as ensuring good practice in our work to uphold children and young people's participation and rights.

## Will there be different impacts on different groups of children and young people?

As an organisation, Cyrenians recognise and acknowledge that, due to the diverse nature of our work, there will be different impacts on different groups of children and young people, within families, and on those who are marginalised in society. We also recognise the positive impacts of diversity on children and young people. We strive to ensure that, in line with Scotland's aspiration to be 'the best place in the world to grow up', we will continue to mitigate potential negative impacts, and to create positive opportunities for children and young people in their lives.

We will continue to monitor, assess and review how our strategy, policies and practice removes barriers and eliminates prejudice in respect of the protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. We strive to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Remove and/or minimise any barriers and/or disadvantages
- Take steps which assist with promoting diversity, equity and inclusion, meeting people's different needs
- Encourage and nurture participation
- Foster good relations, tackle prejudice, and promote understanding

## How will the policy/measures contribute to the wellbeing of children and young people in Scotland?

The wellbeing of children and young people in Scotland is measured against the eight wellbeing indicators outlined in the Scottish Government's Getting it Right for Every Child framework. Using the SHANARRI indicators, Cyrenians' Five Year Plan will have the following impact on children and young people:

**Safe** - Being safe is at the heart of our service provision. In the initial stages this requires the identification of risk factors and taking measures which entail providing safe places for children and young people to consider and discuss their own situation. Ongoing safety planning, support and interventions are focused on improved outcomes. In some instances, Cyrenians' involvement only takes place once the child or young person has left the family home, for instance through the provision of residential care. Our preventative work enables them to stay safe or leave home in a safe, planned way.

**Healthy** - Tackling health inequalities is a common thread throughout all our services. We know that early prevention and intervention reduces the likelihood of children and young people developing additional health problems and other poor health outcomes associated with adverse childhood experiences. Some examples of how we do this includes advocating for better access to health services and to healthy food and support with cooking skills. In terms of mental health, we aim to improve the wellbeing of children and young people and to reduce the chances of self-harm, suicide, and further risk of harm and trauma.

**Achieving** - Whilst poverty is the main driver of education inequality, it is important to provide early prevention and intervention which can reduce the likelihood of children and young people experiencing poorer educational outcomes and attainment associated with adverse childhood experiences. Services which are appropriately targeted can ameliorate some of the impact of poverty and improve educational outcomes for children and young people living in difficult circumstances and support progression towards positive destinations in relation to work, training and further education.

**Nurtured** - Cyrenians' ongoing commitment to the people with whom we work is to provide companionship and support on their journey through trauma and recovery. This is particularly relevant for children and young people as they transition from childhood into adulthood, sometimes requiring additional support because of complex circumstances and potentially adverse childhood experiences.

**Active** - Our approach is to promote an individual's participation in their local community to the fullest extent possible. This entails engagement with play, learning and leisure opportunities, as well as the identification and promotion of individual interests and talents, which allow for holistic development of the person.

**Respected** - The views of those with 'lived experience', as staff, volunteers and people who use our services is crucially important to the ongoing development of service design, delivery and our influencing work. This will continue to be a strong element as it is one of our core strategic aims and a key organisational driver.

**Responsible** - Cyrenians' services are expected to demonstrate how they have sought out and acted on the views of people with whom we work, including children and young people. This entails how they have been supported to meaningfully participate in decisions; any support requirements are self-directed by them. It also includes expectations that people with lived experience have a positive role to play in assisting others who are at different stages in their journey to where they would like to be in the future.

**Included** - Cyrenians know and understand the value of community, and this is embedded across the organisation. Building a supportive community within Cyrenians is standard practice and it is also important for individuals to feel part of their local community, wherever they reside. We believe that to be included and valued is a crucial part of personal development and in addressing previous traumas through companionship and shared understanding. This is relevant for all people, but especially those who may be from marginalised groups.

## Monitoring and review

Cyrenians will continue to progressively review all policy and practice through the application of our CRWIA when reviewing and developing new services and/or policies. This work will also be overseen by our internal Children's Rights Monitoring Group.

## Who carried out the impact assessment?

Cyrenians' CRWIA was initially completed by Cyrenians' Ambassador, Tam Baillie in 2019. This was reviewed and updated by our Children's Rights Monitoring Group in 2021/2022. In early 2023 our Promise Project Team reviewed our organisational CRWIA, with a further update added by our Director of Services in March 2023.

**Contact Information** - Diane Marr - Senior Manager Families [dianemarr@cyrenians.scot](mailto:dianemarr@cyrenians.scot)

**Next date for CRWIA review** - March 2024