



# FOUNDATION – VOICE

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## THE PROMISE

**Children must be listened to and meaningfully and appropriately involved in decision-making about their care, with all those involved properly listening and responding to what children want and need. There must be a compassionate, caring decision-making culture focussed on children and those they trust.**

**Listening** P13  
Active listening and engagement must be fundamental to the way Scotland makes decisions and supports children and families. There is no simple formula or standardised approach that will suit all.

**Listening to Children** P31  
Care experienced children and young adults must have ownership over their own stories and personal data so that they can understand and influence how their stories are shared.

**The Children's Hearing System** P41  
To support parents and ensure Local Authorities are fulfilling their obligations to children and families, Scotland must test the extension of the enforcement and compulsion powers to ensure both families and those with statutory responsibility are compelled to attend and comply with the orders of the Children's Hearing.

**The Children's Hearing System** P41  
Whilst working to prevent the criminalisation of children, Scotland must develop a more progressive, rights based youth justice approach that builds on the Kilbrandon principles and makes them a reality for all.

**The Children's Hearing System** P42  
Everyone involved in The Children's Hearing System must be properly trained in the impact of trauma, childhood development, neuro-diversity and children's rights. That training must be comprehensive and regularly reviewed. Those training requirements must also be required for all the different and various professionals who appear at Hearings, including legal representatives.

**The Children's Hearing System** P44  
Whilst retaining the commitment to the Kilbrandon principles, Scotland must comprehensively assess and consider the role of volunteers in the decision making structure of Hearings.

**The Children's Hearing System** P41  
There must be an approach to care and support that is based on early intervention and prevention. In the long term, The Children's Hearing System must plan to shrink and to specialise. Full and proper consideration of implications for the operating model, including the dependency on volunteers, must be integral to this planning.

**Digital Tools** P35  
Scotland must be committed to the development of digital tools that incorporate the principle of information ownership. These digital tools must operate at a scale that allows care experienced children and young adults to have control over their information and how it is shared.

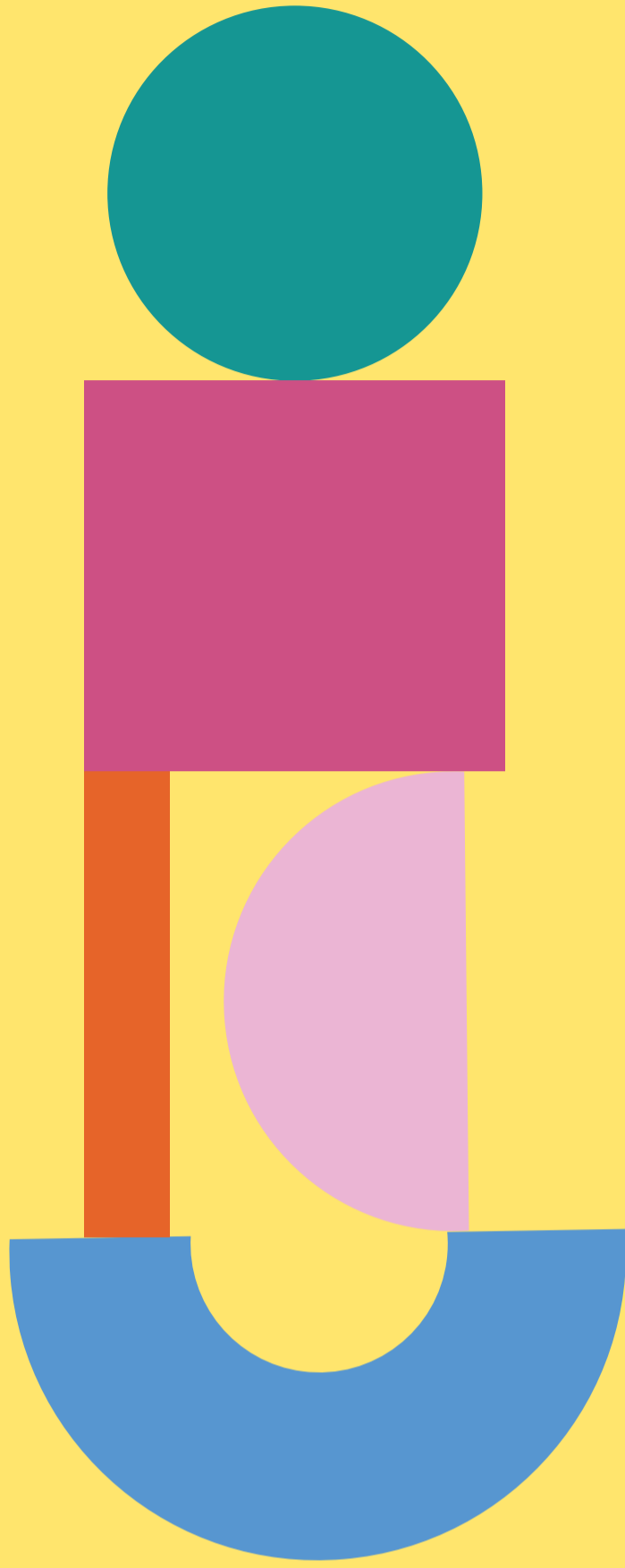
**Decision Making** P14  
Scotland must ensure decision making is based, first and foremost, on what the child needs and wants.

**Decision Making** P14  
Scotland must support a culture change in key institutions responsible for decision making.

**Information and Decisions** P30  
Scotland must ensure that the right information is shared at the right time and that those close to children are heard. The starting point for any decision must be how to best protect relationships that are important to children.

**Sharing Information** P36  
Scotland must acknowledge that it is the culture surrounding information sharing that has the biggest impact on protecting children.

**Structural and System Listening** P37  
Scotland must listen to care experienced children and young adults in the delivery, inspection and continuous improvement of services and of care. Scotland must never again have to commission a review or a judicial inquiry on this scale because participation and listening must form part of everything within Scotland's system of care.





# FOUNDATION – FAMILY

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**THE PROMISE**

Where children are safe in their families and feel loved they must stay – and families must be given support together, to nurture that love and overcome the difficulties which get in the way.

**Risk and Safety** P16

Scotland must broaden its understanding of risk. This is not about tolerating more risk, or becoming more risk enabling. It means ensuring Scotland has a more holistic understanding of risk that includes the risk to the child of removing them from the family. There must be a shift in focus from the risk of possible harm to the risk of not having stable, long term loving relationships.

**Supporting Families** P17

When children talk about wanting to be safe, they talk about having relationships that are real, loving and consistent. That must be the starting point. Scotland must prioritise that message from children over rules that have too often failed to keep them safe.

**Poverty** P18

There must be significant, ongoing and persistent commitment to ending poverty and mitigating its impacts for Scotland's children, families and communities.

**Mental Health Services** P51

Scotland must ensure that timely, trauma informed and thoughtful support therapies act as a cushion to all those that require it, regardless of diagnosis.

**Intensive Family Support** P15

Nurturing and supporting families to stay together will take far more than what Scotland currently provides.

**Beginning Parenthood** P48

Scotland must support a broad understanding of the importance of the early years of parenting.

**Intensive Family Support** P55 to P58

Whatever issues families face, Scotland must ensure that intensive family support is available, proactive and characterised by the 10 family support principles.

**Pre School** P49

Scotland must ensure that there are places in every community for parents of young children to go for support and advice, to meet other local parents and to stay and play with their children.

**Intensive Family Support** P52

Scotland must recognise that there are some families experiencing particular issues who are much more likely to come into contact with the 'care system'.

**Intensive Family Support** P52

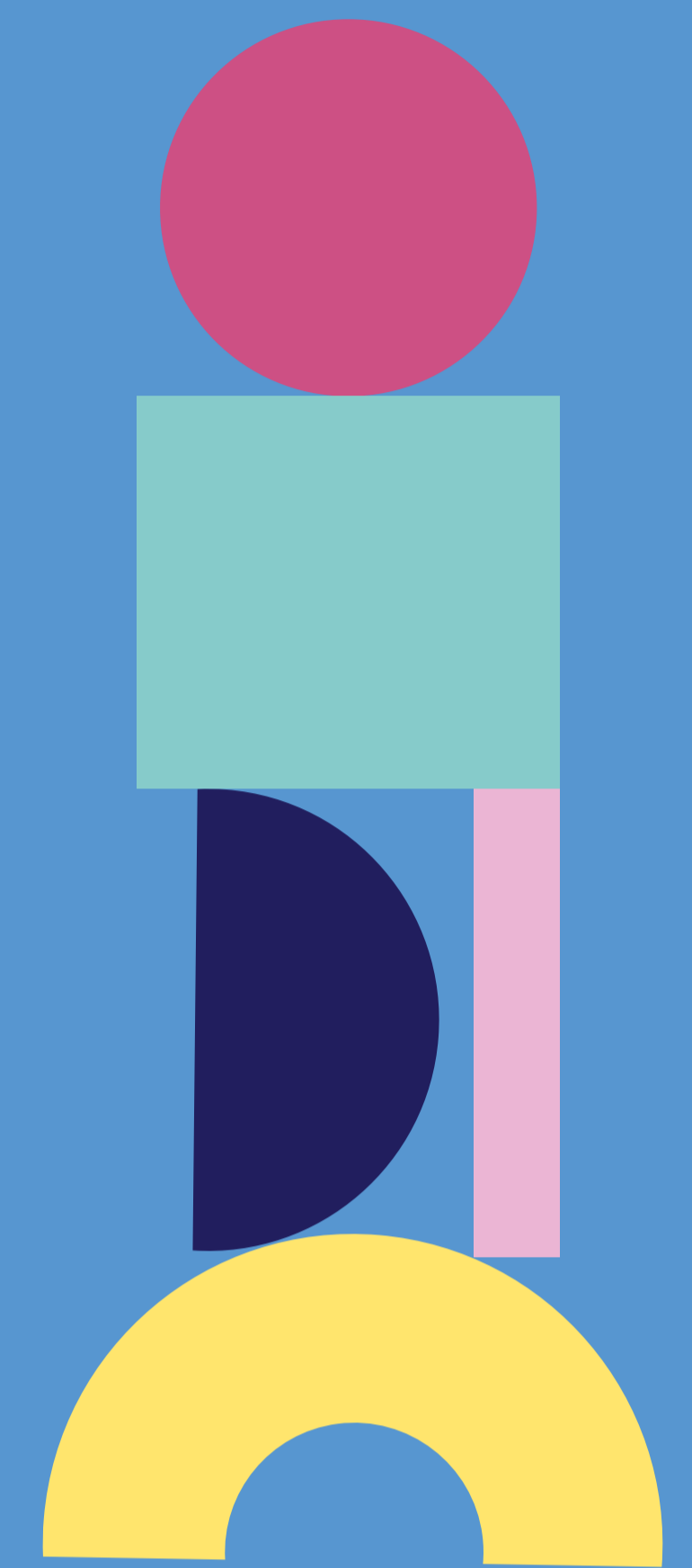
Scotland must support all families caring for disabled children and those with additional support needs. If families require intensive support they must get it and not be required to fight for it.

**Intensive Family Support** P52

Scotland must do all it can to keep children with their families.

**Universal Family Support** P46

Scotland's commitment to early intervention and prevention must be realised through proper, holistic support for families. There must be a significant upscale in universal family support services.





# FOUNDATION – CARE

Everything detailed here, that Scotland must do, is accompanied by important narrative in The Promise. For more detail, please refer to the relevant page numbers in The Promise.

**Upholding Children's Rights** P61  
If Scotland removes children from their families, their rights must be upheld as a basic minimum standard for their care. That must mean a clear commitment to creating the right culture of care where the whole of the workforce respects, upholds, champions and defends the rights of children for whom they are responsible.

**Relationships that are important to the child** P63  
All children must be supported to continue relationships that are important to them, where it is safe to do so.

**Support for families who have had their children removed** P63  
If children are removed from the care of their parents, Scotland must not abandon those families. Families must continue to be provided with therapeutic support, advocacy and engagement in line with principles of intensive family support.

**Stability** P67  
Scotland must limit the number of moves that children experience and support carers to continue to care.

**Kinship Care** P74  
Whatever the mode of arrangement, Scotland must ensure that children living in kinship care get the support they need to thrive. Kinship must be actively explored as a positive place for children to be cared for.

**Brothers and Sisters** P62  
Scotland already has a presumption that children will stay together with their brothers and sisters. That presumption must be fully implemented and closely monitored.

**Schools** P71  
Schools in Scotland must be ambitious for care experienced children and ensure they have all they need to thrive, recognising that they may experience difficulties associated with their life story.

**Schools** P72  
The formal and informal exclusion of care experienced children from school must end.

**Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children** P65  
Children who are unaccompanied and seeking asylum in Scotland must be placed in caring, supportive settings and given the same rights as children who are looked after.

**Secure Care** P80  
There must be absolute clarity that the underlying principle of Secure Care is the provision of therapeutic, trauma informed support.

**Transitions** P68  
Any transition in care experienced child or young person's life must be limited, relational, planned and informed.

**Life Stories** P69  
Scotland must understand that 'language creates realities'. Those with care experience must hold and own the narrative of their stories and lives; simple, caring language must be used in the writing of care files.

**THE PROMISE**  
Where living with their family is not possible, children must stay with their brothers and sisters where safe to do so, and belong to a loving home, staying there for as long as needed.

**Attachment and Co-regulation** P72  
Secure attachments, based on loving, consistent relationships, must be the bedrock of every decision made about children.

**Secure Care** P84  
Children must not be held in Secure Care because there are inadequate options for them within the community.

**Adoption Support** P75  
Adopting parents must have access to support at any point during the life of their child if they require it. That support must be available even if it was not initially required and must mirror the principles of intensive family support.

**Foster Care** P77  
Scotland must better support its foster carers to be the best parents. Foster carers must feel valued, cared for and supported to care.

**Secure Care** P81  
There must be far more alternatives for community based support and monitoring.

**Use of Secure Care** P82  
The planning and provision of Secure Care must reflect the needs of children in Scotland to ensure there are sufficient places for those that need them.

**Residential Children's Homes and Residential School** P79  
The quality of relationships that children experience in residential settings must be the priority.

**Health** P89  
The workforce and in particular family carers must know that they have a particular role in supporting children to have good overall health across dental, physical, mental and sexual. That must be done through caring, nurturing relationships that model good habits and a healthy approach to life.

**Restraint** P85  
Scotland must strive to become a nation that does not restrain its children.

**Criminalisation** P65  
Young Offenders Institutions are not appropriate places for children and only serve to perpetuate the pain that many of them have experienced. There are times where it is right for children to have their liberty restricted, but that must only be done when other options have been fully explored and for the shortest time possible and in small, secure, safe, trauma informed environments that uphold the totality of their rights.

**Adult Life** P93  
Parenting does not stop at 18, Scotland must continue to consider how to create greater equity and opportunity for care experienced young adults. That consideration must include how to increase opportunity for care experienced people to access employment, training, stable housing and support.

**Upholding Children's Rights in Secure Care** P83  
Secure Care must uphold children's rights. Children must have access to all they need for health, education and participation. They must be supported to maintain good contact with their family if safe to do so.

**Respite** P88  
Scotland must stop using the word 'respite' and rethink the nature of short breaks.

**Long Term Hospital Stays** P84  
Scotland must ensure that there is timely access to mental health support before crisis point, so that children can avoid hospitalisation.

**Restraint** P86  
Scotland must reflect on the impact of the equal protection legislation that removes the defence of 'justifiable assault' to ensure that all children wherever they live, are protected from all forms of violence.

**Secure Care** P81  
Children must not be placed in prison like settings.

**Language of Care** P87  
Scotland must change the language of care. Language must be easily understood, be positive and must not create or compound stigma.

**Childhood experiences** P88  
In all care settings, Scotland must provide and promote positive, regular experiences for children.

**Section 3: Normalisation of Care Experience** P87  
Scotland should be a good parent to the children it has responsibility for. That means carers and workers must act, speak and behave like a family so that Scotland can be the best parent it can be. Scotland must stop stigmatising the children it cares for.

**Criminalisation** P91  
Scotland must stop the criminalisation of care experienced children by supporting the workforce to behave and treat children in a way that is relational rather than procedural and process driven.

**Adult Life** P93  
Older care experienced people must have a right to access to supportive, caring services for as long as they require them. Those services and the people who work in them must have a primary focus on the development and maintenance of supportive relationships that help people to access what they need to thrive.

**Adult Life** P92  
Young adults for whom Scotland has taken on parenting responsibility must have a right to return to care and have access to services and supportive people to nurture them



# FOUNDATION – PEOPLE

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**THE PROMISE**

The children that Scotland cares for must be actively supported to develop relationships with people in the workforce and wider community, who in turn must be supported to listen and to be compassionate in their decision-making and care.

**Structure and Definition** **P97**

Scotland's understanding of the workforce must primarily be about their role in terms of the degree of closeness of relationships they have with children, rather than their status as paid/unpaid or in terms of professional/voluntary.

**Nurturing Scotland's Workforce** **P96**

The workforce must be nurtured. They must be supported at all stages of their caring journey. That support must enable them to facilitate a sense of home, family, friends, community and belonging in which children feel loved and can flourish.

**Nurturing Scotland's Workforce** **P100**

Supporting the workforce to care must be at the heart of Scotland's service planning. Supervision and reflective practice is essential for all practitioners, regardless of their professional discipline or role, who are working with children.

**Learning and Development** **P108**

Learning must support the interaction between Family Carers and other professionals. It should nurture equal partnerships and encourage joint learning, with informal learning, mentoring, coaching and support networks, and opportunities for joint reflective practice. Feedback must be a routine component of development.

**Personal Identity, Love and Relationships** **P101**

Children who have been harmed through relationships, must have supportive relationships in order to heal. Scotland must support and encourage the workforce to bring their whole selves to their work, and to act in a way that feels natural and not impeded by a professional construct.

**Personal Identity, Love and Relationships** **P23**

The purpose of the workforce must be to be caring above anything else.

**Learning and Development** **P107**

There must be a rethinking of learning and training in Scotland to create a well-supported workforce that can operate across disciplines.

**Personal Identity, Love and Relationships** **P24**

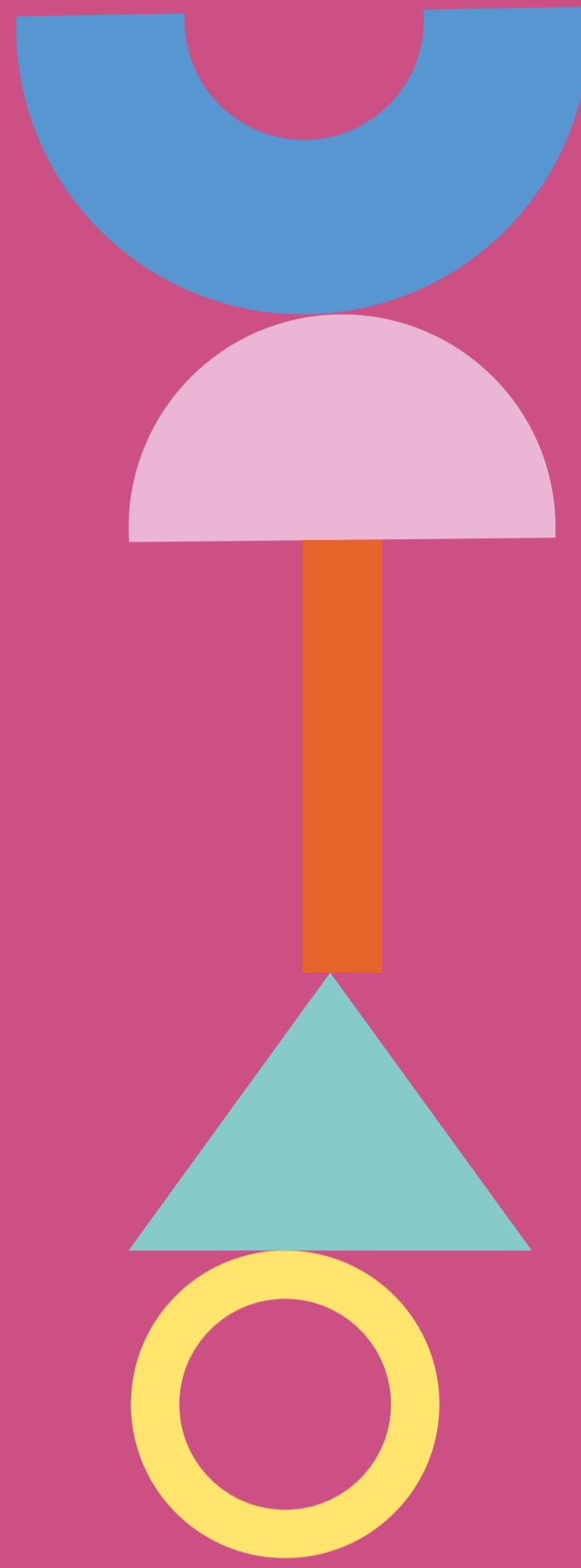
Rather than detach, the workforce must be encouraged not to step back but to step in.

**People and Risk** **P22**

There must be no barriers for children to have regular, positive childhood experiences.

**People and Risk** **P104**

Scotland must support the workforce to contribute to a broader understanding of risk. Scotland must understand, through its people and structures, the risk of children not having loving supportive relationships and regular childhood and teenage experiences.





# FOUNDATION – SCAFFOLDING

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**THE PROMISE**  
Children, families and the workforce must be supported by a system that is there when it is needed. The scaffolding of help, support and accountability must be ready and responsive when it is required.

**P25**  
Scotland must create an approach to care where maintaining, sustaining and protecting loving relationships is possible and much more probable.

**P111**  
**Structure, Commissioning, Funding and Standards**  
Scotland must avoid the monetisation of the care of children and prevent the marketization of care.

**P111**  
**Structure, Commissioning, Funding and Standards**  
The standards of care must be consistent across providers and these must continue to be subject to independent scrutiny and accreditation that values what children and families value.

**P110**  
**Structure, Commissioning, Funding and Standards**  
Scotland must declutter the landscape of how it cares. Services and provision must be designed on the basis of need and with clear data, rather than on an acceptance of how the system has always operated.

**P110**  
**Structure, Commissioning, Funding and Standards**  
Scotland must stop selling care placements to Local Authorities outside of Scotland.

**P111**  
**Structure, Commissioning, Funding and Standards**  
Scotland must make sure that its most vulnerable children are not profited from.

**P27**  
**Inspection and Regulation**  
There must be a complete overhaul of regulation and scrutiny that centres on listening to children about how they are cared for, their ability to flourish and thrive and that measures the things that matter to them.

**P112**  
**Legislative Environment**  
Scotland must create a clear legislative, enabling environment that supports families to stay together and protects and allows relationships to flourish.

**P119**  
**Inspection and Regulation**  
The Care Inspectorate and the SSSC must come together with other regulators to create a new, holistic framework that values what children and families value. That framework must apply to the totality of care experience and include aftercare and advocacy services. A new framework must be totally focused on children's experience and their ability to find and sustain safe and nurturing relationships.

**P26**  
**Rights**  
Scotland must respect, uphold, champion and defend the rights of children and recognise that their rights are most often realised through relationships with loving, attentive caregivers. Scotland must fully incorporate and uphold the UNCRC.

**P27**  
**Inspection and Regulation**  
Scotland must re-orientate its system of scrutiny to uphold relationships so children feel loved, safe and respected.

**P114**  
**Data Collection**  
Scotland must improve the quality and completeness of its data and consider the potential of data linkage to improve accountability for outcomes rather than inputs alone.

**P112**  
**Parenting**  
All of Scotland's institutions, organisations, national bodies and Local Authorities who have responsibilities towards care experienced children and young adults, must be aware of, understand and fully implement all their parenting responsibilities.

**P26**  
**Rights**  
Scotland must implement the rights of the child in a way that does not reinforce a focus on policy, process and procedure but supports the ability of children and those around them to connect and develop relationships and cultures that uphold their rights as a matter of course.

**P116**  
**Legal Representation**  
Scotland must consider the creation of an accredited legal specialism to set standards for legal professionals representing children.

**P115**  
**Advocacy**  
Care experienced children and adults must have the right and access to independent advocacy, at all stages of their experience of care and beyond.

**P118**  
**Definitions**  
Scotland must ensure that current definitions that act as the access point for rights and entitlements are inclusive enough to benefit all young people for whom Scotland has had parenting responsibility.

