Statement on Children’s Rights in Northern Ireland

Welcome

Kathleen O’Hare
Principal - Hazelwood Integrated College
Statement on Children’s Rights in Northern Ireland

Overview and Introduction

Mairéad McCafferty
Chief Executive - NICCY
Statement on Children’s Rights in Northern Ireland

Opening Address

Koulla Yiasouma
Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People

June 2018
Statement on Children’s Rights in Northern Ireland

UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

What is the UNCRC?
The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is a list of the rights for every child up to 18. Government has promised to make these rights a reality for all children and young people in Northern Ireland.

GENERAL PRINCIPLE 1: All children have these rights, no matter who they are or what their culture, language, religion or gender is. No child should be treated unfairly on any basis.

General Principle 2: All adults should do what is best for you.

General Principle 3: You have the right to live and develop fully. You should have food, clothing and a safe place to live.

General Principle 4: You have the right to give your opinion, for adults to listen to it and take it seriously.

Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People
Statement on Children’s Rights in Northern Ireland

www.niccy.org/SOCRNI

Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People
Statement on Children’s Rights in Northern Ireland

Programme for Government 2016-21

Outcome 12 – Children have the best start in life

1. Physical & mental health
2. Play & Leisure
3. Learning & achievement
4. Safety & stability
5. Economic & environment
6. A positive contribution
7. Society respects rights
8. Equality & good relations

UNCRC & Concluding Observations 2016
Children’s Services Co-operation Act 2015

Children & Young People’s Strategy & Action Plan

Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People
Statement on Children’s Rights in Northern Ireland

“Education shall aim at developing the child’s personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to the fullest extent”

Article 29, UNCRC
Statement on Children’s Rights in Northern Ireland

Calls to Government – Education

1. End the education gap between specific groups of children and young people

2. Remove all barriers to every child’s full participation in, and access to, a child’s rights education system

3. Ensure that the focus of education is on the development of every child’s talents, skills and abilities

4. Have a debate and consultation on how we fund education in Northern Ireland
Statement on Children’s Rights in Northern Ireland

“The child has a right to the highest health and medical care”

Article 24, UNCRC
Statement on Children’s Rights in Northern Ireland

Calls to Government – Mental Health

1. Demonstrate robust strategic planning and investment
2. Develop robust data monitoring systems
3. Tackle root causes of poor mental health by applying a ‘health in all policies’ approach to policy making
4. Deliver on existing CAMHS improvement plans
Statement on Children’s Rights in Northern Ireland

“Every child has the right to a standard of living adequate for his or her development”

Article 27, UNCRC
Statement on Children’s Rights in Northern Ireland

Calls to Government - Poverty

1. Meet the material needs of children through the increase of family income
2. Allocate resources to mitigate against changes in social security benefits
3. Eradicate child poverty
Statement on Children’s Rights in Northern Ireland

“1. States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.

2. Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement.”

Article 19, UNCRC
Statement on Children’s Rights in Northern Ireland

Calls to Government - Safeguarding

1. Ensure independence of child protection body within new CYPSP arrangements
2. Commence Child Death Review process
3. Publish CSE Progress Report
4. Ensure the rights of all children who are subject to immigration control
5. Ensure that all separated children have access to an independent guardian
6. Support the transfer of children to NI where it is in their best interests
7. Intensify efforts to tackle bullying and violence in schools
8. Commence Addressing Bullying in Schools Act
9. Implement E-Safety Strategy
Statement on Children’s Rights in Northern Ireland

“A child in conflict with the law has the right to treatment which promotes the child’s sense of dignity and worth, takes the child’s age into account and aims at her or his re-integration into society”

Article 40, UNCRC
Calls to Government – Youth Justice

1. Monitor how government is fulfilling it’s obligation to ensure the best interests of the child
2. Publish proposals on how it is to raise the minimum age of criminal responsibility to 14
3. Demonstrate purpose and effectiveness of ‘Stop and Search’
4. Youth Justice System must publish robust outcome and performance data
Calls to Government – Brexit

1. All aspects of the Good Friday Agreement must be protected
2. UK and EU must avoid all physical infrastructure, at or around, the island of Ireland
3. Safeguarding arrangements must be ensured by maintaining current security, policing and justice arrangements
4. Freedom of movement must not be impeded
5. Continuation of financial support for agriculture, structural and peace funds
Calls to Government – Legacy of the Conflict

1. Ensure protection of children from all forms of violence in their communities, particularly from armed groups.

2. Address the continuing impact of the conflict on children and young people.

3. Support children to have a central role in building a peaceful Northern Ireland.

4. Information about the conflict should be provided to children and young people, with a view to achieving a shared narrative about the conflict.
Statement on Children’s Rights in Northern Ireland

Calls to Government – Participation

1. Develop measurable outcomes to provide a ‘progression framework’, from local to national participation
2. Establish structures for the meaningful participation of children and young people
3. Establish benchmarked levels of children’s and young people’s participation
Statement on Children’s Rights in Northern Ireland

Calls to Government - Discrimination

1. ‘Age, Goods, Facilities and Services’ legislation which includes all ages
2. Equivalent access to safeguards under the mental health and mental capacity frameworks
3. Ensure equal protection for children from all forms of assault
Statement on Children’s Rights in Northern Ireland

“We worry about what a child will become tomorrow yet we forget that he is someone today”

Stascia Tauscher
Statement on Children’s Rights in Northern Ireland

Presentation by Hazelwood Integrated College pupils

Aniesha Courtney and Tony Carlisle
Statement on Children’s Rights in Northern Ireland

Presentation by NICCY Youth Panel

El Savage
Statement on Children’s Rights in Northern Ireland

Presentation by Young People

Young people’s video
Statement on Children’s Rights in Northern Ireland

Political Party Responses

Steven Agnew MLA
Green Party
Statement on Children’s Rights in Northern Ireland

Political Party Responses

Gavin Robinson MP
DUP
Statement on Children’s Rights in Northern Ireland

Political Party Responses

Colum Eastwood MLA
SDLP
Statement on Children’s Rights in Northern Ireland

Political Party Responses

Robbie Butler MLA
UUP
Statement on Children’s Rights in Northern Ireland

Political Party Responses

Catherine Kelly MLA
Sinn Fein
Statement on Children’s Rights in Northern Ireland

Political Party Responses

Fiona Ferguson
People Before Profit
Statement on Children’s Rights in Northern Ireland

Political Party Responses

Chris Lyttle MLA
Alliance
Statement on Children’s Rights in Northern Ireland

Closing Remarks

Koulla Yiasouma
Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People
Thank you for attending

You can out more about our work at:

www.niccy.org/SCRRNI

And follow us on:

Twitter - @nichildcom
Facebook – nichildrencommissioner
Instagram – niccy_yp