



Children's
Rights Alliance
for England

GENERAL MEASURES OF IMPLEMENTATION

STATE OF CHILDREN'S
RIGHTS IN ENGLAND

2014

GENERAL MEASURES OF IMPLEMENTATION

ARTICLE 4 - States Parties shall undertake all appropriate legislative, administrative and other measures for the implementation of the rights recognised in the UNCRC. With regard to economic, social and cultural rights, States Parties shall undertake such measures to the maximum extent of the available resources.

ARTICLE 42 - States Parties undertake to make the principles and provisions of the Convention widely known, by appropriate and active means, to adults and children alike.

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What does the Convention say?

The UK Government is expected to do all it can to implement the UNCRC - to make sure all law, policy and decisions which impact on children comply with their human rights. There are different ways of making sure laws and policies comply with the UNCRC: legal measures, which mean that decisions can be challenged in court; and non-legal measures, such as collecting and analysing information about whether children enjoy their rights and making sure that the rights under the UNCRC are widely known and understood by children, adults and public bodies.

In 2008, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child called on the UK Government to take further action to ensure that there are adequate structures and mechanisms in place to make sure children's rights are taken into account when the government and other public bodies are making decisions. These include:

- Incorporating the UNCRC rights into UK domestic law
- Taking measures to bring other legislation in line with the UNCRC
- Co-ordinating implementation of the UNCRC throughout government and different local authorities
- Adopting and implementing children's rights action plans
- Conducting children's rights impact assessments
- Ensuring the Children's Commissioner is independent of government, and has the necessary resources to carry out his or her mandate
- Strengthening efforts to ensure that the UNCRC is widely known and understood
- Ensuring systematic training on children's rights for all professionals working with children
- Promoting, facilitating and implementing the principle of respect for the views of the child, including by supporting forums for children's participation

In addition to the general measures of the UNCRC, there are four general principles, which underpin each of the specific rights outlined in the rest of the Convention:

- Article 2 - children should not be discriminated against in the enjoyment of their rights
- Article 3 - the child's best interests should take precedence in every decision and action taken relating to a child
- Article 6 - children have a right to life and develop to their full potential
- Article 12 - children have a right to express their views and have them given due weight

What progress have we made?

Making sure children's human rights shape decision-making

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child has recommended that the government should consider incorporating the UNCRC into UK domestic law. This would mean that public bodies, such as schools, hospitals and the police, would be required by domestic law to comply with children's human rights in everything they do and a child could go to court to challenge a decision which breaches his or her rights. They should also be able to challenge other laws and policies which breach their rights. The UNCRC is not yet "incorporated" – or made a part of - our domestic law.

Some of the rights in the UNCRC are similar to those in another international human rights treaty - the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). The ECHR has been incorporated into UK law through the Human Rights Act 1998 – if a decision breaches the human rights which are protected in the ECHR, a child can go to court to challenge that decision. This is a very important protection for some of the human rights in the UNCRC, but does not protect all of them.

Some aspects of the rights in the UNCRC appear in different pieces of legislation – requiring public bodies to comply with a particular right in a particular area, such as in relation to family, in special educational needs or child poverty. However, this piecemeal approach does not satisfy the requirements of the Convention. It limits a child's protection to a particular service they use or the setting they are in, and protects some rights while ignoring others. It allows children to challenge the actions and decisions of public bodies, but does not allow children to challenge laws which breach their rights.

Child rights impact assessment

Child rights impact assessment (CRIA) is a process through which a Government anticipates the impact of any proposed law, policy or budget on children's human rights. It is a way of considering how the proposals would comply with the UNCRC, and should, in particular, be used to ensure that the best interests of the child (Article 3 of

the UNCRC) and children's views (Article 12 of the UNCRC) are an integral part of policy development. These should be published to show how children's human rights have been taken into account. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child recommends that all levels of government - national, regional and local – should complete a CRIA as part of their policy development.

In 2010, the then Children's Minister made '*a commitment that the Government will give due consideration to the UNCRC articles when making new policy and legislation.*¹ Cabinet Office guidelines on making legislation² recommend that government departments should address the compatibility of government Bills with the UNCRC in the explanatory notes that are published with each Bill. This commitment was not, though, set out in law.³ In contrast, Wales⁴ and Scotland⁵ have introduced UNCRC duties that apply to all Welsh and Scottish Government ministers. The Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011⁶ requires Welsh ministers to have due regard to the UNCRC.⁷ The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014⁸ requires Scottish ministers to review their approach to implementing the UNCRC and, if they think it appropriate, take steps to further secure children's human rights. This means that Government ministers should look at laws and policies that have a direct or indirect impact on children and assess what they need to do to make sure they comply with the UNCRC. Routine CRIA is carried out in Wales,⁹ and the Scottish Government is developing a CRIA model due to be rolled out across Scotland in 2015.

CRAE made a Freedom of Information request to 11 government departments to ask what child rights impact assessments they had produced between April 2013 and August 2014.

In February 2013, the Department for Education (DfE) published a detailed assessment measuring the different sections of the Children and Families Bill (now Children and Families Act 2014) against the UNCRC and ECHR,¹⁰ and published a series of impact assessments during the passage of the Bill.¹¹ The Home Office issued a memorandum on the Modern Slavery Bill which looked at aspects of the Bill in the light of ECHR and UNCRC requirements,¹² but this was not a systematic child rights impact assessment.

Other departments said they consider the interests of children when developing relevant policy, but were unable to provide evidence of systematic child rights impact assessment. In its scrutiny of the Criminal Justice and Courts Bill, the Joint Committee on Human Rights criticised the Ministry of Justice's failure to carry out any equality or child rights impact assessment of their proposals for secure colleges, a new kind of custodial establishment for children.¹³

In England, the Office of the Children's Commissioner has carried out some CRIAs, often in response to policy areas in which the government has singularly failed to do so - notably, on the 2013 Budget and the cumulative impact on children of tax and benefit reforms and reductions in spending in public services.¹⁴ However, this neither removes nor replaces the government's responsibility to undertake CRIA.

- 1 Teather, S (2010) Children's Commissioner Review. House of Commons Hansard, 6 December 2010, col.17WS. <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201012/cmhansrd/cm101206/wmstext/101206m0001.htm>
- 2 Cabinet Office (2014) Guide to making legislation, p.98. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/328408/Guide_to_MakingLegislation_July_2014.pdf
- 3 Teather, S (2010) Children's Commissioner Review. House of Commons Hansard, 6 December 2010, col.17WS. <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201012/cmhansrd/cm101206/wmstext/101206m0001.htm>
- 4 Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/mwa/2011/2/contents>
- 5 Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2014/8/pdfs/asp_20140008_en.pdf
- 6 Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/mwa/2011/2/contents>
- 7 Welsh Government (2014) Children's Rights Scheme 2014 <http://www.assemblywales.org/Laid%20Documents/GEN-LD9732%20-%20Children's%20Rights%20Scheme%202014-22042014-255569/gen-ld9732-e-English.pdf>
- 8 Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2014/8/section/1>
- 9 Welsh Government (2014) Children's Rights Scheme 2014, annex 1 <http://www.assemblywales.org/Laid%20Documents/GEN-LD9732%20-%20Children's%20Rights%20Scheme%202014-22042014-255569/gen-ld9732-e-English.pdf>
- 10 DfE (2013) Consideration of the Children and Families Bill provisions in light of the European Convention on Human Rights and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140430083435/http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/e/140213%20echr%20and%20uncr%20note%20for%20publication%20final%20lao.pdf>
- 11 DfE (2013) Evidence packs to Children and Families Bill. Adoption reforms. <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140430083435/http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/a/adoption%20-%20evidence%20of%20impact.pdf> Childcare. <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140430083435/http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/c/childcare%20-%20evidence%20of%20impact.pdf> Family justice. <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140430083435/http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/f/family%20justice%20-%20evidence%20of%20impact.pdf>
- 12 Home Office (2014) Modern Slavery Bill: European Convention on Human Rights; United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child - memorandum. http://www.parliament.uk/documents/joint-committees/human-rights/Modern_Slavery_Bill_ECHRMemo.pdf
- 13 Joint Committee on Human Rights (2014) Legislative scrutiny (1) Criminal Justice and Courts Bill, and (2) Deregulation Bill, para 1.57. Fourteenth report of session 2013-14
- 14 Office of the Children's Commissioner (2013) A Child Rights Impact Assessment of Budget Decisions: including the 2013 Budget, and the cumulative impact of tax-benefit reforms and reductions in spending on public services 2010 – 2015. http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/content/publications/content_701

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child asks governments to review their domestic legislation and guidance to make sure it complies with all of the rights in the UNCRC.¹⁵ In 2010, the UK Government published an analysis of whether key legislation complies with the UNCRC and in that document committed to an annual review and update of its contents. Even though significant legal reforms have since taken place, no update has been published.¹⁶

Children's rights strategies

Article 4 of the UNCRC requires governments '*to undertake all appropriate legislative, administrative and other measures for the implementation of the rights recognised in the UNCRC*'. This requires a co-ordinated, cross-government children's rights strategy or implementation plan that sets out actions and targets, with clear monitoring and reporting arrangements. The plan must also be properly resourced. A UK-wide plan was published in 2009¹⁷ and commits ministers in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales to meet to discuss progress on the Convention. It is unclear whether these meetings are taking place.

Also in 2009, England,¹⁸ Scotland¹⁹ and Wales²⁰ each published an action plan, and Northern Ireland produced a second action plan to its ten-year children's strategy.²¹ Since then, Scotland²² has issued a progress report; Northern Ireland²³ is working on a new action plan; and Wales is planning to revise its action plan. There has been no update or progress report in England where the government prefers to take a '*less centralised approach*.'²⁴ This does not satisfy the requirements of the UNCRC in which State signatories are responsible for ensuring the full implementation of the UNCRC.

Child budgeting

Article 4 of the UNCRC requires governments to fulfil children's economic, social and cultural rights to the maximum extent of their available resources. It is not possible to do this without being able to identify and monitor what financial allocations are made to services that have a direct impact on children and how this benefits them.

In its fifth periodic report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child,²⁵ the UK Government makes a welcome - though incomplete - attempt to do this. Areas where it is easier to identify what is being spent on children include:

- Benefits targeted at children - Child Benefit, Disability Living Allowance, Child Tax Credit, and Income Support (which is being phased out)
- Early education and childcare
- Primary school education
- Secondary school education
- Education for 16 to 19 year-olds
- Children's services, including services for children in care, child protection and local authority youth justice services

It is the policy of the coalition government to devolve spending decisions to local authorities and schools, which makes the task of identifying what is being spent on children even more difficult.

Data collection

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child recommends that governments develop indicators to cover all rights in the UNCRC and that they should collect comprehensive and reliable data, which shows whether children are enjoying their rights in practice.²⁶ This is an essential part of complying with the UNCRC. The UK Government has not

15 UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (2003) General comment no.5 on the general measures of implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

16 Zaman, S (2010) The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child: how legislation underpins implementation in England. London: DCSF https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/296368/uncrc_how_legislation_underpins_implementation_in_england_march_2010.pdf

17 DCSF, Welsh Government, Scottish Government, Northern Ireland Executive (2009) Working together, achieving more: a joint commitment to take action in response to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child Concluding Observations. <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151715/http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/01084-2009BKT-EN.pdf>

18 DCSF (2009) United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child : priorities for action. <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151715/http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/01099-2009BKT-EN.pdf>

19 Scottish Government (2009) Do the right thing. <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/resource/doc/282927/0085645.pdf>

20 Welsh Government (2009) Getting it right.

21 Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (2009) Northern Ireland's priorities and plans for children and young people. <http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/northern-irelands-priorities-and-plans-2>

22 Scottish Government (2012) Do the right thing progress report 2012. <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0039/00392997.pdf>

23 Committee of the Office of First Minister and Deputy First Minister (2014) Delivering social change for children and young people: departmental briefing. NI Assembly Hansard, 22 January 2014 <http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/Assembly-Business/Official-Report/Committee-Minutes-of-Evidence/Session-2013-2014/January-2014/Delivering-Social-Change-for-Children-and-Young-People-Departmental/>

24 HM Government (2014) The fifth periodic report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child: United Kingdom, para.15 <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/uploads/Pdfs/The%20UK's%20Fifth%20Periodic%20Review%20Report%20on%20the%20UNCRC.pdf>

25 HM Government (2014) The fifth periodic report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. United Kingdom http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CR%2fC%2fGBR%2f5&Lang=en

26 UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (2003) General comment no.5 on the general measures of implementation of the UNCRC.

developed a set of children's rights indicators. Unicef UK's Child Rights Partners programme is working with six local authorities across the UK to develop a set of child rights indicators²⁷ to demonstrate that this can be done. There is currently a lack of data showing whether children enjoy their rights in certain areas – for example in relation to play and children's mental health services and outcomes.

The UN Committee suggests that children themselves should contribute to this data. The Office of National Statistics publishes annual survey results on children's self-reported wellbeing as part of its Measuring Wellbeing programme.²⁸ This survey looks at children's personal wellbeing; their relationships with others; health; how they spend their time; personal finances; education and skills. It is a welcome addition to data sets, but is not developed within the framework of the UNCRC and does not cover the full range of children's rights.

National human rights institutions

Independent national human rights institutions (NHRIs) play an important role in promoting and ensuring the implementation of the UNCRC.²⁹ Part 6 of the Children and Families Act 2014³⁰ gave the Children's Commissioner for England a clearer mandate to promote and protect children's rights, including a power to monitor the implementation of the UNCRC in England. As recommended by the UN Committee, the Children's Commissioner now has increased powers in line with international standards and increased independence from government, but is still appointed by the government (which could compromise the independence of the office), and does not have all the powers recommended by the UN Committee, such as the power to consider individual complaints or to bring human rights cases involving children to court. It also has fewer powers and less autonomy than the Children's Commissioners in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

Children's access to justice

If children are to be able to take action when their rights are breached, they must be able to access the courts. Changes to legal aid and judicial review have undermined children's access to justice.

Legal aid is meant to help those who otherwise could not afford legal help and/or legal representation. Not having legal representation can undermine a child's ability to bring a case to court and challenge public bodies which breach their rights. Since April 2013, the types of cases that can be funded through legal aid have been severely restricted. Most private family law (except those that involve domestic violence or child abuse), immigration (except asylum and detention), welfare benefits, and education (except special educational needs) cases have been removed from the scope of legal aid provision, leaving children and families without the advice they need to understand or navigate their way through the complexities of the legal system. CRAE's Freedom of Information request to the Ministry of Justice showed that the number of children granted legal aid for education has fallen by 84%, and the number granted legal aid where their parents have divorced or separated has fallen by 69%.

A CRIA of the legal aid changes, produced by the Office of the Children's Commissioner, found that *'it is likely that a range of rights will be negatively impacted when children do not receive legal support to resolve an ongoing legal problem.'*³¹ Participation work with children affected by these reforms found that the legal aid changes have had a profound impact on children's ability to effectively exercise their right to information, advice, support and representation.³²

- Most were unaware that the issue they faced was a legal matter that could be resolved by recourse to the law
- Many had tried but were unable to resolve their cases without legal support
- Trying to represent themselves was having a bad effect on their wellbeing, and on the likelihood of the proceedings reaching a satisfactory conclusion
- Local authorities would have continued to fail to meet their statutory duties to these young people if the cases had not gone forward
- Where legal aid was no longer available, children were relying on charities and pro bono work in order to access legal support

27 Unicef UK Child Rights Partners webpages <http://www.unicef.org.uk/UNICEFs-Work/Our-UK-work/Child-Rights-Partners/>

28 ONS (2014) Measuring national well-being: exploring the well-being of children in the UK, 2014. <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/wellbeing/measuring-national-well-being/exploring-the-well-being-of-children-in-the-uk-2014/rpt-measuring-national-wellbeing-children-uk-2014.html>

29 UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (2002) General comment no.2 on the role of independent national human rights institutions in the promotion and protection of the rights of the child.

30 Children and Families Act 2014. <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/part/6/enacted>

31 Office of the Children's Commissioner (2014) Legal changes since April 2013: child rights impact assessment., p30 http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/content/publications/content_871

32 Carter, J (2014) The impact on children of legal aid changes since April 2013: participation work with children and young people. http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/content/publications/content_873

*Judicial review is an important type of court case which can allow children to challenge the decisions or actions of public bodies which breach their human rights. Reforms have made it more difficult for children, adults acting on children's behalf and children's organisations to use judicial review to protect children's human rights.*³³

Awareness-raising of children's human rights

Under Article 42 of the UNCRC, the government should do all it can to ensure that the rights under the UNCRC are widely known and understood by both children and adults.

In the UK-wide UNCRC action plan published in 2009, ministers made a commitment to raise awareness of the UNCRC in their jurisdictions. The UK government has minimal information on the UNCRC on its official gov.uk website.³⁴

Human rights and international law are part of the Key Stage 4 Citizenship curriculum,³⁵ which applies to maintained schools only. Neither free schools nor academies are obliged to teach pupils about their rights under the Convention. Younger children have no right to learn about their human rights under the curriculum. The Key Stage 4 curriculum makes no mention of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Training in children's rights

As well as raising public awareness of the UNCRC, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child emphasises the government's responsibility to develop training for all those who work with or on behalf of children. This of course includes teachers, health visitors, social workers, childcare providers, and youth workers, but also police, doctors, prison officers, immigration staff, journalists, lawyers, civil servants and the judiciary. The purpose of such training is to increase knowledge and understanding of, and encourage respect for, the UNCRC, as well as instilling respect for children as holders of human rights.³⁶

There is no overarching programme of training or core curriculum on the UNCRC in professional training programmes in England, and levels of awareness and understanding seem to be relatively low, though the principle of the child's right to be heard in matters which affect them is more widely known and accepted.³⁷

Children taking part in the political process

Article 12 of the UNCRC requires governments to make sure that children are able to express their views in all matters that affect them. In the words of the Votes at 16 campaign:

*We want our political system to recognise the abilities of 16 year-olds. To properly include us in our society and show us the trust and respect that society expects of us by giving us the right to vote.*³⁸

There were 109,533 (over 80%) 16 and 17 year-olds registered to vote in the Scottish Referendum on 18 September 2014, the first time young people under 18 have been able to take part in a public election in the UK. The Liberal Democrat, Labour and Green parties all support the call for constitutional change, promising to extend the right to vote to all 16 and 17 year-olds in the UK when the opportunity arises.

Children's participation in decision-making

In 2008, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child recommended that the UK Government should promote respect for the views of the child, including by supporting forums for children's participation. Article 12 of the UNCRC gives a child the right to express their views freely in all matters affecting them, and these views should be given due weight in accordance with the child's age and maturity. Other rights in the UNCRC - for example, the right to access information - support the implementation of Article 12.

33 See Part 5 of the Criminal Justice and Courts Bill

34 The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. <https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/creating-a-fairer-and-more-equal-society/supporting-pages/the-united-nations-convention-on-the-rights-of-the-child-uncrc>

35 DfE (2014) The national curriculum in England: Key Stage 3 and 4 framework document. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/330327/SECONDARY_national_curriculum_FINAL_140714.pdf

36 UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (2003) op cit.

37 Davey, C (2010) Children's participation in decision-making: a summary report on progress made up to 2010. London: National Children's Bureau for Participation Works. http://www.crae.org.uk/media/26285/Childrens_participation_in_decision-making_-_a_summary_report_.pdf

38 Votes at 16. <http://www.votesat16.org/about/>

At central government level, the Youth Policy Team in the Cabinet Office has issued guidance to civil servants on involving children in policy development. Their focus is on children from 11 to 18, so excludes younger children.

Statutory guidance on the roles and responsibilities of local authority Directors of Children's Services and the Lead Members for Children's Services states that both '*should have regard to the General Principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and ensure that children and young people are involved in the development and delivery of local services.*'³⁹ This requires activity at both the strategic and service delivery levels.

Reforms for children with special educational needs and disabilities place a legal duty on local authorities to have regard to the views, wishes and feelings of the child and their parents, and to ensure they participate as fully as possible in any decisions,⁴⁰ with details of how this should be implemented available in a statutory Code of Practice.⁴¹

CRAE sent a Freedom of Information request to all 152 local authorities in England, asking what mechanisms they have in place to support children's participation in local authority service planning and commissioning. Eighty-nine local authorities responded. Nearly all local authorities have a children and youth forum, or youth cabinet, often linked to the work of the UK Youth Parliament, and enjoying regular contact with the local council.

Some local authorities listed additional mechanisms that give children the opportunity to influence the commissioning and evaluation of social care, health, recreation and other local services:

- Young Mayors, elected in five of the local authorities who responded
- Young inspectors/young reporters/mystery shoppers, trained to assess the quality of local services in 14 local areas
- Disabled children and young people's groups, helping 12 local areas to prepare for wide-ranging special educational needs and disability reforms
- Children's commissioning task forces or scrutiny groups, advising on commissioning decisions in seven local areas
- Youth commissioners, or young Police and Crime Commissioners, providing a youth perspective on local crime issues in one local area

Recommendations

- Incorporate the UNCRC into UK domestic law
- Appoint a senior Minister for Children with responsibilities for developing a children's rights strategy and action plan, which includes clear, resourced, time-bound actions and a corresponding monitoring framework
- Introduce a mandatory, transparent system of child rights impact assessments for all policy and legislation
- Collect and publish disaggregated data which cover the full range of children's rights, and use this data as a means of monitoring the resourcing and implementation of the UNCRC
- Deliver a national strategy for increasing awareness, knowledge and understanding of the UNCRC
- Develop a UNCRC curriculum to benefit all children
- Establish appropriate mechanisms to ensure the genuine participation of children, including young children, in government decision-making at national, regional and local levels
- Establish transparent and participatory budgetary decision-making processes and publish disaggregated budgets, which show spend on children
- All professionals working with and for children must receive statutory, pre and post qualifying comprehensive and ongoing training on the UNCRC
- Ensure children can access justice in all cases relating to their rights

39 DfE (2013) Statutory guidance on the roles and responsibilities of Directors of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children's Services. pp.5-6. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/271429/directors_of_child_services_-_stat_guidance.pdf

40 Children and Families Act 2014, s.19. <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/section/19/enacted>

41 DfE (2014) Special educational needs and disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

CRAE believes that human rights are a powerful tool in making life better for children. We're one charity working with over 100 organisational and individual members to promote children's rights, making us one of the biggest children's rights coalitions in the world. Our vision is a country that values and upholds every child's human rights.

We fight for children's rights by listening to what children say, carrying out research to understand what children are going through, and using the law to challenge those who violate children's rights. We campaign for the people in power to change things for children. And we empower children and those who care about children to push for the changes that they want to see.

CRAE has produced an annual State of Children's Rights in England report since 2003. This report is one chapter from the full report State of Children's Rights in England 2014.

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