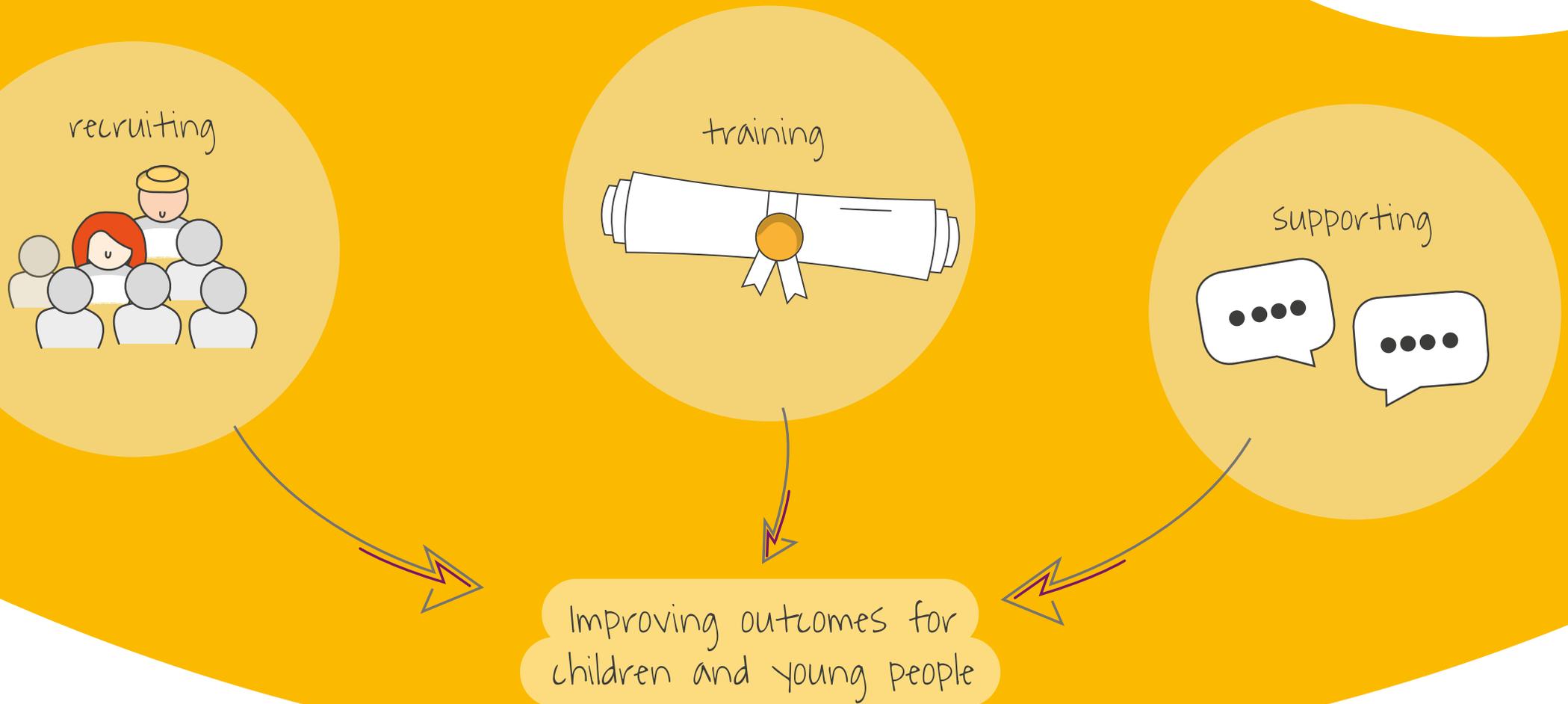


2018 | 21

# CORPORATE plan



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# INTRODUCTION FROM THE CHAIR



In the last three years, we've made great strides towards creating a more dynamic, inclusive and child centred Children's Hearings Scotland. As we look to the next three years, our focus will continue to be on ensuring children and young people going through the Children's Hearings System feel loved, safe and respected and that the outcomes from their hearings help them have the opportunity to realise their full potential.

Working within the Children's Hearings System, in partnership with our fantastic volunteers and the National Team, our responsibility is to recruit, train and support Panel Members. As a Board, our role is to set the direction for Children's Hearings Scotland and we are totally committed to putting the interests of children and young people at the very heart of everything we do.

It is this commitment that drives our strategic planning and the development of our key objectives for the next three years. We will focus on ensuring that every child and young person's wellbeing and happiness are reflected in child centred hearings, at which high quality decisions are made. We know that we will only achieve this if we recruit high quality Panel Members that feel properly supported, and are equipped with the knowledge and skills they need to do the important and difficult job that is asked of them.



*Every child deserves the very best hearing possible. We all have a role in ensuring they get it.*

**Garry Coutts,**  
Chair, CHS Board

# INTRODUCTION FROM THE NATIONAL CONVENER



I am extremely proud of Children's Hearings Scotland. We have an engaged community of passionate volunteers which the National Team is dedicated to supporting. Our organisation has also shown itself to be agile and capable in working to ensure quality hearings that put children and young people at the centre of everything we do.

Our new Corporate Plan is an ambitious programme, and the next few years will see us deliver on some large scale projects that will have a big impact on the Children's Hearings System. The delivery of our Digital Strategy and development of the young person led Board, Our Hearings Our Voice, will transform the way we think about our work. It will also help to place more emphasis on ensuring that the voices of the children and young people we support are heard at every step of the Children's Hearings process.

We operate in an ever changing environment which seeks to improve outcomes for children and young people, and our activities to support corporate parenting are highlighted in our Business & Corporate Parenting Plan. In the months and years ahead, we will wish to respond to new developments such as the Independent Care Review, raising the Age of Criminal Responsibility and the Scottish Government's Secure Care Review, and we are keen to play our part in delivering positive change for vulnerable children and young people across Scotland.



*The coming years will see us deliver an ambitious programme to transform the way we work, whilst retaining the ethos of the Children's Hearings System.*

**Boyd McAdam**  
National Convener

# CHILDREN'S HEARINGS SYSTEM



The Children's Hearings System is Scotland's unique care and justice system for children and young people. It exists to ensure the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable children and young people through a decision making lay tribunal called a children's hearing made up of members of the Children's Panel. The Children's Panel is the largest tribunal in Scotland and is made up of specially trained volunteer Panel Members from local communities.

## The history

The Children's Hearings System was established over 50 years ago in the Kilbrandon Report, and is based on a set of principles which ensure that:

- Children and young people who offend, as well as those who require protection, should be equally considered 'children in need'
- The child or young person's welfare is the most important consideration
- The views of the child or young person are taken into account.

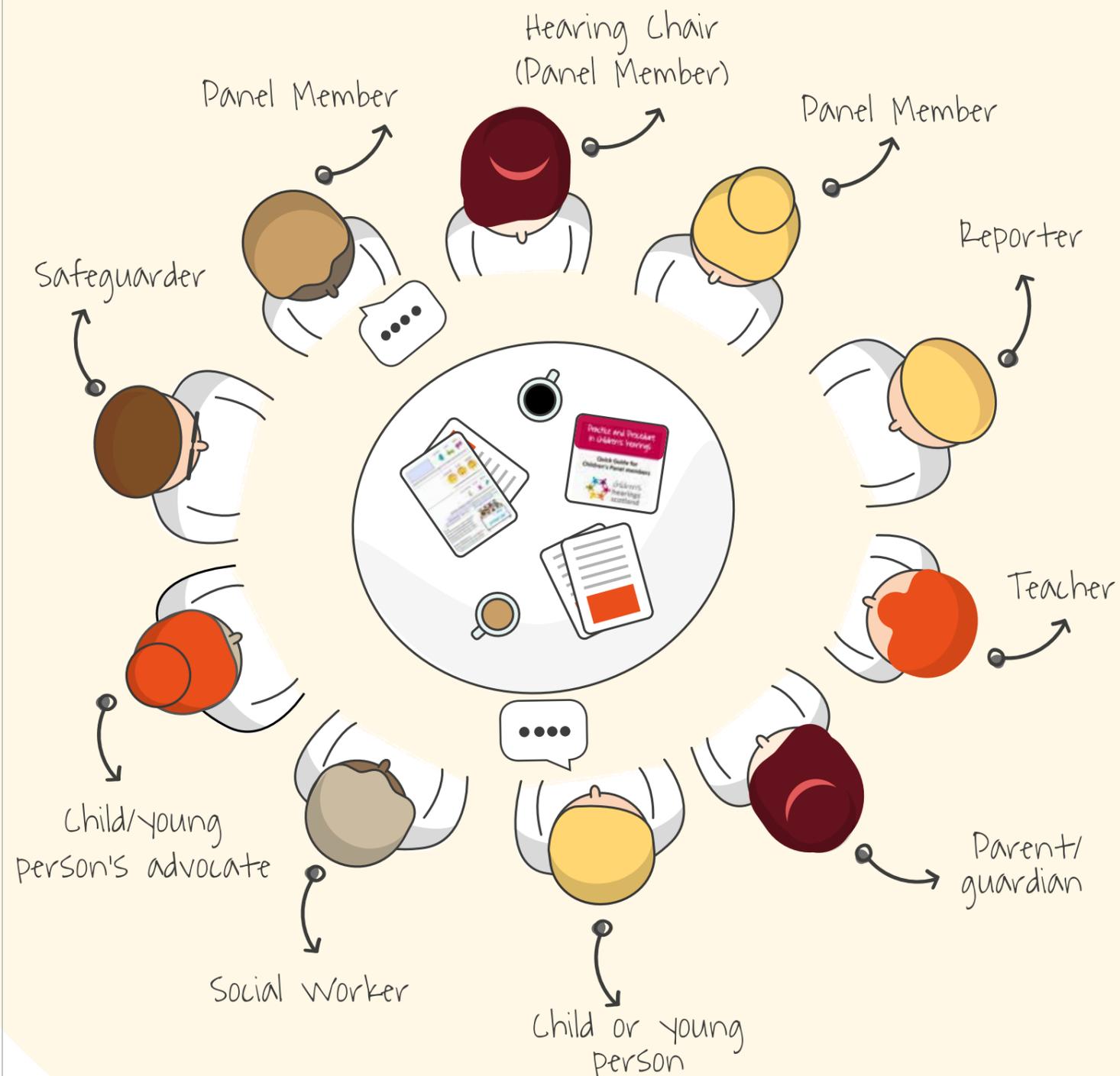
These principles allow the Children's Hearings System to respond appropriately to the individual needs of children and young people, in a legal context, where their rights are respected.

## The Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011

The Act kept the key principles of the Kilbrandon Report, but introduced some changes aimed at strengthening and modernising the Children's Hearings System.

The Act introduced a single national Children's Panel where volunteer Panel Members receive accredited national training which helps them to make the best possible decisions for children and young people in the Children's Hearing's System. The Act also strengthened the Children's Hearings System by ensuring Panel Members have local and national support, and advice on best practice through one organisation – Children's Hearings Scotland.

## CHILDREN'S HEARINGS SYSTEM



# ABOUT CHILDREN'S HEARINGS SCOTLAND



Children's Hearings Scotland is a national non-departmental public body which was formed in June 2013. We are one of a number of organisations who work within the Children's Hearings System, including the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration, local authorities, health and Police Scotland.

**Our role is to recruit, train and support around 2,500 skilled volunteer Panel Members who sit on children's hearings.** We also support a network of 22 volunteer led Area Support Teams.

Children's Hearings Scotland works to a set of National Standards and we are focused on ensuring that our Vision, Mission and Values are upheld and visible in everything we do.

## Our Vision

Our vision is of a Children's Hearings System where **everyone works together, making sure that all children and young people are cared for and protected and their views are heard, respected and valued.**

## Our Mission

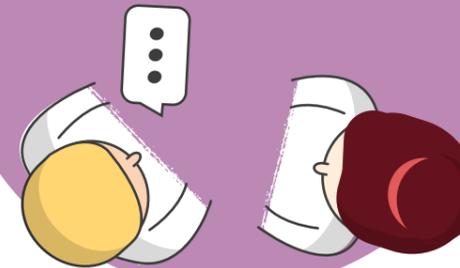
Our mission is to **improve outcomes for vulnerable children and young people in Scotland** by making high quality decisions about their future.

## Our Values



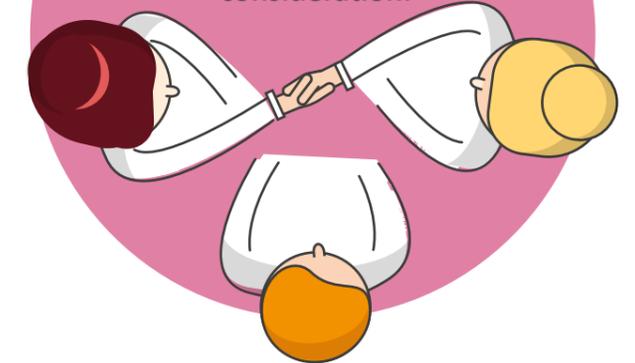
### Child centred

Making sure everything we do is in the best interests of children and young people.



### Respectful

Treating children, young people, their families, partners and each other with care and consideration.



### Fair

Making sure that everyone is treated with dignity and according to their individual needs; that our information and services are accessible to all; that we provide a consistent level of service to all.



### Creative

Considering innovative and imaginative ways of approaching the issues we face in the work we do.



### Challenging

Not being complacent, but questioning ourselves and others to help us improve.



### Open

Listening, responding to and learning from feedback; acting honestly; ensuring processes are transparent; sharing information and being accountable for our actions and decisions.



# WHAT WE DO



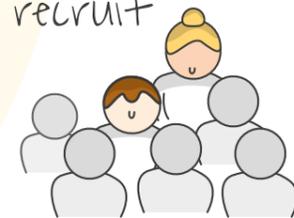
Children's Hearings Scotland recruits, trains and supports volunteer Panel and Area Support Team Members.

## CHS BOARD

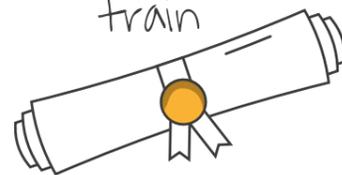
Our Board is made up of six members. It **sets our strategic direction, provides governance and challenges the decisions Children's Hearings Scotland makes.** Through the Board, we are accountable to Scottish Ministers.



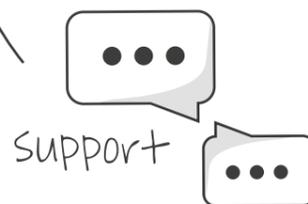
recruit



train



support



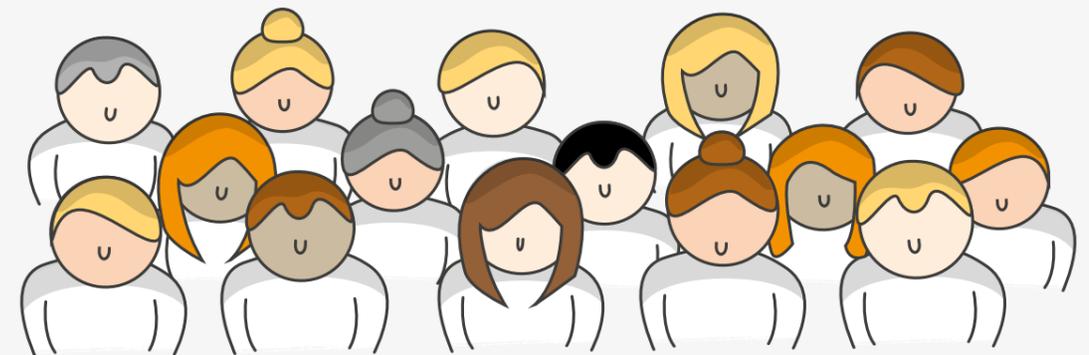
## CHS NATIONAL TEAM

The National Team is made up of 24 permanent and temporary staff whose job it is to **recruit, train and support our volunteer community.**

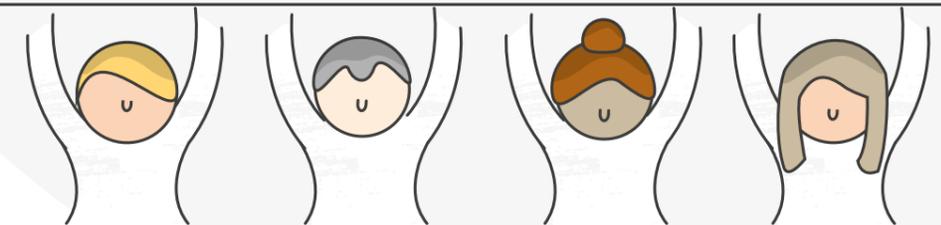
## PANEL MEMBERS

Around **2,500 skilled volunteer Panel Members from local communities across Scotland make up the Children's Panel.** They sit on children's hearings and make important legal decisions with the aim of improving outcomes for vulnerable children and young people in Scotland. Panel Members make themselves available at least once a month to prepare for and sit on a three hour hearing session.

make legal decisions



give support to the panel members



## AREA SUPPORT TEAMS

There are 22 Area Support Teams across Scotland made up of around 400 volunteers from local communities. They are recruited to **support Panel Members in their area.** Area Support Teams carry out functions on behalf of the National Convener; each Area Support Team is managed by a volunteer Area Convener who is accountable to the National Convener. Area Support Teams are also supported by a Clerk who is employed by the local authority.

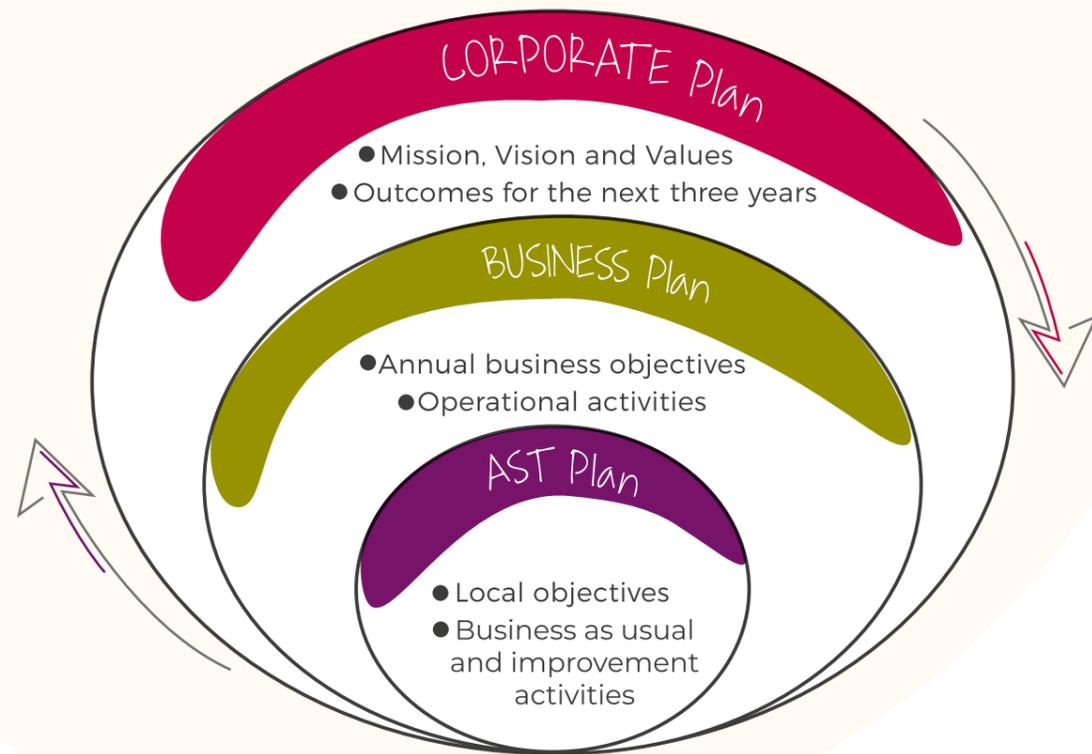
# WHAT WE DO



# CREATING OUR CORPORATE PLAN



It is important that our Corporate Plan reflects our contribution to the Children's Hearings System and the children and young people we exist to support. With this in mind, when developing the plan we consulted a range of different people and organisations including children and young people.



The corporate outcomes set out in this Plan are our strategic priorities and will guide our work for the next three years. Each outcome is supported by pieces of work and detailed plans including:

- An annual Business & Corporate Parenting Plan
- A Digital Strategy
- An Equalities Strategy
- A National Training Strategy
- A Property Strategy
- A Recruitment and Retention Strategy
- A Volunteer Management Strategy
- An annual Workforce Plan.

## CREATING OUR CORPORATE PLAN



### Our strategic environment

Children's Hearings Scotland is a member of several improvement groups, including the Children's Hearings Improvement Partnership, in which we share knowledge and pool skills and resources to improve outcomes for children and young people.

We work within an ever changing environment, and key policy drivers have influenced the shape and content of this Plan. These will impact on the delivery of our work over the next three years and are, amongst others:



# GOOD GOVERNANCE



To achieve this Plan we need to have the right corporate structure in place and good governance will be key.

We will work with our Scottish Government Sponsor Team to meet our non-departmental public body reporting requirements. These include:

- 50/50 by 2020
- Biodiversity
- Climate Change
- Corporate Parenting
- Equalities.

How we plan on delivering on these requirements is set out in our annual Business & Corporate Parenting Plan.



## Measuring impact

We will monitor how we are performing on a regular basis through reports to our Senior Management Team and the CHS Board. Our Business & Corporate Parenting Plan sets out key performance indicators and targets in more detail.

# OUR DIGITAL FUTURE

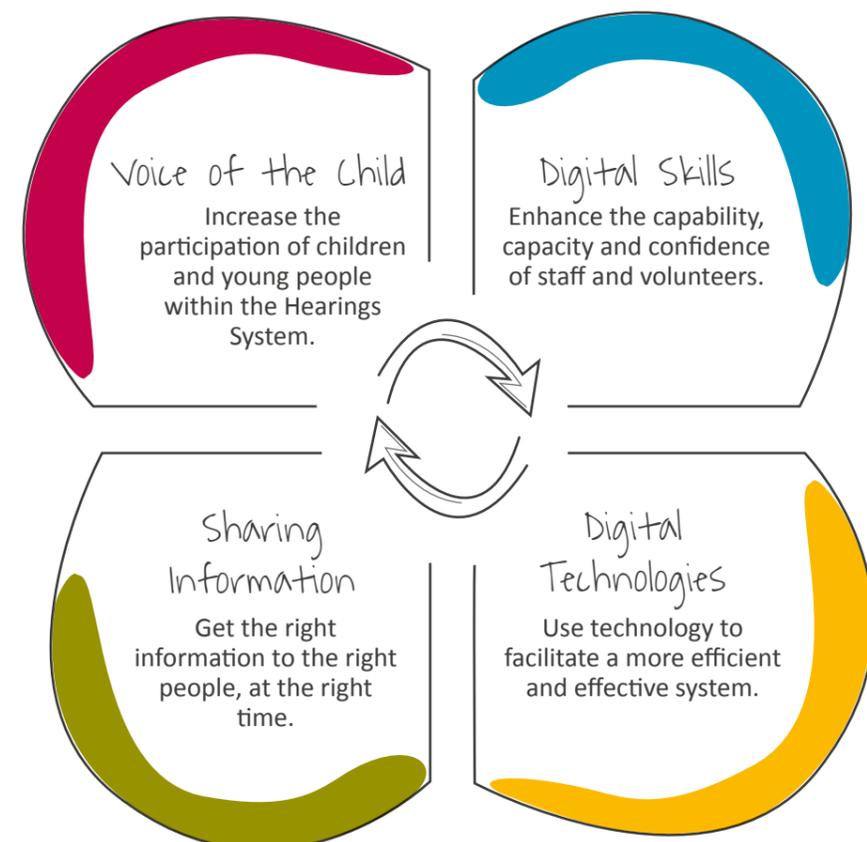


The Children's Hearings System is embracing digital technology. It is transforming how we engage, support and interact with our volunteer community, children and families and our partners.

**The Children's Hearings System Digital Strategy aligns with the Justice Digital Strategy and will support Scotland's Digital Future.** We will work together with partners across other sectors to improve outcomes for children and young people in Scotland. Public bodies in Scotland are collaborating to ensure that services are joined up to meet the needs of service users, and both Children's Hearings Scotland and the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration are committed to collaborating with each other to realise the benefits of this approach.

**Our vision is to embed a child centred Children's Hearings System with digitally enabled volunteers and employees,** who can confidently use digital tools and technologies to improve outcomes for children and young people in Scotland.

The Digital Strategy for the Children's Hearings System sets out four core objectives and priorities:





We will support our volunteer community to develop the digital capability and confidence they need to make use of our improved digital services.

The Digital Strategy will, over time, deliver benefits for all our stakeholders:

**For children and young people and their families**

digital technology will allow them to:

- Choose how they share their views with others in their hearing
- Communicate more effectively with Panel Members
- Tell us how we are doing
- Keep up to date on each stage of their journey through the Children’s Hearings System
- Explore how they could attend a hearing virtually using video conference technology.

**For our volunteer community** digital technology will support:

- More opportunities for online training including the ability to book training online
- Volunteers to communicate, collaborate and share knowledge and information
- The claiming of expenses quickly and easily

- The review of their observation reports quickly
- Them in monitoring and charting their hearings experience and contribution to the Children’s Hearings System.

**For the CHS National Team**, digital technology will:

- Allow us to make decisions about the types of support we need to provide to our volunteer community
- Enable us to tailor solutions to meet the needs of the community to make being a Panel or Area Support Team Member easier
- Ensure that we can recognise the contribution and impact of our volunteer community in protecting Scotland’s most vulnerable children and young people more accurately
- Help us work with employers across Scotland to ensure that they actively support our volunteer community and recognise the transferable skills that membership brings.

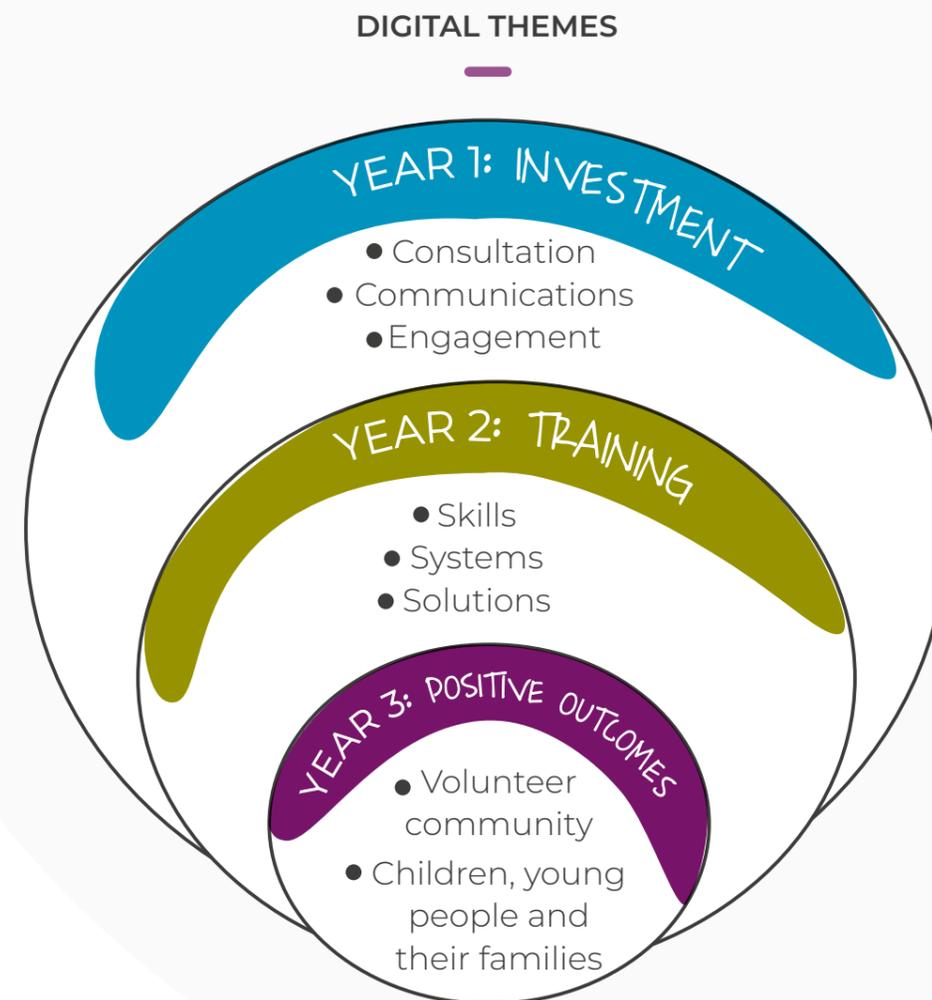


We will implement and embed our Digital Strategy over the course of the Corporate Plan period. Our three digital themes include:

- Year 1: INVESTMENT** in consultation, communications and engagement
- Year 2: TRAINING** in skills, systems and solutions
- Year 3: POSITIVE OUTCOMES** for our volunteer community and children, young people and their families

**The Children’s Hearings Scotland community will be supported to develop the digital capability and confidence they need to make use of our new digital services.**

We have established the Children’s Hearings Scotland Community Digital Consultation Bank who will work with us and the Scottish Children’s Reporter Administration to provide feedback on systems that will be used by the our volunteer community.



# OUTCOME ONE



## For every child...child centred hearings



Children’s hearings are centred around the child or young person and their views and experiences are heard, considered and respected.

What we will do



	DELIVERY PERIOD		
	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
Influence and collaborate with our partners to improve outcomes for children and young people in the Children’s Hearings System through the Children’s Hearings Improvement Partnership			
Make sure that the voices of children and young people are front and centre, by supporting and developing the Our Hearing Our Voice young person’s Board			
Continue to enhance our training programme for the chairing members of children’s hearings, with a focus on the important role the Chair plays in making sure children and young people are able to participate in their hearing			
As Corporate Parents, we will work with our partners to align our individual corporate parenting strategies with the aim of promoting the best hearings experience for children and young people			
Report on the steps we have taken to embed children’s rights throughout the Children’s Hearings Scotland community			
Provide opportunities and skills development for young people within Children’s Hearings Scotland			
Establish a process to check the quality of all Panel Member practice, with a focus on their values and how they interact with the child or young person at their hearing			
Invest in digital technologies which make it easier for children and young people to participate in their hearing			
Create opportunities to involve hearings experienced young people in the design of training for, and recruitment of, our volunteers.			

## OUTCOME ONE



“ Our Panel Members are well trained to lead and be involved in children’s hearings where children and young people have the opportunity to participate meaningfully and contribute to discussions and decisions that could shape their future. ”

How will we measure our success? \*

**Through the Scottish Children’s Reporter Administration’s ‘Children and Families Survey’** we will measure where children and young people felt that they:

- Were the most important person at their hearing
- Were listened to at their hearing
- Could express their views at their hearing.

**Through our Children’s Hearings Scotland ‘Community Survey’** we will measure where our volunteers agree that:

- Children’s Hearings Scotland motivates them to help achieve their mission for children and young people.

\*We will measure our performance against an established baseline where available. Key performance indicators and targets are set out in our annual Business & Corporate Parenting Plan.

**Through our Business Plan we will measure:**

- Successful delivery of our corporate parenting activities.

**Through our recruitment and training process** we will measure the number of:

- New Panel Members appointed that are male
- Volunteers who undertake national training to ensure effective involvement of children and young people in hearings.

# OUTCOME TWO



For every child...high quality decisions



**Panel Members make reasoned and evidence based decisions for children and young people who attend a children's hearing.**

What we will do

	DELIVERY PERIOD		
	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
Launch and grow a CHS Learning Academy to deliver a blended learning programme for our volunteer community and our partners in the Children's Hearings System			
Work with our partners to evidence the implementation and impact of hearing decisions by local authorities			
Provide a framework of digital tools that support the development of Panel Member practice through the process of practice observation and feedback, allowing us to ensure quality decisions are being taken in children's hearings			
Develop our digital systems to help us generate information about children's hearings that allow us to drive improvements in Panel Member decision making			
Provide our Panel Practice Advisors with access to a dedicated training programme and support systems and tools to quality assure Panel Member practice and decision making			
Further enhance our Chair training for Panel Members which will result in better decisions for children and young people			
Provide practical guidance to support Panel Member decision making			
Streamline procedures to support Panel Member continuity.			

## OUTCOME TWO

Panel Members are equipped with skills, knowledge and values to make and communicate high quality decisions for and to children and young people.



How will we measure our success? \*

### Through our Children's Hearings Scotland 'Community Survey' we will measure where our volunteers agree that:

- They are confident in their skills, knowledge and practice to carry out their role
- Observation and feedback helps improve their practice in hearings
- They have taken action as a result of the feedback they have received
- They feel well trained to carry out their role
- National training is of benefit to them/increases skills
- National training courses are good quality
- They are able to access training and development when they need to.

### Through hearings system data we will measure:

- The number of successful appeals
- The number of appeals uncontested by the Reporter.

### Through our recruitment and training process we will measure:

- Applicants recommended for appointment who successfully complete their professional development with two years
- Panel Members who successfully complete national training.

\*We will measure our performance against an established baseline where available. Key performance indicators and targets are set out in our annual Business & Corporate Parenting Plan.

# OUTCOME THREE



For every child...supported by skilled volunteers



Our community of skilled volunteers feel supported to carry out their roles and their contribution to the Children's Hearings System is valued in their communities.

What we will do

Put in place **new digital technologies that will improve the experience of our volunteers**, including: paying volunteer expenses online, creating a volunteer contribution statement, a range of certificated online learning opportunities, and digital tools to support children's hearings

Seek investment to support a **Scotland-wide Young Panel Member Training Programme**

Continue to **strengthen the relationship between the Children's Hearings Scotland National Team and our volunteer community** through a dedicated programme of engagement

**Launch a new recruitment campaign** which aims to attract a diverse range of volunteers from local communities

**Review our national Area Support Team operating model** to ensure that it effectively supports our volunteer community

**Build engagement with employers** aimed at growing opportunities and looking at how businesses can support their staff in volunteering with Children's Hearings Scotland.

	DELIVERY PERIOD		
	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
Put in place new digital technologies that will improve the experience of our volunteers, including: paying volunteer expenses online, creating a volunteer contribution statement, a range of certificated online learning opportunities, and digital tools to support children's hearings		🟢	🟣
Seek investment to support a Scotland-wide Young Panel Member Training Programme		🟢	🟣
Continue to strengthen the relationship between the Children's Hearings Scotland National Team and our volunteer community through a dedicated programme of engagement	🟡	🟢	🟣
Launch a new recruitment campaign which aims to attract a diverse range of volunteers from local communities	🟡	🟢	🟣
Review our national Area Support Team operating model to ensure that it effectively supports our volunteer community		🟢	🟣
Build engagement with employers aimed at growing opportunities and looking at how businesses can support their staff in volunteering with Children's Hearings Scotland.		🟢	🟣

## OUTCOME THREE

“Our volunteers feel respected and valued for their contribution to the Children's Hearings System, and well supported both locally and nationally. Partners understand and value the role of and contribution made by Panel and Area Support Team Members to the Children's Hearings System.”



How will we measure our success? \*

**Through our Children's Hearings Scotland 'Community Survey'** we will measure where our volunteers:

- Feel proud to be part of Children's Hearings Scotland
- Feel that their Area Support Team supports them to carry out their role
- Rate Children's Hearings Scotland's digital systems positively
- Agree that the Children's Hearings Scotland National Team supports them to carry out their role.

**Through our digital systems** we will measure:

- Volunteer turnover and resignation reasons
- Area Support Team adoption of digital rota management
- Length of Panel Member service.

**Through our digital delivery programme** we will measure:

- IT helpdesk calls and resolution
- Growth of the Children's Hearings Scotland Community Digital Consultation Bank
- Uptake of our digital systems.

\*We will measure our performance against an established baseline where available. Key performance indicators and targets are set out in our annual Business & Corporate Parenting Plan.

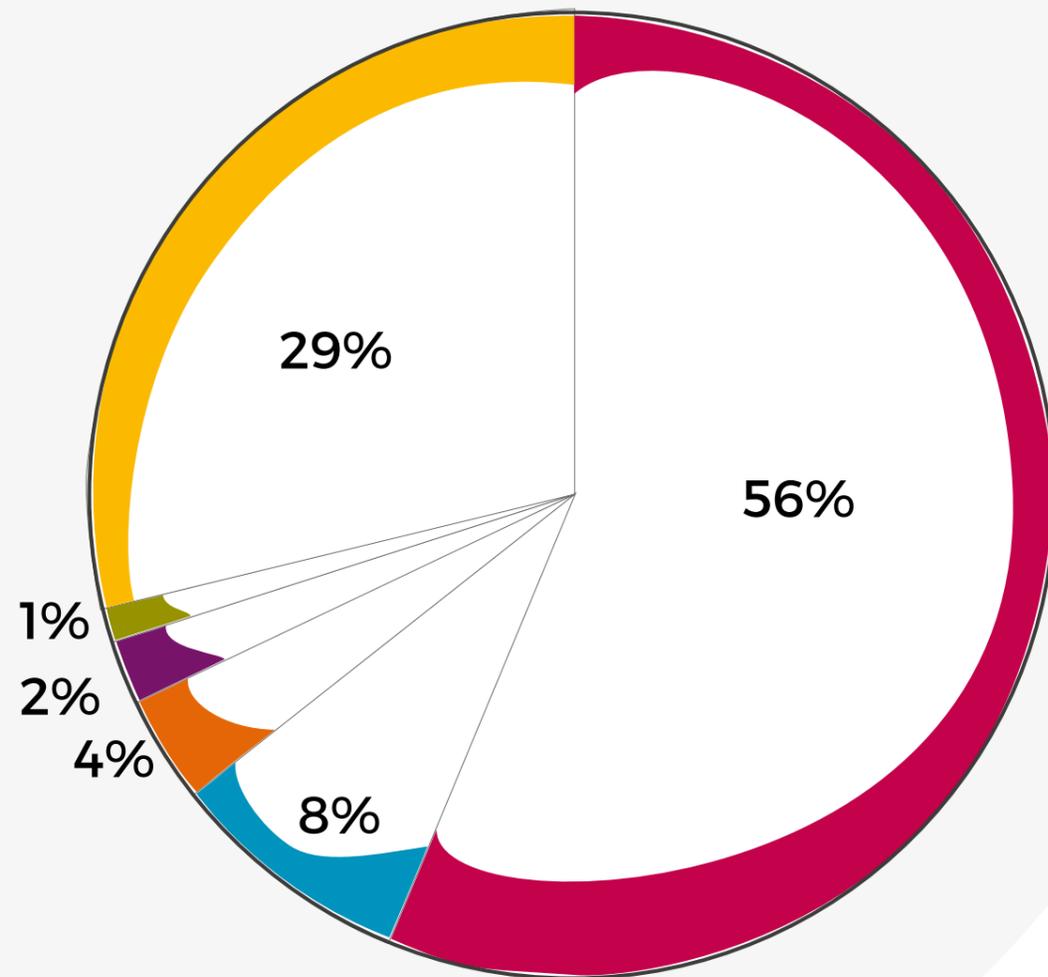
# OUR BUDGET AND RESOURCES



Children’s Hearings Scotland received a one year settlement for 2018/19.

We have been allocated grant in aid of £3.8 million revenue and £250,000 capital for 2018/19.

In addition to this the Scottish Government has also provided dedicated funding of £2.5 million in support of the Digital Strategy between Children’s Hearings Scotland and the Scottish Children’s Reporter Administration.



- Direct Support for volunteers
- Corporate costs
- Governance
- ICT
- Property
- Staff

# SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT NATIONAL OUTCOMES



Our Corporate Plan is aligned to the Scottish Government’s National Outcomes.

We share Scotland’s vision for all children and young people to be safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included. As a non-departmental public body, Children’s Hearings Scotland plays a role in delivering the Scottish Government’s overall purpose, strategic objectives and national outcomes. **The outcomes and activities set out in this plan are aligned to seven national outcomes in the Government’s National Performance Framework.** These outcomes will be updated by Scottish Government in September 2018. We will take action to comply with the updated outcomes when they are released.

Scottish Government Outcomes	What we are doing to deliver
Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs.	We seek the views of children and young people in the Children’s Hearings System through the Scottish Children’s Reporter Administration’s ‘Children and Families Survey’ and the Our Hearings Our Voice Board. We ask our volunteers their views of volunteering with us and regularly assess our performance and the quality of our services and take action to continually improve.
We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk.	Panel Members are well trained to make high quality decisions in the best interest of vulnerable children and young people. By continuing to develop our quality assurance framework, we will work towards evidencing that our decision making is of a high standard across Scotland.
Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed.	We support Panel Members to make decisions, based on timely and relevant evidence. Through our Digital Strategy we will ensure children and young people move through the Children’s Hearings System with minimum delay, to ensure all children are safe and settled as soon as possible.
We live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger.	Panel Members make decisions which support children and young people who are offending, are at risk of offending or have been offended against.
We are better educated, more skilled and more successful, renowned for our research and innovation.	We provide support, training and volunteering experiences to over three thousand people across Scotland. We will work with employers to communicate the workplace and personal skills gained through volunteering with Children’s Hearings Scotland.
Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.	We listen to the needs, fears and wishes of children and young people, and are proactive and determined in our collective efforts to support and involve them in their hearings. The views of children and young people inform our policy and practice decisions.
We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others.	Our recruitment campaign and selection process attracts volunteers from the local communities they serve. The Children’s Hearings System empowers local communities by promoting local decision making and, involving children, young people and their families in the decision making process.

child centered



fair



respectful



creative



challenging



open



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