



**CELCIS**

**Centre for excellence**  
for Children's Care and Protection

*building brighter futures*

Our strategy **2019-2024**

## Building on our achievements

CELCIS has over 20 years of experience and expertise in improving the lives and life chances of some of Scotland's most vulnerable children and young people. These achievements reflect a collective and collaborative effort with the people and organisations caring and working for babies, children, their families, and young people.

### 2000-2010

Supported the 6,000+ residential child care workforce to become qualified.

### 2009

Led the National Residential Child Care Initiative (NRCCI).

### 2011

Commissioned by UNICEF and international partners to produce Moving Forward, a handbook for the global implementation of the UN Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children.

### 2013

Ran From 'Act to Practice' to support the implementation of the Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011.

### 2013

Facilitated the delivery of the National Foster Care Review.

### 2014

Published the research 'Throughcare and Aftercare Services in Scotland's Local Authorities: A National Study'.

### 2014 to present

Delivering the ground-breaking Permanence and Care Excellence programme: an innovative and rigorous whole-systems approach, working with local agencies across Scotland to reduce the time it takes for children to have a settled, secure and permanent place to live.

### 2014 - 2018

Wrote official guidance on behalf of the Scottish Government in relation to:

- Contributed to Continuing Care Guidance
- Children's Services Planning
- Kinship Care
- Services to Vulnerable Children
- The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014

Created and facilitated an alliance of stakeholders and published the Scottish Care Leavers Covenant in 2016.

### 2015

Produced Looked After and Learning, a guide for teachers and educators.

## Welcome

"Welcome to our strategy. Here we outline what drives us and what we are striving for. Our purpose is simple: to ensure children's needs and rights, and their development, are at the heart of the support services designed to protect them, care for them and enable them to learn, grow and thrive. We work on behalf of children, to support them and their families, and those caring for them."

**Professor Jennifer Davidson,**  
Executive Director

"We recognise that the work CELCIS achieves with its partners to improve the lives of children and their families is one part of a bigger local, national and international picture. We have seen new guidance, legislation and ways of working over the last two decades, not least in how public services can and should understand what is in the best interests of each child and their needs. The Centre brings a professional, objective and evidence-based approval to this principle and I believe these core strengths will continue to help us to address opportunities and challenges in the future."

**Professor Alexis Jay OBE,**  
Chair of CELCIS Strategic Advisory Board and Visiting Professor,  
University of Strathclyde

"Our world-class Centre for Excellence harnesses valuable insight, providing challenge and innovation that drives positive change in the lives of the most vulnerable of the world's citizens – our children and young people – wherever they may be. We are proud to be able to contribute to, and benefit from, the work CELCIS does to inspire a collective effort in safeguarding the human rights of children and young people. This work advances our University's mission as "the place of Useful Learning" where socially progressive thinking and action leads to both local and global impact."

**Professor Sir Jim McDonald,**  
Principal and Vice-Chancellor of the  
University of Strathclyde

## Our Values

- People orientated
- Bold
- Innovative
- Collaborative
- Ambitious

## Our Principles

- The needs and rights of babies, children, young people and their families should be at the heart of services
- Development of practice is essential to improve experiences and outcomes
- People develop through relationships
- Working in partnership benefits everyone
- Making a difference in people's lives requires courage

### 2015

Began to support the delivery of the Scottish Government's Child Protection Improvement Programme.

### 2016

Began work as part of the Children's Hearings Improvement Partnership (CHIP).

### 2016

Began Addressing Neglect and Enhancing Wellbeing work in Dundee, Perth and Kinross, and Inverclyde Community Planning Partnerships to improve the system response to early signs of neglect.

### 2017

Produced a global South study, Towards the Right Care for Children, on behalf of the European Commission, examining the circumstances of children and families in relation to the care systems across Asia, Africa and Latin America. This study informed the EC's funding of their international development for children.

### 2018

Joined Scotland's ACEs research hub.

### 2017

Partnered with the Robertson Trust and Life Changes Trust to improve public understanding of the issues affecting vulnerable children and families, and of the policy solutions available.

### 2017 - 2018

Brought the main educational data holders in Scotland together to examine how data collection and reporting could be better aligned to better understand children and young people's journeys through education.

### 2016 - 2017

Co-ordinated an evidence-informed, independently chaired Child Protection Systems Review, as part of the National Child Protection Improvement Programme for Scotland.

### 2017

Produced and delivered Getting Care Right for All Children MOOC to support professionals to implement the UN Guidelines.

### 2016

Held the consultation on a potential financial compensation/redress scheme for victims/survivors of historical abuse in care in Scotland, working in partnership with the InterAction Action Plan Review Group.

### 2016

Ran a series of workshops to discuss how a child developmental orientation can improve how we address needs - facilitated by the Scottish Universities 2015 Insight Institute (SUII).

## Worldwide

# 30th anniversary

of the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.**

**196**  
countries

including all the EU member states, have ratified the UNCRC, making a commitment to implement the rights for every child into their policies and laws



**42%**

of world's population is

aged under **25**

## In the UK

**4.1**  
million children

were living in poverty in the UK in 2016-17

**That's 30%**  
of children



or **9** in a classroom of **30**



In the UK, **neglect**

is the most common reason for taking child protection action

## In Scotland



There are **1,000,000** children aged **0-17** years old



**50,000** babies born per annum



**500,000** young people aged **18-24** years old

# Neglect

is the most common form of child abuse, but it isn't always easy to identify

**11%** or **100,000** children experience neglect

There is currently

**no**



for children in alternative care or in need of protection globally. **There are millions of these children worldwide**

# 4,300

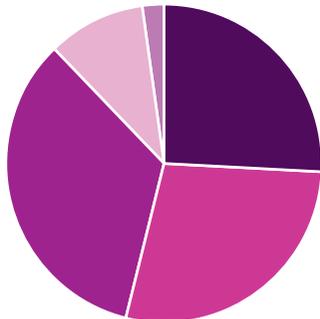
**children** are registered on the Child Protection Register each year with **2,600 children** registered at any one time. The most common reasons are emotional abuse, parental substance abuse, domestic abuse, and neglect

## Almost 15,000 children



are looked after and accommodated at any one time; **4,200 children** become looked after each year; and **5,600 young people aged 18-24 years old** and eligible for aftercare support

Children living with other family or friends (in **Kinship Care**) has risen dramatically. But, the most common place to live is with a **foster family**



	In the last 10 years
<b>26%</b> at home with parents	↓17%
<b>28%</b> kinship care	↑12%
<b>34%</b> foster care	↑6%
<b>10%</b> residential care	↓1%
<b>2%</b> other	no change

We know children who face the greatest adversities are those in need of care and protection. And, they are disproportionately represented among:

Children in the UK receiving

## 278,440

**counselling sessions** from Childline in 2017-18



**4,278 children** referred to external agencies because of welfare concerns

**34,000 annual referrals** to Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services in Scotland

**10-20% of Scottish school pupils** who do not meet expected Curriculum for Excellence levels in reading, writing, listening and talking, and numeracy



## Carers and workers

The workforce caring for and supporting care experienced children and young people includes **55,840** people working directly in children's services, more than **50,000 teachers** and many other professionals in the third sector, police, health practitioners (health visitors, doctors, nurses)

- 2,500** panel members
- 4,138** kinship settings
- 5,252** foster settings
- 5,740** social workers
- 7,680** residential workers
- 399** children's reporters

In Scotland there is also a huge **'unpaid workforce'** made up of 2,500 children's panel volunteers as well as friends, families, and others in communities, who have an enormous impact on the lives of babies, children and young people in their care

## What children want, need, and have a right to...



Children and young people in need of care and protection have told us what they want and need from the people who support them:

**Positive relationships**  
Relationships that are **authentic and loving**, and built on **trust**, over time

Someone to **rely on**  
Someone who will **be there** no matter what

To be **kept safe**, to be **seen and heard**, to be **healthy, cared for and loved**, their individuality respected

To be **respected, listened to**, and **involved** in the **decisions** about their lives

To live in a **nurturing, stable** home

To **achieve, learn and thrive**

To have **fun**, to **play** and **be active**

## Our vision

Children and young people in need of care and protection are always well supported to be all they hope to be.

Our vision is guided by the gap that exists between the experience of children and families and what it should be. Our strategy sets out how we will continue to work with others to close this gap.

## Why CELCIS?

CELCIS is a leading improvement and innovation centre in Scotland. We improve children's lives by supporting people and organisations to drive long-lasting change in the services they need, and the practices used by people responsible for their care.

We want to see a world where children and young people at risk of harm or in need of care and protection have safe, healthy, happy, and loving childhoods, and are supported to be all they hope to be.

We know that too many children do not have the best start in life despite the intentions of many. Some will have experienced significant trauma and neglect, and we all have a duty of care to uphold children's rights to be protected, and to safeguard their health and wellbeing.

All families can face difficulties and some may need extra support. We work alongside the people and organisations involved in providing care, protection and support through public, private, and voluntary services including social work, education, health, justice, and housing, across

Scotland and around the globe. Together we take bold steps to improve the lives of the most vulnerable babies, children, their families, and young people, using the knowledge we have acquired and shared over decades and continue to develop and generate.

A University of Strathclyde Centre for Excellence – the first of its kind - CELCIS is also the co-founder and partner of the Institute for Inspiring Children's Futures, and an associate of the Scottish Universities Insight Institute, bringing the needs and rights of vulnerable children and their families to the forefront of new thinking.

With a track record of bringing together our specialist knowledge and experience of front-line practice, ground-breaking research and data, high-quality learning and development, and policy guidance and analysis, CELCIS is also home to improvement and implementation science expertise.

This enables us to lead the way in using evidence-informed approaches to build on what works and support sustainable

change and improvement in systems, organisations and services for children with a rights-based, child-centred focus.

We are able to do this because we seek to directly understand, listen to, and include the experience of babies, children, young people, families and carers in what we do and how we approach our work. We also draw on the real world experience of professionals and academic excellence in teaching and research from an award-winning seat of learning. This means we are uniquely placed to contribute to policy development and drive effective implementation through guidance and best practice. This is why service providers, local and national governments, and international bodies including UNICEF, place their trust in us and our work.

This strategy sets out our framework for the next five years and provides the foundation from which we will plan our work through our annual business plans and our sustainability plan to deliver on the vision we have for babies, children, young people and their families.

### Scotland's National Performance Framework

- Scotland's collective commitment and ambition to reduce inequality, and drive economic, environmental and social progress, and achieve a number of national outcomes including that all children "grow up loved, safe and respected to reach their full potential", and we "respect, protect and fulfil human rights and live free from discrimination."

### Scotland's GIRFEC

- Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) is Scotland's multi-agency approach and framework for organisations to ensure children, young people and their families get the right help, at the right time, from the right people.

### UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

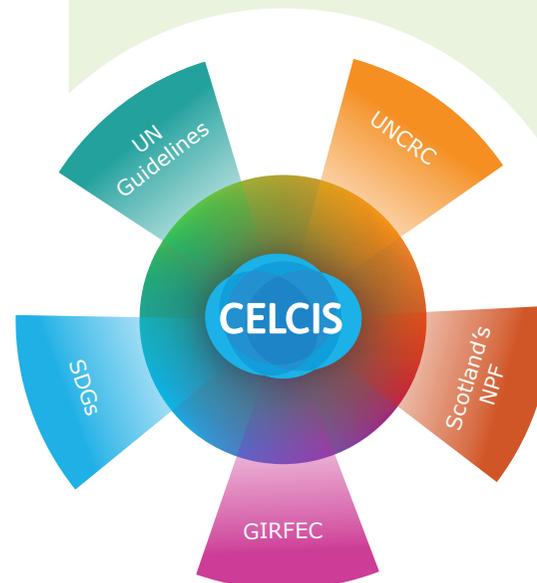
- An international agreement setting out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of every child, regardless of their race, religion or abilities.

### UN Sustainable Development Goals

- A call for action by all countries to leave no one behind, ensuring children are cared for well, protected from harm and injustice, and have what they need to grow and thrive, as we work together to promote sustainable development.

### UN Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children

- Unanimously welcomed international Guidance on how to realise and protect the rights and needs of all children who are deprived of parental care, or who are at risk of being so, to ensure their wellbeing.



We work in the context of international, national, and local policy frameworks and we embrace and contribute toward shared agreements and ambitions to meet the needs of children and young people and protect their rights.



## Strategic Outcomes

At the very heart of our work is an understanding that in order to secure safe, positive, long-lasting change in the wellbeing of children and families, we cannot work alone. Building brighter futures for children is always about relationships. That is why multi-agency collaboration and partnership is the essential component of our DNA.

We work alongside international partners, national and local governments and organisations, as well as individuals, to contribute to three strategic outcomes:

**We are committed to working to ensure that babies, children and young people in need of care and protection can...**

benefit from early, effective support for them and their families

experience safe and loving relationships and stability as they grow up

achieve their potential through their rights and needs being fulfilled

## Strategic Goals

We have clear, shared goals through which these outcomes will be achieved.

Working with partners, we will ensure that children and young people at risk of or in need of care and protection can access appropriate family support; are able to experience stability and loving relationships as they grow; and can then achieve what they aspire to, through:

### Early help

The provision of the earliest and best possible support for children and families when they need it

### Valuing experience

Children and family support and services are informed by the participation, voice and experience of babies, children, young people and families

### Effective decision making

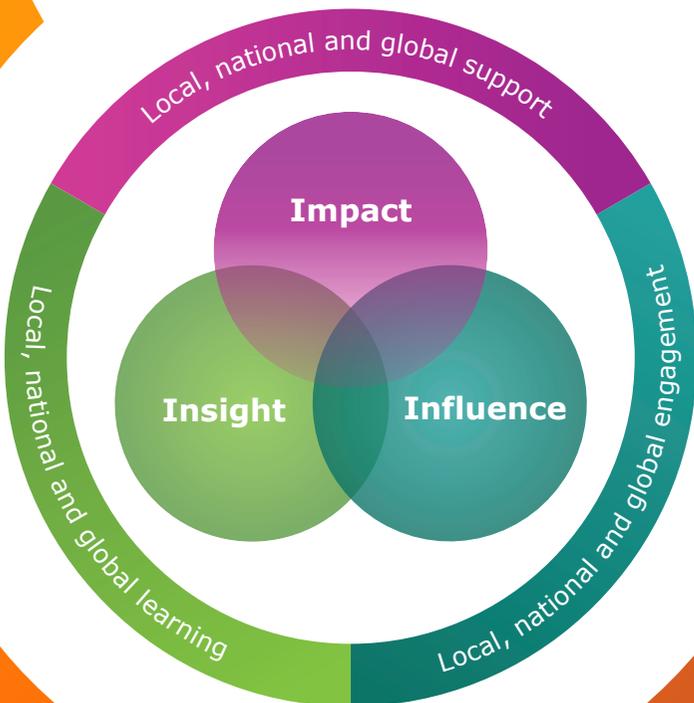
Timely and informed decision-making at the earliest stage of wellbeing concerns, signs of risk to children, and throughout their transitions into and through care and protection services

### Quality care

Quality care and protection services, responsive to the individual needs and rights of each child and family

## How we will achieve our goals

We are the go-to organisation for specialist knowledge concerning the care and protection of children in Scotland, and work with people at all levels (strategic, operational and practice) in communities, across the country and internationally, to improve how services can be developed and delivered to meet the needs of children, young people and their families. We bring together insight, influence and impact in ways to make positive, transformational change happen here in Scotland and across the world.



## Insight

Our work is rooted in data, research and evidence, and the sharing of knowledge of what works for children and families. In providing expertise and insight we:

- Take a lead role in gathering, analysing and applying existing and new data, research and evidence from Scotland, across Europe and globally - information that we know is vital in order to make improvements for children and their families and young people as they enter adulthood
- Seek, champion, include, and listen to the voices and experiences of children, young people and families across our work in ways that keep a focus on the child-centred needs of our goals
- Create dynamic exchanges of knowledge of international, national and local policy and practice, through multiple platforms and opportunities, so that perspectives, research and expertise can be brought to Scotland and insight from Scotland can be shared across the world
- Deliver an extensive programme of events and learning opportunities, including tailored training and consultancy, all of which support the development of a skilled, confident and well-equipped workforce able to deliver more effective support

## Influence

We know that working to ensure the needs and rights of children, young people and families' starts by working at a policy level, where legislative and strategic decisions are made, and by laying the ground work for positive change in organisations and services to happen. It is important that all of us working at strategic, operational and practice levels are able to align in order to make the impact we are all working for. In our influencing work with our partners, including local, national and international policy makers, decision makers, and providers, we:

- Encourage positive change and challenge the status quo in systems, services, policy and practices, championing what we understand to be in the best interests of children and their needs
- Take a rights-based approach and consider what children, their families and young people say would help them the most
- Influence and support the implementation of legislation, policy and guidance that is based on effective, evidence-informed methods of working, with a realistic assessment of what organisations can implement and deliver
- Build alliances, coalitions and consensus for collective action to create the circumstances from which we can improve the lives of children and their families, and support young people in their transition to adulthood
- Advocate for the experience of babies, children, young people and families to be heard and their experiences and needs valued in ways that can shape the support and services they receive

## Impact

We believe that improving the lives of children is only possible when we use systematic, evidence-informed approaches to drive sustainable and positive change in systems, services and practices for children in need of care and protection and their families.

Using our insight and influence, CELCIS applies these approaches to make real impact and drive change.

Working in collaboration, we provide intensive, practical support, working with leaders, managers and practitioners within organisations and services, and across multiple agencies to make positive change happen. Our impact work involves:

- Building awareness and understanding of what works well for babies, children, their parents or carers, and young

people, in the context of their circumstances, relationships and interactions within their communities, and with services

- Developing strong, collaborative relationships among stakeholders
- Generating and strengthening the use of data to improve services and guide decisions that affect children's lives
- Developing and strengthening the skills and capabilities of the workforce to support and sustain complex change and continuous improvement
- Nurturing, developing and deepening leadership skills and capabilities at all levels within an organisation, and across partnerships to support change and consistency

## Focusing our impact for 2019-2024

We strive to never lose sight that **each child, young person and family is unique**, and will require support that is specific to their circumstances, as we work to **innovate and improve** the complex processes, procedures and systems that are necessary to protect and **uphold their rights and needs**.

It is a collective endeavour and one that can only be achieved by **working alongside partners**, building on existing strengths, introducing best possible practice and developing solutions together. We will continue to work in this way to **make an impact** in bringing about real change to improve the lives of babies, children, young people and their families.

Over the next **five years** we will:

### Drive data improvement

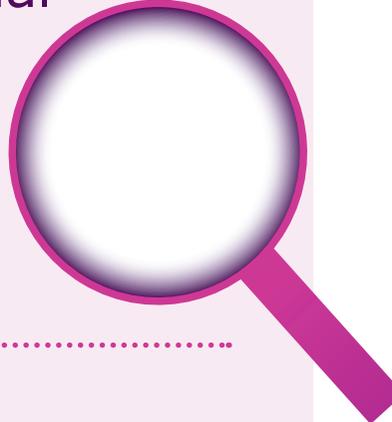
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By building on our **innovative**



we will make the case to decision makers and partners for the sustained gathering and recording of better local and national data, and guide and strengthen the collection and use of meaningful data that helps practitioners make **informed decisions about children's lives** and helps to **improve services**.

Guide and support transformational change and improvement in systems and services



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By providing our **expertise**

and using evidence-based approaches we will help innovate and make change happen in the systems, organisations and services that care and protect children and support families, developing and scaling up changes and improvements to provide **early help**, support **a preventative approach** and avoid escalation and crisis. We will do this through work to **address child neglect**; ensure children have a **stable and loving home**; narrow the **educational attainment** gap; and improve the quality of care services across **residential, foster and kinship care**.

## Inspire and embed positive change in practice and behaviour

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By providing

tailored

and evidence-informed learning and support to strengthen the core practice of professionals working with children, and equipping them to identify and respond to the **developmental needs** of the babies, children and young people with experience of **trauma** and families facing **adversity**. We will also support the implementation of local, national and international policy and guidance in a way that creates positive change in practice, and support all **Scotland's corporate parents** to meet their responsibilities for **looked after children, their families, and care experienced young people**.

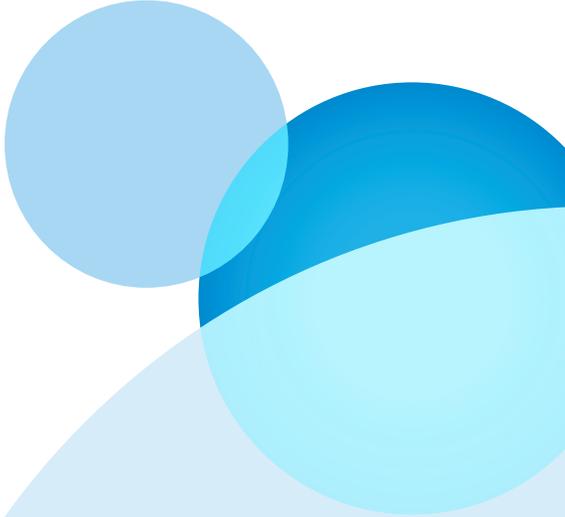
## Advocate for and support the inclusion of voices, experience and participation of children and families

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By providing **practical support**



to organisations in order to improve **participation and co-creation** with children, young people and their families. We will also provide a platform to **reduce stigma** and call out the inequitable life chances of children and care experienced young people and care leavers.



Our strategy is designed to evolve over the next five years in order to be responsive to the developing landscape about how best to fulfil children's and families' rights and needs, both at home in Scotland and across the world. We will continue to listen, learn and assess what is needed to support service leaders and all those caring and working for children and families, to meet our shared goals and our vision. In particular, we are ready to respond to what children, young people and families tell us through Scotland's Independent Care Review.

## Supporting our strategy: a place of organisational excellence

We strive for excellence and will deliver results by building on our legacy and achievements, including:

- Continuing to value and develop our committed workforce, and strengthen their skills and knowledge and what we can offer
- Providing learning and employment opportunities for care experienced people
- Continuing to learn and improve how we collaborate and work alongside the many people and partners affecting the lives of children and families
- Always learning, evaluating and improving as an organisation to provide the best possible services to our partners
- Remain accountable, and provide value for money in planning and monitoring our finances and sustainability, and diversifying our funding streams

## Measuring success

We use the best evidence to support decisions about the work we do and how we approach this. We are informed by the experiences of children, young people and families; draw on research; and harness the insight and expertise of those who work within and around care and protection services.

We will continue to evaluate our work to ensure it is having the results intended, and ensure that we are delivering this work in the most effective way.

We will seek feedback from our stakeholders and partners and report on the extent to which our work has been valuable and impactful.

## Talk to us, we're listening...

We always look forward to hearing from you. Talk to us about our work, find out about our research and consultancy services, or get more information about our events programme, training workshops or tailored training packages.

You can call, email or connect with us on social media.

## Contact us

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