

Cross Party Group on Children and Young People

Tuesday 26 October

13:00 – 14:00

Minutes

Zoom

Chair: Kaukab Stewart MSP

MSPs in Attendance

Kaukab Stewart, MSP

Meghan Gallacher, MSP

Non MSPs in Attendance

Sarah Paterson

Chris Ross

Dana Vreeswijk

Kelly Munro

Kirsten Shield

David Ashford

Sarah Rogers

Helen Forrest

Rosie Moore

Amy Woodhouse

Elaine Kerridge

Brian Magee

Susan Hughes

Lynne Gilmour

Khaleda Noon

Nic McGowan

Cath Logan

Janet Morton

Nina Collins

Claire Hunter

1. Welcome from chair – Kaukab Stewart MSP

Kaukab Stewart MSP welcomed members to the first meeting of the Cross Party Group on Children and Young People of the new parliamentary term. Kaukab told members that the meeting would cover the reconstitution of the CPG - including the election of office bearers and confirming the purpose of the group, topics to priorities for future meetings, a review the member's survey and a discussion of the convenors and membership's priorities.

Kaukab ran through a range of housekeeping measures and reminded all attendees that the chat function was available for questions and comments.

Kaukab thanked the previous convenor group for their work across the previous parliamentary term and we wished them well in their new roles.

2. Election of Office Bearers and aims of the group

a. Convenors

Kaukab told the members that two MSPs have agreed to take on co-convening roles for the CPG on Children and Young People. They are Kaukab Stewart MSP and Meghan Gallacher MSP. Kaukab asked for a proposer and a second to confirm their roles.

Chris Ross, Children in Scotland, agreed to act as a proposer. Cath Logan, National Lottery Community Fund, agreed to act as a second.

b. Secretariat

Children in Scotland confirmed that they are happy to continue in their role as the Secretariat for the Cross Party Group. Kaukab asked for a proposer and a second to confirm the membership approved of Children in Scotland continuing in this role.

Kelly Munro, Carers Trust, agreed to act as a proposer. Nina Colins, Forces Children Scotland, agreed to act as a second.

c. Treasurer

YouthLink Scotland confirmed that they are happy to continue in their role as the Treasurer for the Cross Party Group. Kaukab asked for a proposer and a second to confirm the membership approved of Youth Link continuing in this role.

Chris Ross, Children in Scotland, agreed to act as a proposer. Kelly Munro, Carers Trust, agreed to act as a second.

d. Proposed Purpose of the Group

Kaukab asked for the membership to confirm the purpose for the CPG on Children and Young People:

'To ensure issues affecting children and young people are recognised and discussed throughout the working of the Scottish Parliament, in order to ensure that the needs and rights of children and young people are met throughout Scotland'

This purpose was approved by the membership.

e. New members of the group

Kaukab asked whether the members of the group were happy with Children's Health Scotland, Lynne Gilmour, and Intercultural Youth Scotland becoming new members of the group.

This was approved by the membership.

3. Members survey responses

Kaukab handed over to Chris Ross from Children in Scotland to update the group on the results of a survey for members of the Cross Party Group on Children and Young People. Chris told the group that this survey was created by Children in Scotland and YouthLink Scotland and was sent to the membership to complete over summer 2021. The survey covered areas the CPG should priorities over the next parliamentary term.

Chris shared a presentation which summarised the survey results. This presentation can be found here <https://childreninscotland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/CPGCYP1021.pdf>

4. Convenors Priorities for the term

Meghan Gallacher MSP told members that the priorities raised in the survey resonated with her priorities. She emphasised that it was key for CPG members to lead and that COVID recovery should underline all of the CPG's work over the coming term.

Kaukab Stewart MSP said that she would listen to members and allow them to lead the development of the group's work across the year. She emphasised the importance of children and young people's voices being directly involved in the CPG's decision making.

5. Potential Areas of Future Work

The chair opened up for discussion about what attendees at the meeting felt the CPG should focus on across the year. These included:

The need for more youth spaces and for young people to connect more with nature.

- David Ashford raised this as an issue for further exploration and said that supporting more outdoor spaces, particularly between home and school, was vital to supporting children and young people's wellbeing.
- Lynne Gilmour (University of Stirling) also raised the issue of the lack of youth spaces, particularly in the Highlands where she has conducted research on the topic.
- Khaleda Noon (Intercultural Youth Scotland) also brought up the need to create pathways to ensure BIPoC children and young people, and those from deprived backgrounds, have equal access to youth spaces and outdoor opportunities.
- Kaukab said that she is a big believer of outdoor learning and has seen its huge potential.

The pathways of care and the experiences of children and young people who have been referred to CAMHS

- Lynne Gilmour (University of Stirling) raised this as a potential area of work.

Mental health and gender / mental wellbeing and self confidence

- Lynne Gilmour (University of Stirling) highlighted she had conducted research showing worsening mental wellbeing outcomes in young women.
- Helen Forrest (Children's Health Scotland) also highlighted it would be worth exploring this topic.

The CPG should take an anti-racist and intersectional approach in all its work. There is a need to support the involvement of children and young people of colour, LGBTQ+ children and young people, and other children and young people who are rarely heard, as well as organisations that support them, in the CPG's work.

- A number of members of the CPG supported the CPG doing more work in this area including Sarah Rogers (Forces Children Scotland) and Khaleda Noon (Intercultural Youth Scotland).

The CPG should actively engage in equalities targeting to recruit new members from diverse backgrounds.

- Amy Woodhouse (Children Scotland) suggested that the CPG should be making an active effort in this area.

6. Closing remarks

Kaukab stated that in the Scottish Parliament there are now six elected MSPs of colour and this is bringing in a new drive for change. As the first elected woman of colour, it is her aim that equalities, anti-racism, and equity will be at the heart of everything Parliament does going forward.

7. AOB

Chris Ross (Children in Scotland) highlighted that Robert McGeachy had asked the CPG to share that Pam Duncan-Glancy MSP has lodged a member's bill to create a statutory right for every young person with a disability to be supported through their transition from childhood to adulthood. Any members interested in supporting or learning more about this bill should get in contact with Pam or Robert.

8. Actions

The membership agreed to the following actions and Kaukab closed the meeting.

- The convenors and the secretariat will look closely at the lack of access to youth spaces, an issue that particularly affects children and young people from marginalized backgrounds. COVID-19 has exacerbated this issue and it will be a key priority of the CPG.
- The CPG secretariat will engage in targeted work to expand the diversity of the CPG's membership.