

**Briefing for Scottish Government Debate: Celebrating our Future -
Scotland's Year of Young People**

Key points:

- Putting the **voices of young people** at the centre of all activity across the year is crucial.
- The Year of the Young Person **must create a legacy** which means every year becomes the year of the young person.
- Key issues to be addressed in 2018 include **health and wellbeing in education, looked after children, and Equal Protection.**

Barnardo's is the UK's largest children's charity, across Scotland we work with thousands of children, young people and their families and we are delighted to be able to contribute and take part in the Year of Young People. Scotland is the first country in the world to dedicate a full year to celebrating young people. And we want to help make it unforgettable.

Participation – The voice of the young person

The Year of Young People 2018 is a once in a lifetime opportunity to show our young people how **important, valued and proud Scotland is of them.** Activity throughout the Year will focus on celebrating their achievements, recognising the contribution they make to communities and creating opportunities to have their voices heard.

We will be looking at participation across all our key policy areas, focusing on policy making which centres children and young people in the decisions that affect them and creates ways for them to engage in public decision making. We want to ensure the **voices of children and young people** are not only heard but have a **meaningful impact.**

Barnardo's Scotland is committed to celebrating **both children and young people during this dedicated Year** and providing a platform for them to take an active role in events across 2018. Whilst the Year is named and focused on young people (aged 8-26) we feel it is important to ensure that children and young people of all ages are included in the celebrations. Importantly we want to play our part in ensuring there is an **enduring legacy** which means that the focus on young people continues into 2019 and beyond.

Barnardo's Scotland approach to the Year of Young People will be to offer a range of opportunities to children and young people working with our Services across Scotland. These will include:

- Setting up a **YoYP fund** which children and young people can apply to - Grants will be available to children and young people who co-design and take the lead in shaping, developing and enjoying activities and projects as part of YoYP 2018.
- **Children and Young People's Accreditation** - Children and young people will be able to gain a nationally recognised qualification through their involvement in YoYP.
- Supporting 18 YoYP Ambassadors in **Polmont YOI**.
- Themed **celebration days** across our services.

Our hopes for 2018

Health and wellbeing in education

Along with literacy and numeracy, health and wellbeing is one of the three core areas of the curriculum that falls under the responsibility of all school staff. As part of 'Responsibility of All' everyone who works in a school has a responsibility to support the **mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing of pupils**. This is to be commended; however we remain concerned that this laudable vision is not being reflected in practice across Scotland.

We would like to **see strong progress to address this in 2018** through the National Review of PSE as well as other streams of work around:

- The attainment agenda
- The Mental Health Strategy
- The National Action Plan on Internet Safety for Children and Young People
- Consent and healthy relationships including through the Pregnancy and Parenthood in Young People Strategy

Looked after children

We listened to [what children and young people told us](#) about what the Care Review should focus on.

In response to this, in 2018 we will be **exploring transitions**, particularly out of care, including issues around **housing and homelessness**.

We will be finding ways in which our children, young people and staff can **engage with and influence** the journey phase of the Care Review in 2018.

Equal Protection

Scotland has the opportunity to make clear progress on a fundamental children's rights issue in 2018 by **giving children equal protection from physical assault** within the law.

Barnardo's Scotland has campaigned on this issue for many years; we fully support John Finnie MSP's proposed Children (Equal Protection from Assault) Scotland Bill and encourage all MSPs to do the same. **Legal change should happen at the earliest opportunity in 2018.**

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