

Child friendly scheduling of Hearings – Report for children and young people



About this report

The Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (usually called SCRA for short) has been running four projects across Scotland called 'child friendly scheduling'. To see if the projects have made a difference, we have spoken to lots of children, their families and professionals in the Children's Hearings System. We have taken all of this feedback and produced this report for children and young people. There is also a more detailed report which you can read on SCRA's website.

What is child friendly scheduling?

The four different projects have looked at the best ways of getting children and young people's views and making sure that they are better supported to attend and take part in their Hearings. We also wanted children and young people to know more about their participation options.

Why have we been doing this?

We know that Children's Hearings can be upsetting and sometimes even scary for children and young people. We also know that it can be difficult for some children and young people to have their say. We want everyone to feel safe and be able to fully take part in their Hearing and make sure their voice is heard.

What's been happening?

The pilot projects have been running in Ayrshire, Fife, Grampian, Moray and Renfrewshire. Slightly different things were being tested in different areas.

♥ In Ayrshire, people called trusted adults, such as social workers, teachers or advocacy workers would talk to children and young people. They asked when and where they would like the Hearing to be held, whether they wanted to attend at the Hearing centre, or virtually at school or elsewhere.



♥ In Fife, children and young people were given a scrapbook called Taking Control of my Hearing. This included a page with a seating chart where children and young people could choose where to sit in the Hearing room. Children and young people were also sent an invite to attend a Pre-Hearing visit.

♥ In Grampian and Moray, SCRA staff would call children and young people direct to ask what would help them in their Hearing. Questions included what name the child or young person would like to be referred by and if there was language that they didn't like/understand.

♥ In Renfrewshire, social workers were asked to check the suitability of arrangements for their Hearings with children and families in advance. This included checking if the date of the Hearing clashed with anything at school or if the date was special to the child or young person.

Have the projects worked?

It certainly looks like the pilots have helped children and young people. We have had positive feedback from children and young people, as well as their parents and carers. We have heard that children and young people liked being asked – one young person put on their feedback form "thank you for asking me what I wanted". Pre-Hearing visits which were promoted in all of the pilot areas, also seemed to make a difference. More children and young people were attending their Hearings – some for the first time.

What happens next?

During 2025 child friendly scheduling will undergo further testing within four of SCRA's Locality areas - Ayrshire, Fife, Renfrewshire and South East (which covers Edinburgh, East and Midlothian and the Scottish Borders). Then our research team will look at the findings. If the results are positive, child friendly scheduling will be introduced across Scotland. So watch this space for more information!

Any questions?

If you have any questions or comments about this report or child friendly scheduling, please get in touch. We would love to hear from you!

Thank you to all the children, young people, parents/carers and professionals who talked to us to help us evaluate child friendly scheduling.

