



Top Tips For Defending Rights in Policy & Influencing

When the Charter guides influencing work, we move from 'helping' forces children to working alongside them - as partners in change, not subjects of decisions.



1. Start with the rights	Keeps focus on children's lived experience
2. Gather rights-based evidence	Builds stronger influencing messages
3. Co-create with young people	Makes asks authentic and credible
4. Speak the same language	Creates consistency across partners
5. Be honest about change	Builds trust and accountability
6. Track progress	Shows the Charters real impact
7. Keep rights visible	Embeds change in culture, not just projects

START WITH THE RIGHTS

The Charter is a tool for change.

- Every policy idea, campaign, or consultation should link back to a provision in the Charter.
- Ask "which rights does this issue touch?"
- Use the Charter's words to frame elements of your work.
- Connect them to the UNCRC and Armed Forces Covenant for extra credibility.

1

COLLECT EVIDENCE THAT SHOWS RIGHTS IN ACTION (OR NOT).

Build your case with both stories and stats.

- Gather children's experiences that show where rights are being realised or denied.
- Back this up with data from surveys, service feedback, or research.
- Present findings as a **rights issue**, not just a service problem.

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3

CO-CREATE POLICY MESSAGES WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

Work **with** young people, not just for them.

- See children and young people in their own right, not just part of the family.
- Run short sessions where children link their lived experience to the Charter and your work.
- Ask “what needs to change for this right to be real for you?”
- If you can’t run sessions, use the Charter as the vehicle for their voice.
- Turn those ideas into shared recommendations adults can back.

4

SPEAK THE SAME LANGUAGE EVERYWHERE

Keep the Charter visible in all your influencing work.

- Quote Charter provisions in meetings, reports and submissions.
- Use its icons or language in presentations and briefings.
- Encourage partners (MOD, DfE, Education Scotland, schools, NHS) to embed the Charter in their own policies.

5

BE HONEST ABOUT WHAT CAN AND CAN'T CHANGE

Transparency builds trust.

- Always explain to young people how their views will be used.
- Feedback what changed, and what hasn't because of their input.
- In influencing spaces, be clear where decisions sit and who holds the power.
- Credibility isn't about promising everything, it's about following through on what you say.

6

TRACK PROGRESS AND SHOW IMPACT

Keep a simple record of what difference the Charter is making.

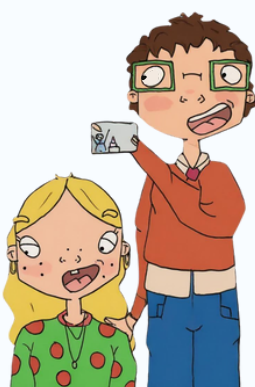
- Create a 'Charter Impact Log' for each project or policy theme.
- Note key wins: changes in language, policy commitments, or new partnerships.
- Share these stories back to children, funders, and partners.

7

KEEP THE CULTURE OF RIGHTS ALIVE

The Charter isn't a one off - it's a way of working.

- Use it in your team meetings, planning sessions, and staff inductions.
- Check decisions against the Charter: “would this feel fair to a forces child?”
- Find ways in consultation responses, campaigns etc to include the voice and views of forces children.
- Celebrate successes publicly to build momentum and keep rights and children visible.



SCAN FOR THE RIGHTS CHARTER



www.forceschildrenscotland.org.uk

