RNRA Development Team

Renfrewshire educaitonal psychology service  July 2022

Pupil Voice in Renfrewshire’s Nurturing relationships approach (RNRA)

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Renfrewshire’s Nurturing Relationships Approach (RNRA) is a relational and trauma informed approach to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people. RNRA is grounded in a rich evidence base and has been found to positively impact on staff practice and the wellbeing of children and young people (Nolan, 2020). Positive relationships across the school community (parents/carers, children and young people and staff) and a focus on the development of resilient children and young people are considered some of the key features of whole-establishment nurturing approaches.

The information in this document is intended to clarify the criteria used to determine where establishments are in their plans and actions to embed pupil voice in their approach to RNRA. Pupil voice means a whole-establishment commitment to listening to the views, wishes and experiences of all children and young people.

REPS RNRA development team has mapped the nurture framework features of highly effective practice onto a continuum of pupil involvement and engagement in whole-establishment nurturing relationships approaches. The intention of developing this continuum is to demonstrate what establishments should do, in order to effectively involve and engage children and young people in RNRA. Please see appendix for wider whole school approaches to consider, when capturing pupil voice wider than a pupil council forum or when seeking a view for a child/young person’s Team Around the Child (TAC) meeting.

This continuum has been further refined to produce practical examples which would be included in establishment accreditation submissions (including actions plans) to indicate that pupil involvement and engagement in RNRA has been considered, developed, and embedded. The purpose of these indicators is to allow scrutiny of accreditation submissions to determine progress in this area.

1. Consideration of pupil voice in RNRA and wider pupil planning and in meetings

2. Developing pupil voice in RNRA & individual child meetings

3. Embedding pupil voice in RNRA & in school/community culture

1. Evidence of 0-2 of:

* Informing children/young people about RNRA in the establishment e.g. assembly, newsletter, website, twitter and other social media apps.
* Gathering information from children/young people at any stage e.g. surveys, focus groups etc.

2. In addition to **all** at stage 1, evidence of at least 1 of:

* Involving children/young people in at least 1 change idea (detailed in action plan) e.g. design of safe spaces and names for certain areas
* Working with children/young people to develop their knowledge & understanding of nurture and what it means to them and their class/school/nursery
* Consulting with children/young people across all stages using variety of media to gain their views

3. In addition to **all** at stages 1 & 2, evidence of at least 2 of:

* Involving children/young people in **more than 1** change idea (detailed in action plan)
* Working with children/young people to develop their knowledge & understanding of nurture and how they can begin to use aspects of relational practice in their own lives and communities.
* Children/young people collaborate with the establishment about the development of RNRA in the establishment and/or community e.g. pupil council representative links with RNRA core group, pupils contribute to development and refinement of a change idea etc.
* Children/young people (including those with additional support needs) are involved in all decisions making processes throughout their school and wider community

* **They are experts of themselves – moral and ethical reasons**

**Why seek the views of children and young people (CYP)?**

In meetings and in planning paperwork for CYP there should be a section on their views and while at times it can be challenging to seek CYP views it is often the case that these sections are left empty. CYP are experts in their own lives and therefore their views and the information they can provide about their learning and wellbeing is a pivotal piece in planning for and meeting their needs. It is also vital to upholding their rights.

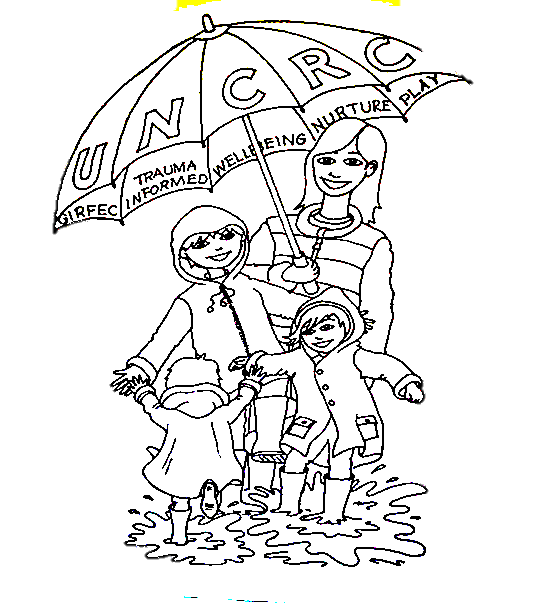
* Research tells us that gathering and taking account of children’s views has many benefits for their overall wellbeing and education including increased confidence and self-esteem; developing trust in adults and themselves; social inclusion and a sense of belonging; a sense of responsibility; Increased control over aspects of their lives and an understanding of decision making processes (Kirby & Bryson, 2002).
* The Young Ambassadors for Inclusion are young people with additional needs within mainstream education who have been nominated by their local authority to join a network to share their experiences of school. The views and experiences they shared demonstrate the importance and continued need for CYP’s views to be gathered, valued and responded too accordingly. A link to the video can be found here [The Young Ambassadors for Inclusion](https://education.gov.scot/improvement/self-evaluation/young-ambassadors-for-inclusion)

How children’s views are gathered and used often varies significantly and Shier (2001) outlines 5 different levels of engagement:

1. Children are listened to
2. Children are supported in expressing their views
3. Children's views are taken into account
4. Children are involved in decision-making processes
5. Children share power and responsibility for decision making.

It is important that we don’t just listen to CYP and then not act upon their views. We need to consider how to support CYP to express their views in a meaningful way that impacts decisions about their lives (Lundy, 2009, *‘Voice’ is not Enough. Conceptualising Article 12 of the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child* <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01411920701657033>).

**What does the legislation and policy say?**



[The United Nations Convention on the Right of the Child (UNCRC, 1989)](https://www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights/) highlights that all children including those with additional support needs, have the right to have their views sought and expressed. In 2021 it was agreed by the Scottish Parliament that the UNCRC should be enshrined into Scottish Law making it a legal requirement that childrens rights are respected and protected.

**Article 12: Respect for the view of the child**

*“States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child. For this purpose, the child shall in particular be provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child, either directly, or through a representative or an appropriate body, in a manner consistent with the procedural rules of national law.”*

**Article 13: Right to Freedom of expression & information**

*“The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child’s choice”*

In addition to the UNCRC, the following legislative and policy frameworks are of most relevance in relation to seeking and taking account of the views of CYP:

* [The Children (Scotland) Act (1995)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-children-children-scotland-act-1995-regulations-guidance-volume-1-support-protection-children-families/pages/1/) incorporates articles 3, 5 and 12 of the UNCRC and makes it a legal requirement to consult with CYP over any decision made about them.
* [Standards in Scotland’s Schools etc. Act 2000](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2000/6/contents)places a duty on taking account of the views of CYP. *“…the authority must, so far as is reasonably practicable, have regard to the views of children and young people (if there is a wish to express them) in decisions that significantly affect their education.”*
* [The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2014/8/contents) - *“Scottish Ministers must take such account as they consider appropriate of any relevant views of children of which the Scottish Ministers are aware.”*
* [The Education (Scotland) Act (2016)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2016/8/contents/enacted) has given a right to children and young people aged 12+ to be involved in decisions around their education and support.
* [Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2004/4/contents) as amended and [Supporting Children’s Learning, Statutory Guidance (2017)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/supporting-childrens-learning-statutory-guidance-education-additional-support-learning-scotland/)*“All children and young people should have the opportunity to make their views known about decisions which affect them. They should have the opportunity to express their opinions and have these opinions taken seriously. They should be encouraged to contribute to decision-making processes, the setting of educational objectives, the preparation of learning plans, reviews and transition planning. They need to know that what they have to say will be respected, listened to and, where appropriate, acted on.”* (Scottish Government, 2017, p.110)
* [Presumption to provide education in a mainstream setting: guidance (2019)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/guidance-presumption-provide-education-mainstream-setting/) states that *each and every child and young person should be involved in their own education and have a voice to shape their experience*
* [Support for Learning: All our Children and All their Potential. Review of Additional Support for Learning Implementation: Report June 2020](https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/independent-report/2020/06/review-additional-support-learning-implementation/documents/support-learning-children-potential/support-learning-children-potential/govscot%3Adocument/support-learning-children-potential.pdf). In this review CYP stated being listened to and involved in all decisions about additional support for learning was very important to them.
* [Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC)](https://www.gov.scot/policies/girfec/). The principles and values of this national policy is based on children’s rights.
* [The Independent Care Review 2020](https://thepromise.scot/) resulted in a promise being made to all care experienced CYP that Scotland would be the best place in the world to grow up so that CYP are loved, safe and respected and realise their full potential. One of the foundations for achieving this was Voice.

*Children must be listened to and meaningfully and appropriately involved in decision-making about their care, with all those involved properly listening and responding to what children want and need. There must be a compassionate, caring, decision-making culture focussed on children and those they trust.*

Figure 1 summarises a model of participation that conceptualises article 12 in the UNCRC. This framework can be used to consider how best to meaningfully support all CYP to express their views.



**Space**: Provide a safe and inclusive space for children to express their views

* Have children’s views been actively sought?
* Was there a safe space in which children can express themselves freely?

**Influence**: Ensure that children’s views are taken seriously and acted upon, where appropriate.

* Are there procedures in place that ensure that children’s views have been taken seriously?
* Have children and young people been provided with feedback explaining the reasons for the decision taken?

**Audience**: Ensure that children’s views are communicated to someone with the responsibility to listen.

* Do children know who their views are being communicated to?
* Does that person or body have the power to make decisions?

**Voice**: Provide appropriate information and facilitate the expression of children’s views.

* Have children been given the information they need to form a view?
* Do children understand that they can choose to pause or stop the conversation?
* Have they been given a choice of options of how to express their view?

Lundy’s Model of participation and Voice-Model checklist. Adapted from “*Overview of the National Strategy on Children and Young People’s Participation in Decision-Making (2015-2020)”* by Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2017, 8. Copyright by Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

**Practical considerations when gathering and taking account of CYP views**

When gathering CYP’s views it is important the trusted adult, who has a good relationship with the CYP, needs to listen to hear, not listen to respond. CYP views should be an accumulative process not a ‘one off’ meeting. Establishments may already have whole school approaches to gathering pupil voice through their Pupil Council, Children’s parliament or through their own internal self-evaluation processes for example. However, there are many tools available to gain children and young person’s views (see Tools table below) and when a CYP’s needs are being discussed in education forums or wider multi agency meetings a more in-depth consultation should be considered to gain their views. It is also important to consider when a CYP be given a choice to attend their own meeting. This may not always be appropriate, but this level of involvement can be an empowering experience for a CYP and gathering their views is the first steps to achieving this. Below are things to consider gaining their views:

1. Choose the right time and provide the right environment (Safe space, child friendly, quiet)
2. Identify the right person to gather the views of the child/young person

* Do they have a good relationship with the child? Who is the child’s trusted adult within the establishment?
* Consider giving the child or young person a choice of people with whom they can discuss their views with (in secondary this may not always be their pastoral care teacher)
* Choose an appropriate method to gather the child or young person’s views (see Tools table below)
* Ask the child or young person how best to communicate with them
* Offer choices to communicate, don’t assume speaking is the ‘best’ way to communicate (face to face, text, email, virtual)
* Adjust your communication to ‘meet them halfway’
* Explain their rights to them - some children and young people may not know them
* If you can’t answer their questions let them know you are working on it and will get back to them
* Support the child or young person to advocate for themself and help them to develop the skills to do this effectively
* Respect their experiences and perspectives, make an effort to understand, don’t judge
* Give the child or young person time to reflect on the information and to form a view where this is necessary. Check back with the child or young person to see if their view is still the same.
* Be prepared to develop your own skills in listening and communication
* Address power imbalances: Inform children they have the power to pause or stop the conversation. Consider using a visual tool such as a stop/pause sign for children to indicate their wish to pause/stop where appropriate.

1. If discussing a particular meeting where the child will be discussed seek consent from the child or young person. If child or young person does not give their consent discuss with the parent/carer at the same time.
   * Explain the process of the meeting (TAC, Solution Oriented), who attends and what things can happen from the discussion with the help of a leaflet/diagram/visual. Explain reasons for meeting in an age and stage appropriate way.
   * Discuss what they consider to be the most important points from the views gathered so that these can be included in the meeting. Inform them that you will share the original document capturing their views, if this has been completed, and ask if they are happy for this to be shared.
   * Discuss case at TAC – ensure due consideration is given to the child or young person’s view.
   * Feedback the outcomes of the TAC meeting and reasons for these in a child friendly way. Consider doing this in writing or a comic strip conversation so the child can take this away and think about the feedback. Offer the child/young person the opportunity to ask questions regarding the outcomes of the TAC.

The resource section has a range of tools for practitioners to use to gain the child or young person’s views. Some tools may be more appropriate than others and it is only through a trusted adult knowing the child or young person best and the questions seeking to be answered, that will result in the most appropriate tool being used and most effective result. Sometimes it can be difficult to gather children and young people’s views (e.g. non-attenders). In these cases, consider phone calls and home visits or enlisting the help of other appropriate adults or agencies (e.g. Home Link workers, social workers and third sector agencies). If it has not been possible to gather a view, consider stating what attempts were made.

Further information on listening and responding to children can be found here:

[The Compassionate and Connected Classroom: A health and wellbeing curricular resource for upper primary | Learning resources | National Improvement Hub (education.gov.scot)](https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/compassionate-and-connected-classroom#:~:text=What%20is%20this%3F%20The%20Compassionate%20and%20Connected%20Classroom,can%20help%20mitigate%20the%20impact%20of%20these%20experiences.)

Where an establishment involves children and young people in their own planning meeting as part of their staged intervention process and where CYP attend multi agency meetings the following links are helpful for guidance:

[Ways to Involve Young Adults in their IEP Meetings - The Pathway 2 Success](https://www.thepathway2success.com/10-ways-to-involve-young-adults-in-their-iep-meetings/#:~:text=When%20kids%20and%20young%20adults%20are%20involved%20in,confidence%20and%20increased%20self-advocacy%20skills%20for%20our%20students.)

[Involving-children-young-people-parents-and-carers-in-planning-to-meet-childrens-wellbeing-needs.pdf (alliance-scotland.org.uk)](https://www.alliance-scotland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Involving-children-young-people-parents-and-carers-in-planning-to-meet-childrens-wellbeing-needs.pdf)

**Tools to use to support seeking and taking account of CYP views**

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| **Tool** | **Description** | **Who to use it with** | **Where to find it** |
| My World Triangle | The My World Triangle is a communication friendly resource with widget images, based on the Scottish Government My World Triangle. | This tool may be useful to gather views of children and young people with a range of additional support needs. | <https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/glowblogs/communicationfriendlyenvironments/my-world-triangle/> |
| Person Centred Planning (PATH) | A creative planning tool in which the young person and people around them visualise a preferred future and work backwards to identify the steps towards this vision of the future. It focuses on the future and a positive or preferred outcome and involves goal setting. | May be most useful with young people in upper primary and secondary education.  It is good to involve families in this process and also peers where possible and appropriate.  This tool focuses on the future and is best used when it is not necessary to go over information from the past. | [Person-centred Thinking Tools | HSA | Consultancy | Training (helensandersonassociates.co.uk)](http://helensandersonassociates.co.uk/person-centred-practice/person-centred-thinking-tools/) |
| Solution focussed approaches | The solution-focused approach poses questions to children to help them to identify what they want in a certain aspect of their life, understand what is within their capacity, and explore what they are doing to move towards this. It can help identify strengths that could be built upon and possible strategies and supports that could be explored to work towards the preferred future.    Solution focussed approaches can be used in conversation and through the use of visuals and art based approaches. | The approach can be adapted to suit the abilities of a range of children, through the use of visuals, art-based materials and appropriate phrasing of questions. | [Solution-focused practice toolkit | NSPCC Learning](https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/2015/solution-focused-practice-toolkit)  Renfrewshire Psychological Services  Training can be requested from your Link EP |
| Glasgow Motivation and Wellbeing Profile (GMWP) | The Glasgow Motivation and Wellbeing Profile (GMWP) is a 50 item questionnaire and planning sheet that explores a young person’s motivation and sense of wellbeing in the learning context. It elicits the young person’s view of themselves and their emotions including their vulnerabilities; it gives them an opportunity to reflect on their feelings and current experiences and it encourages them to consider how they can increase their own motivation and sense of wellbeing.    Though the 50 item version of the GMWP is the primary version, there are also other versions which can be considered:    GMWP- 20 item version with all positive statements with Boardmaker symbols, (paper). | The 50 item version is recommended for use with 8-17 years old. Please refer to the guide for how this tool can be used to facilitate meaningful consultation.    The 20 item version with Boardmaker symbols can be printed and used with young people who would benefit from the use of visuals. This can then be translated onto the 20 item electronic version to produce the charts which map the answers in relation to the SHANARRI indicators. | Different versions exist to suit different needs.      It is important to read the guide in how to use this tool to facilitate a meaningful discussion, completing all parts of the GMWP.    [Profiling Wellbeing Tool (GMWP) | Renfrewshire Health and Wellbeing (glowscotland.org.uk)](https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/re/renfrewshirehwb/profiling-wellbeing-tool-gmwp/) |
| Nurturing Me | A GIRFEC tool which captures the voice of the child. The main purpose is to allow the child to have their voice heard in relation to their perspective on their wellbeing. It is a mediated tool using concrete materials which allows children and young people to identify key people in their lives alongside the child’s perspective on the closeness and importance of that relationship.   (Available in paper, as an app on the IPad or as a PC version) | This tool can be used with preschool to primary aged children. Please refer to the guide for how this tool can be used to facilitate meaningful consultation. The guide also supports the drafting of a solution focussed report from the child’s answers. | [‎Nurturing Me on the App Store (apple.com)](https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/nurturing-me/id988369996)  [Nurturing Me – Glasgow Educational Psychology Service (glowscotland.org.uk)](https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/glowblogs/glasgowpsychologicalservice/nurture/nurturing-me/) |
| Talking Mats | Talking Mats is a picture-based communication tool with engaging pictures and symbols.  It is also available in a digital format. | Talking mats can be used with children and young people with a wide range of ages (nursery through to adulthood) and additional support needs, including those with speech language and communication needs and has previously been used with children who are care experienced. | Training may be required. More information can be found on the Talking Mats website:  <https://www.talkingmats.com/about/our-story/>  <https://www.callscotland.org.uk/professional-learning/webinars/WEB132/> |
| Social stories tm/comic strip conversations | These approaches are short descriptions of a situation, event activity or conversations, presented in a concrete way to help with understanding. | These tools may be particularly useful to prepare young people to participate in or feedback the outcome of a TAC or multi agency meeting. Particularly helpful for children who might benefit from information being presented in a concrete way, including children and young people with autism. | <https://widgitonline.com>  <https://carolgraysocialstories.com/social-stories/> |
| School Wellbeing Risk and Resilience Cards  Strength Cards | A set of 40 picture cards to reflect school avoidance, unhappiness as well as strength and protective factors in order to promote shared experience of school and any worries or concerns.  Sets of 57 cards showing animals in a variety of emotional states, used to engage children in a discussion about their strengths and worries in life | Suitable for aged 7+yrs  Adults use these with children | [School Wellbeing Risk and Resilience Card Set (schoolwellbeingcards.co.uk)](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.schoolwellbeingcards.co.uk%2F&data=05%7C01%7Ctracy.burke%40renfrewshire.gov.uk%7C3f5eb460662442a8c4fb08da85d62b93%7Cca2953361aa64486b2b2cf7669625305%7C0%7C0%7C637969452135540077%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=GapwBIbsin6vegcyAmG9nZ9YPisQQPeA4MpUHt5k318%3D&reserved=0)  https://innovativeresources.org/resources/card-sets/strength-cards/  <https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resource/au-t-pe-002-strength-cards-flashcards> |
| Drawing the Ideal Safe School  (PCP) | A structured drawing technique – led by a trusted adult | This tool can be used with preschool to secondary aged children. Please refer to the guide for how this tool can be used to facilitate meaningful consultation. | Guidance can be found on the following link  <https://www.obsdirectory.co.uk/?mdocs-file=6398> |
| Mosaic Approach | A multi-method approach in which children's own photographs, tours and maps can be joined to talking and observing to gain children's perspectives on their education settings | This method of gathering children’s views is relatively new and developed for Early Years but can be used up to P3 age range. | Training may be required, please speak to your Link EP.  <https://www.nicole-brown.co.uk/the-mosaic-approach-according-to-clark-and-moss/> |
| Voices Toolkit | A visual and practical toolkit aimed at seeking views and empowering care experienced children and young people talk about their lived experiences. It provides a wide range of resources and activities with thinking points to choose from. | This tool is created by third sector organisation and relatively new. The aim is to empower care experienced children and young people tell their story in a safe way –in terms of accessibility upper primary to secondary would be most appropriate. | [Voices-Toolkit-print-friendly-30.03.pdf (projectchange.scot)](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.projectchange.scot%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2F2022%2F03%2FVoices-Toolkit-print-friendly-30.03.pdf&data=05%7C01%7Ctracy.burke%40renfrewshire.gov.uk%7C553c88c4eb954e5c5f0808dabb30bcd6%7Cca2953361aa64486b2b2cf7669625305%7C0%7C0%7C638028115233324531%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=7FRgmWuJ%2BRTqzBwf5jC0BxXvIx4N1YTx0zodP1TORqI%3D&reserved=0) |
| Education Scotland’s Pupil Support Staff – Professional Learning Framework | Section on **effective communication and collaboration – developing positive relationships** focusses specifically on pupil voice and how to involve children more in their learning plans using a link to a SWAY document. | This SWAY document is for practitioners with practical advice for how to involve children from Early Years to Secondary school. | <https://education.gov.scot/improvement/pupil-support-staff/skilled/> |