

SCRA Keeping The Promise 2021-24 Route Plan



Children and young people will be listened to, protected and supported to have a positive future where they are safe, valued and respected.



[#KeepThePromise](#)



Our Vision and Commitment

Our vision is that children and young people will be listened to, protected and supported to have a positive future where they are safe, valued and respected.

SCRA is committed to Keeping The Promise. In order for us to demonstrate our commitment, plan our journey and show our activity to get there, SCRA has developed this Keeping The Promise Route Plan. The Route Plan contains the high level activity we will do to Keep The Promise. It will sit alongside detailed project plans with actions through which these activities will be delivered.

Our Keeping The Promise 2021-24 Route Plan contains two interlinked strands of work – Improvement and Reform. This Route Plan focusses mainly on improvement. SCRA is also actively involved in reform through our work as a member of the Hearings System Working Group (HSWG). We will work with partners in key organisations and with children and families to redesign the structures, processes and legislation of the Children’s Hearings System.



Keeping the Promise Aims 2021-24

SCRA’s aims are led by the Promise Change Plan 2021-24. Some of the work that we will do to give effect to this includes:

- Hearings will be inclusive, rights based and trauma informed.
- Everyone attending Hearings will have the information they need, be prepared and be able to participate.
- The reasons for coming to a Hearing will be clear and explained as will the decisions of the Hearing.
- Rights to appeal will be clear and accessible.
- Everyone in our organisation will work with children and families with kindness.
- The language that we use to talk and to give information will be clear, accessible and appropriate.
- We will be open and constructive in our conversation with partners about how the Children’s Hearing can and should change, and we will do all we can to prepare our staff for this change, whilst continuing to improve the current Children’s Hearing experience of children and families.





Keeping The Promise Approach

SCRA is Keeping The Promise across the organisation by ensuring every member of staff can be involved, promoting an inclusive approach to achieve sustainable improvement and delivering on The Promise.

A Keeping The Promise team, comprised of roles from across the organisation and led by a Programme Manager, has been identified and will be working together to develop plans, engage with staff, partners, and children and families, to help us transform our plans into demonstrable actions.



Keeping The Promise Activity

1. Preparation for your Hearing – Options, Choices and Participation

This is an area of work that already has a lot of evidence for improvement as well as recommendations and achievements in Better Hearings to build from. A Better Hearing is inclusive, it is listening, it is rights based. Everyone going to a Better Hearing is well prepared, has all of the information that they need, know what they would like to say – how they would like to say it, and what they need to support them. This will see children and young people have a far more personal interaction with the Reporter and enable the sense of a bespoke Hearing. To enable this:

- We will evaluate, consolidate and expand the good work from Better Hearings to promote and embed the different aspects of what makes a good hearing across the country.
- Review and analyse experiences from virtual and hybrid Hearings during the pandemic to inform what children and young people need to support effective and accessible virtual attendance, and identify the most appropriate method.
- This work will look at introductory letters from the Reporter – explaining who they are and what their role is.
- This strand will focus on needs and inclusive service provision to ensure equity for everyone attending.
- We will develop an easy to use form (electronic and paper) detailing what to expect, what is available and asking what would be preferable – what would help support them when they come in (in person or virtually) if they have any particular needs.
- It will incorporate and build on the new 'Hearing about Me' form, which has been developed in partnership with Proud 2 Care to replace the All about me and is far more about what young people would like the panel to know – about them, their situation, what they would like to happen.
- We will also consider methods of participation and explore video content, as well as more creative options to participate.



- Explore with local partners different options for Hearing locations and for Hearing scheduling – to make sure these work for children and families. With our partners, we will consider who should to be involved in scheduling and interacting with families.
- We will work with our partners to ensure that young people are as prepared as they can be to attend their Hearings by receiving support in advance of their Hearing from knowledgeable professionals.

2. Rights Based Grounds

An exploration of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in grounds – this piece of work takes the description of the grounds for referral and re-frames it from a rights based perspective to shift blame to an unfulfilled right. This is at an early stage and requires to be scrutinised in terms of practice and operational enablement – in partnership with CELCIS.

3. Reports for Hearings

We will work with partners to promote more concise, relevant reports for Hearings which genuinely support high quality decision-making for children – building on work carried out in response to COVID-19, and one of the clear recommendations coming through from The Promise, as well as from Better Hearings - in partnership with CELCIS and Our Hearings, Our Voice (OHOV).

4. Hearing Rooms

We will do all we can to promote the safety, comfort and privacy of children at the Hearing centre by ensuring our Hearing rooms are upgraded to make them feel safe, inclusive and support participation. We will be exploring Hearing rooms that take a sensory approach. We have another set of rooms that are being re-designed this year – and another lot the following year. Options, Choices and Participation work will be developing this to ensure that the views of young people are at the heart of the redesign process.

5. Child Friendly Compulsory Supervision Orders (CSOs)

Looking at how a Compulsory Supervision Order (CSO) and its conditions can be described in a way that is family friendly – accessible and able to be explained, whilst still fulfilling statutory requirements. Working in partnership with CELCIS and Our Hearings, Our Voice (OHOV).

6. Trauma Training

Staff awareness raising and training on trauma – understanding trauma and its impact, vicarious trauma, what trauma informed practice is and how to become a



trauma informed workforce/place. We will ensure that our staff carry forward this approach into the work they do.

7. Contextual Safeguarding

Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to the harm or risk that can be faced by children out of the family home – at school or in the wider community. A greater understanding of this approach will be promoted in order for the exploitation of children in Scotland to be fully understood and addressed – without a child taking the blame for their ‘behaviour’. We will link this work with the trauma informed approach and wider work on promoting rights based approaches for children and young people. We will carry forward lessons from research on exploitation of children to ensure that reporters play a key role in ensuring exploited children are treated appropriately and fairly in the Hearings System.

8. Referrals

We will work with our partners locally and nationally to ensure that we have the right referrals for the right children at the right time. We will take a data informed approach to understanding referral patterns and outcomes. As well as focussing on care and protection referrals, we will work together with our partners at Police Scotland and the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal’s Service (COPFS) to promote that children in conflict with the law are retained within the Children’s Hearings System rather than entering the adult criminal justice system. We will work together with partners to maximise clarity in communication about care plans and interventions and to minimise delay in decision-making on joint referrals.

9. Your Rights

Your Rights – working with a group of reporters to present creative ways to let people know and understand their rights. This piece of work will produce full and detailed information for people about their rights in the system and when coming to Hearings – to include the rights of children in hearings, relevant persons in hearings, brothers and sisters, victims, rights around offending and around secure care. Working in collaboration with Children and Young People’s Centre for Justice (CYCJ) Staf and others to ensure consistent messaging and clear links.

10. United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

Staff awareness raising and training on UNCRC and in particular Article 12 through a series of workshops. We will work to expand the knowledge of our staff and embed a rights-based approach to our work.

To find out more about how we are approaching this work, read on... and to find out *even more* our strategy can be accessed [here](#).





Getting the conditions right

To ensure that the improvements outlined in our Route Plan are as bold and sustainable as they can be SCRA will support our staff to engage in and deliver improvement. SCRA will focus on 'getting the conditions right' through workforce awareness, support and training, capacity planning, inclusive recruitment, good data collection, research, and much more. The activities outlined in the following section aims to capture the actions to get the conditions right.

What we will do next to make this happen

- Conduct a UNCRC audit in the organisation.
- Work with The Promise team - looking at data to provide the information required to support them.
- Look at our own data to make sure we are collecting and reporting on the things that matter.
- Undertake research to understand the impact of the pandemic and how we can use this to inform our improvement journey.
- Use a range of platforms to engage with our motivated workforce to participate in delivering on The Promise and to communicate our plans and work with children, young people, families and partner agencies.
- Continue to focus on staff wellbeing as a priority to support our staff to do their best at work and have the space and time to be involved in sustainable improvements.
- Ensure that we promote staff in all roles in SCRA, becoming involved in testing and delivering improvements to the experience of children and young people attending Children's Hearings.

Inclusive language and communications

Working with Children's Hearings Scotland (CHS) and Our Hearings, Our Voice (OHOV) and other partners in the system, we will look at recommendations around language, from both The Promise and 40 Calls To Action. We will develop communication standards for the information that we provide, which will impact all aspects of how we communicate. The work of this group will help inform the Options, Choices and Participation work, along with work on all the information and communications that we provide. It will also seek to recognise and address the areas that are not just about language, more a lack of information - making it feel inaccessible.



Working in Partnership

We will be working with our partners in the Hearings system to take forward the actions – working with CHS, with Social Work, with Police Scotland and the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service, with Advocacy Providers, and with many other partners.

Key to our partnership work will be the work that we do with children and young people. We are not looking to go forward and consult on our work, we are looking to genuinely develop our work going forward in partnership at every stage. This is going to take time and commitment to get right across the country. Please tell us when you have feedback about how we are doing. KeepingthePromise@scra.gov.uk
communications@scra.gov.uk



Keeping The Promise- Monitoring, Evaluation and Governance

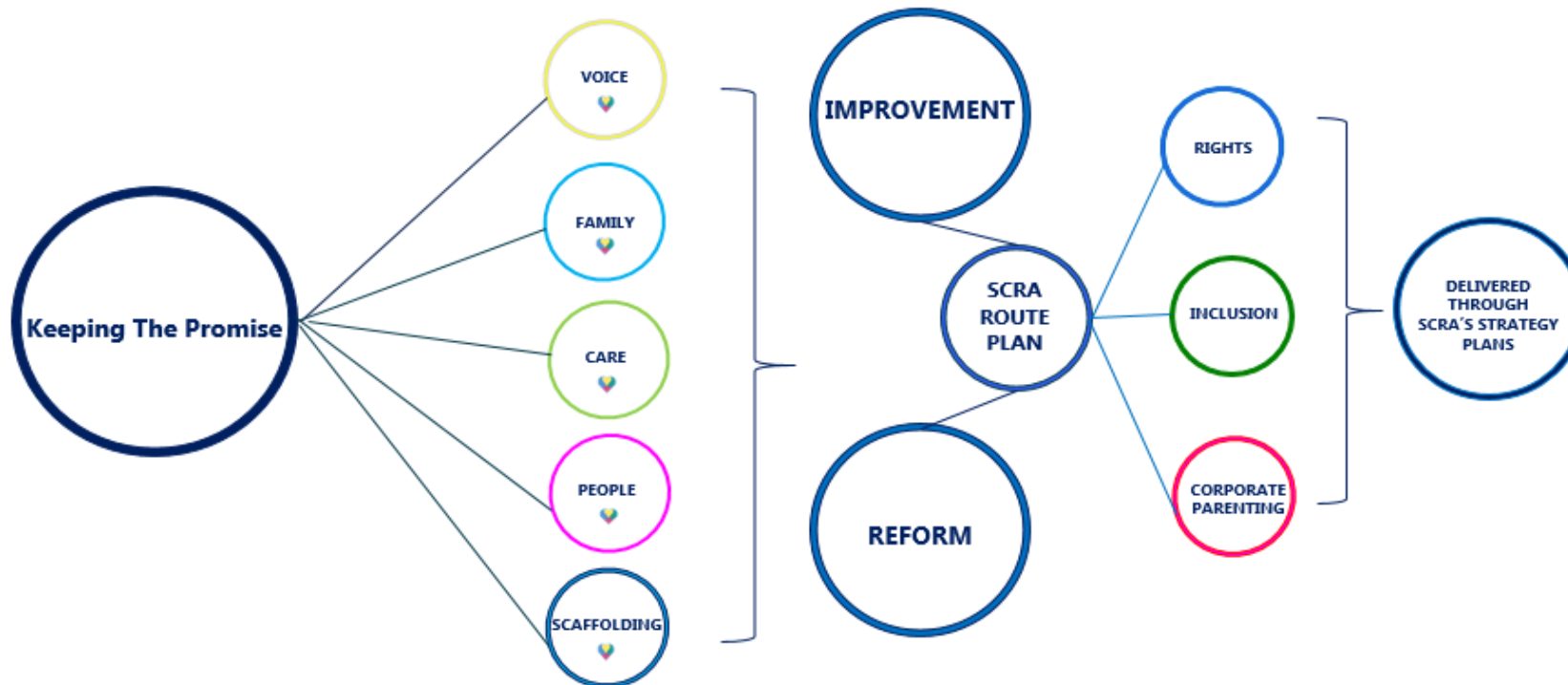
The SCRA Route Plan will be approved by the Keeping The Promise Programme Board and will be led and reported on by the Programme Manager. The Programme Board will review progress on a quarterly basis. The Route Plan is a fluid and live document, and will be subject to change, as we continue to further consult and engage with internal and external stakeholders.

All of our Route Plan activities will have detailed project plans and actions with timelines and leads, journey maps and full descriptions of the actions to enable the Keeping the Promise Programme Board to monitor and have an oversight of our progress. We will plot our activities across our route plan, under the themes of Rights, Inclusion and Corporate Parenting.

We have staff trained and qualified in Improvement Methodology and it is our intention to use robust methodology to test, monitor, evaluate and improve as an integral part of our approach. Throughout, we will be accountable to children and families and seek feedback on how we are doing.



Strategic Framework.



The [Rights Inclusion and Corporate Parenting Strategy](#) creates a dynamic way for us to plan and manage the activity required to #KeepThePromise in SCRA. We will recognise actions, develop plans, establish and support working groups and ask for support and advice from our expert partners across Scotland. Our dynamic approach means that we will be able to change what we are doing if that becomes necessary. We are determined that we recognise what doesn't work and that we promote and encourage what does work.





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