

National Autistic Society Scotland

Child Rights & Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA)

Stage 2: Assessment

1. UNCRC Rights Affected by Moving Forward+ with CashBack for Communities

The four general principles of the UNCRC are affected by our programme:

- Article 2: Apply rights without discrimination
- Article 3: Best interests of the child to be a primary consideration
- Article 6: Right to life, survival and development
- Article 12: Right to express a view and have that view considered

Additionally, we identified five other articles affected:

- Article 13: Freedom of expression
- Article 15: Freedom of association
- Article 23: Children with a disability
- Article 28: Right to education
- Article 31: Leisure, play and culture

2. Assessing the Impact of Moving Forward+ with CashBack for Communities on these rights

Article 2: Apply rights without discrimination - positive impact

- We promote Moving Forward+ with CashBack for Communities to a wide range of schools and referral agencies, ensuring as many people as possible are aware of the programme and know how to refer, or self-refer, to us
- Our leaflets contain information in other languages including Urdu, Polish and Mandarin, in order that children and young people from ethnic minority groups feel included and encouraged to join our programme
- We reimburse travel expenses so that children and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds are able to access Moving Forward+ with CashBack for Communities
- When delivering group sessions for autistic children and young people, we ensure that there are always at least two female participants per group in order that female participants feel comfortable

Article 3: Best interests of the child to be a primary consideration - positive impact

- Background information provided by other stakeholders, e.g. parents, carers, teaching staff or social workers is considered in order to gain a rounded picture of the circumstances affecting each child and young person
- The programme can be delivered in whatever format is in the best interests of each child or young person; online sessions can be set up if preferable, these can be 1-1 or group based and while online, children and young people have the option of communicating via text and video or just text. If in-person support is preferred, this can also take place on a 1-1 or group basis. Children and young people who opt for in-person support can also choose between attending our office base or receiving community-based support
- Support is regularly reviewed with children and young people being encouraged to feed back on their progress and advise whether additional sessions, resources etc may be helpful to them

Article 6: Right to life, survival and development - positive impact

- Moving Forward with CashBack for Communities offers a very flexible, person centred pathway that we tailor to meet the development needs of individual children and young people
- By addressing the specific challenges faced by each child and young person joining the programme and equipping them with the necessary life skills, we ensure each individual has the best opportunity to move forward with improved confidence and resilience

Article 12: Right to express a view and have that view considered - positive impact

- From the outset of their time on the programme, children and young people are encouraged to express their hopes and fears, in order that we can support them effectively
- Within group settings, children and young people are asked to express themselves in a way that is respectful to others and to have respect for different points of view
- We encourage children and young people to share their views on programme delivery. We have adapted our delivery in response to previous feedback and will continue to be responsive to new ideas that our children and young people put forward

Article 13: Freedom of expression - positive impact

- We encourage children and young people participating on the programme to express themselves but we know that autistic people can need extra time to process information. We therefore provide information in advance of each meeting or training session. This gives children and young people time to think about what is to be discussed and consider any questions, thoughts or ideas for the meeting or training session. We also ensure that materials and resources used in meetings and training sessions are provided in alternative formats where needed e.g. easy read, coloured paper etc. By helping children and young people feel prepared and making information accessible, we ensure that they are best placed to express themselves on the day.
- The programme team will offer positive feedback to children and young people as they express themselves, encouraging participants to feel more confident about doing so again in future meetings or training sessions as part of the programme or in day to day situations.

Article 15: Freedom of association - positive impact

- Moving Forward with CashBack for Communities offers children and young people the opportunity to work on a 1-1 basis with programme staff or to work within a group alongside other children and young people. A child or young person who starts off working on a 1-1 basis may later decide that they would prefer to try group work and vice versa and the programme team are happy to accommodate changing preferences.
- Many autistic children and young people are socially isolated and group work is the first opportunity they have had to socialise with others. Group work has often led to the establishment of connections and friendships that have lasted beyond the programme. This is seen as a very positive development.

Article 23: Children with a disability - positive impact

- Our programme provides autistic children and young people with the skills and confidence to realise their potential and go on to live fulfilling lives. Moving Forward+ with CashBack for Communities also reaches out to schools, referral agencies, employers and the wider public, in order to raise awareness and increase opportunities for autistic children and young people.

Article 28: Right to education - positive impact

- Participation on Moving Forward+ with CashBack for Communities is free for eligible children and young people with expenses covered from the programme budget
- Children who have been unable to attend school due to high levels of anxiety are supported to develop coping strategies that will give them the best opportunity

to return to education. The programme team also liaise with teaching staff to raise awareness of adjustments that can be made for each child, to facilitate a successful return to school

- Young people who have left school and would benefit from gaining qualifications are assisted to identify and apply for relevant courses
- Young people are also encouraged to consider alternative awards e.g. Hi 5 and Saltire awards where these are more appropriate

Article 31: Leisure, play and culture - positive impact

- Moving Forward+ with CashBack for Communities regularly supports children and young people to sample new experiences that they have identified as being of interest to them. Go-karting, laser tag, indoor climbing, raft building, meals out, museum and cinema trips, gaming groups, book groups and creative writing groups are just some of the many activities offered to date.

Evidence Base

Throughout the five years that the programme has been funded by CashBack for Communities, we have reported to our funder on a quarterly and annual basis. There have also been three external evaluations conducted by an external evaluator.

These reports and external evaluations draw on qualitative and quantitative data gathered from children and young people via online surveys, one to one interview's and focus groups, using the SHANARRI framework to measure changes in children and young people's wellbeing. Other stakeholders, including parents and carers, volunteer mentors, referral agencies and employers have also been consulted using similar methods. There was therefore a wide evidence base of information available from which to inform the CRWIA.

The information that has been gathered via these methods confirms that children and young people under the age of 18 feel that participating on our programme has had a positive impact in relation to the UNCRC articles outlined in the previous section and the 6 outcomes required by our funder, below:

- Improved confidence and resilience
- Improved personal and physical skills
- Improved health and wellbeing
- Improved learning, employability and employment options
- Positive contribution to their communities
- Diversion from criminal behaviour or involvement with the criminal justice system

We will continue to monitor the impact of Moving Forward+ with CashBack for Communities on children and young people's rights and wellbeing via ongoing surveys of those children and young people, as well as other stakeholders.

Additionally, our next external evaluation, which is already underway, will utilise 1-1 interviews and focus groups with programme participants and other stakeholders and is due to be published in June 2022.

Involving Young People in the Design & Development of our Programme

Prior to our first application to CashBack for Communities, in 2016, autistic young people were consulted via two focus groups and an online survey. The feedback received from these young people shaped the delivery model we employed during CashBack for Communities Phase 4, 2017-2020.

External evaluations conducted during Phase 4, highlighted the number of young people who, having benefitted from the programme, wished they had been able to access it sooner. Sadly, many had found school to be a traumatic experience and a time when a Moving Forward+ type intervention would have been welcome. In response to this feedback, we lowered the age range of the programme for Phase 5, and now assist autistic children who feel unable to attend school.

Review, Training & Promotion of CRWIA

This CRWIA will be reviewed annually and referenced in our annual report to CashBack for Communities. We will ensure that all current and future Moving Forward+ with CashBack for Communities team members undertake CRWIA training and that the UNCRC and this CRWIA is highlighted on our webpage.

Stage 3: Declaration

Adopted: February 2022, to be reviewed: February 2023

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