

Garnetbank Primary School
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11 February 2015

Dear pupils

Thank you very much for the wonderful letters that you sent to me as part of your celebration of the 25th anniversary of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (the Convention) and for the many colourful pictures that you also attached with these. They were a joy to read.

Over 1,500 children, from schools across the whole of Scotland, wrote to me as part of UNICEF's Outright initiative. You told me about your views on the Convention, your favourite rights and why children's rights are important to you. Amongst the rights that many of you mentioned as being especially important were the right to education, to play, to have privacy, to speak your own language and to have nutritious food, clean water and access to appropriate health services.

Many of you mentioned the needs of children in other parts of the world who are not yet having their rights met. Some of you were also worried about children and their families here in Scotland who are experiencing poverty. In the Scottish Government we, along with people in your local authorities and others, are working hard to help families in Scotland facing these difficulties.

Some of you asked me about my favourite right under the Convention; this is Article 12, the right for children to be heard. I think it is very important for children to be able to speak out about the issues that affect them and for their views to be listened to and respected.

It is also important for everyone to know about children's rights and how these should be part of our everyday lives. I was so glad to hear that you have been learning all about the Convention. Many of you have developed classroom and playground charters and have talked about the rights of the child in special school assemblies.

To celebrate UNICEF's Day for Change on Friday 6 February, we have created a specific space within Glow, which will allow you to share information about what you are doing to become a Rights Respecting School and how you have celebrated the Day for Change. The Glow wiki can be accessed at: <https://rrs.wikis.glowscotland.org.uk/home>. (You will have to first log into Glow before accessing this website.) I have also recorded a special message for all of you which your teacher can let you see.



Thank you again for all of your wonderful letters. I have loved reading them and looking at your pictures. I hope that you will keep talking about children's rights and how to make sure that every single child and young person has the best possible start in life.

Fiona McLeod

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