

All about panel members



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Who is a panel member?



children's
hearings
scotland

Who is a panel member?

Panel members are people who live in your local area. They may already have a job, but in their spare time they volunteer for the Children's Panel. They don't get paid for what they do at Children's Panels. They do it because they want to help children and young people sort out the problems they have in their lives.

Before panel members sit on a hearing they receive lots of training to make sure that they know how to help children and young people. This training is based on the National Standards for the Children's Panel. These standards explain what you can expect from panel members at children's hearings. You can find the National Standards on our website.

There are three panel members at every hearing and one of them will lead the hearing – they are known as the chair or chairing member.



What do

panel members do?

Before the hearing

Before the hearing takes place, the panel members will read all the papers about you and your hearing. These are the same papers as you and your parents or carers may receive. This is their preparation for the hearing.

During the hearing

One of the panel members will introduce everyone there. If this is the first hearing you have been to, a panel member will read out the legal reasons for the hearing (Statement of Grounds). You and your parents or carers will be asked by a panel member if you accept that these reasons are correct.

If you and your parents or carers accept these reasons, the panel members will have a discussion about your situation with everyone present but most importantly you. Everyone gets the chance to speak during the discussion. The panel members will be really interested in what you want to say – you are the most important person at the hearing!



What do

panel members do?

Panel members are there to listen to you and will do their best to make sure that you feel comfortable during your hearing. Panel members can ask people to leave if this makes you feel more comfortable. However, they do have to tell your parents or carers what has been talked about when they are not there. If you find it easier you can tell the panel members what you think using the 'All About Me' form. This should be sent to you before your hearing.

The panel members will look at all the information before making a decision about what is best to help you or to keep you safe. This might mean changes for you at home or at school. The panel members must give reasons for their decision. They will tell you what is going to happen and why.

After the hearing

You will be sent a written copy of the decision that the panel members have made. This document will also contain the reasons why the panel members have made that decision.



Who

is responsible

for panel members?

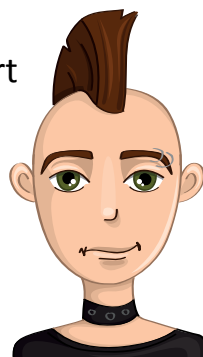
Children's Hearings Scotland (CHS) is the public body set up by the Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011. This Act aims to improve things for children and young people who go to children's hearings.

CHS provides support to panel members serving on children's hearings. All panel members belong to the national Children's Panel and there are about 2,700 panel members across Scotland.

The person in charge of CHS is called the National Convener. It is the National Convener's job to:

- make sure that there are enough panel members to attend children's hearings across Scotland
- make sure that anyone who is interested in being a panel member goes through a process to check that they are the right kind of person
- make sure that panel members get all the information and training they need to carry out their role
- make sure that panel members get all the support they need

CHS helps the National Convener with all this work.



Where

to get

more information

Children's Hearings Scotland

Our website contains sections with lots of information for children and young people.

 www.chscotland.gov.uk

Scottish Children's Reporter Administration

The Children's Reporter receives referrals for children and young people who are believed to be at risk and decides if the child or young person should be referred to a children's hearing

 www.scra.gov.uk

You can also contact the Children's Reporter using the contact details on the letter that was sent to you.

Scottish Child Law Centre

The Scottish Child Law Centre provides free legal advice to children and young people.

 **0800 328 8970 (freephone)**

 enquiries@sccl.org.uk

 www.sclc.org.uk

