# Topic Exploration Pack

# Young people’s rights and the ‘age laws’

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## Instructions for teachers

These instructions cover the student activity section which can be found on [page 17](#_Student_Activity). This Topic Exploration Pack supports OCR GCSE (9‒1) Citizenship Studies.

**When distributing the activity section to the students either as a printed copy or as a Word file you will need to remove the teacher instructions section.**

### Learning outcome

This synoptic topic can be used at the start of the course, as an introduction to different sections of the specification, or, towards the end of the course, to help learners review and synthesise their knowledge and understanding from across the specification.

By studying this topic, learners will develop their knowledge and understanding of:

* Rights and responsibilities, especially as they apply to young people.
* The role of the United Nations (UN) in developing international law.
* Law making in the United Kingdom (UK).

Learners can apply their knowledge and understanding from different parts of the specification to the following citizenship questions and issues:

* How does The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) safeguard young people’s rights?
* How well does the UK Government implement the UNCRC?
* Is the age of criminal responsibility set at the right level in England and Wales?
* Are UK ‘benchmark ages’ fair?
* Should people have the right to vote at sixteen?

Learners have the opportunity to develop the following skills linked to the specification’s assessment objectives:

* Applying knowledge and understanding to different contexts (AO2).
* Analysing information to help develop an understanding of citizenship issues and debates (AO3).
* Advocating a viewpoint using evidence (AO3).
* Evaluating a viewpoint to reach a reasoned conclusion (AO3).

### Introduction

**Young people’s rights and benchmark ages (the ‘Age Laws’)**

Citizens across the world have rights and freedoms. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights sets out the basic rights and freedoms that all people should have wherever they live. This famous human rights declaration was signed by all countries of the United Nations (UN) in 1948.

Since 1948, most governments have passed their own national laws to safeguard the rights and freedoms of citizens in line with the UN declaration. One of the key principles of Universal Declaration of Human Rights is that the rights should apply to everyone whatever their nationality, place of residence, sex, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, language, or any other status. However, in 1948, the UN was much less clear about age, preferring to leave national governments to decide the benchmark ages at which citizens they could enjoy rights such as being able to marry or vote, and duties such as having personal responsibility for wearing a car seatbelt or buying a pet.

|  |
| --- |
| Most rights in the Universal Declaration apply to all people of any age. For example, Article 3 states that “Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person”. Other articles are much less clear about the age at which a person has right to do things. So, for example, Article 16 states that “Men and women of full age … have the right to marry and to found a family.” The meaning of ‘full age’ was left for each country to decide so, even today, there are international differences in the age at which people can marry. In Switzerland people cannot marry until they are at least eighteen-years- old while, in England, a person can marry at age sixteen as long as they have parental permission, and in Columbia a fourteen-year-old can marry as long as their parents agree. Age of marriage tends to be lower in Islamic countries. For example, girls in Iran can marry as young as thirteen provided they have the permission of their father. A girl under the age of thirteen can still marry, but needs the permission of a judge. Boys in Iran can marry after the age of fifteen. *Source:* [*http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/*](http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/) |

In 1989, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) defined a child as everyone under 18 unless a nation’s own laws specify an earlier age at which a child gains adult rights and responsibilities. While the Convention specifies some benchmark ages that must apply in every country, (such as banning life imprisonment or death sentences for people under eighteen), ages for other rights and responsibilities can be set by national governments as long as they apply to every young resident in the country.

In recent years, benchmark ages have tended to increase in the UK. In 1997 the minimum age for buying fireworks increased from sixteen to eighteen with a similar increase in 2007 for buying cigarettes. The legal age at which a person can buy a pet went up from twelve to sixteen in 2006. The voting age has moved in the opposite direction. Eighteen year olds in the UK were given the right to vote in 1969 (down from twenty-one) and a further reduction to sixteen has now been made in Scotland but not in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. In making these decisions, elected representatives take into account age-related levels of responsibility and the amounts of protection young people may need.

There is continuing discussion about the benchmark ages at which UK citizens should be able to enjoy certain rights and freedoms. Most of these decisions, such as the right to vote, are made by the United Kingdom Parliament in London. However, the Scottish Parliament and Northern Ireland Assembly have powers to decide their own age of criminal responsibility and the minimum age for criminal prosecution. This is because England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland are separate legal jurisdictions. In 2009 the Scottish Parliament decided to increase the minimum age for criminal prosecution from eight to twelve-years-of age. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, ten year olds can be prosecuted if they break the law.

### Section 1: How does The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) safeguard young people’s rights?

### Teacher introduction

In 1989, world leaders decided that people under eighteen often need special care and protection that adults do not. This protection is given through The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). All 194 countries agreeing to the UNCRC are required to implement it by international law. Each country’s progress is checked by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. The Committee also encourages all countries to set eighteen as the benchmark age for adult rights and responsibilities. The UN believes that all young people up to the age of eighteen should have special rights to safeguard their interests.

The UNCRC has helped to change the way children are viewed and treated – as human beings entitled to a distinct set of rights instead of passive recipients of care and charity.

### Activities

Introduce learners to the ‘child friendly’ summary of UNCRC’s main 42 articles at: <http://unicef.org.uk/Documents/Publications/Child_friendly_CRC_summary_final.pdf>

Some learners may prefer to use the more detailed standard version of the UNCRC at: <http://www.unicef.org.uk/Documents/Publication-pdfs/UNCRC_summary.pdf>

(Both these documents can be printed one side of A4 paper if necessary)

Note that there are three optional UNCRC protocols not mentioned on the child friendly version. These are the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict and the Optional Protocol on a complaints mechanism for children (called Communications Procedure). The UK had not fully adopted the second and third of these protocols in 2016. (More able learners may like to investigate this issue.)

1. Explain to learners that the UNCRC is underpinned by four ‘guiding principles’. These are articles necessary for all the other articles to operate. Ask learners to use the first column of UNCRC summary to choose four articles that might be the ‘guiding principles’. Discuss their ideas so that they understand the importance of these four articles (2, 3, 6 and 12). The ‘guiding principles’ can be recorded on [**Resource 1** (page 16)](#_Resource_1:_Describing).
2. Ask learners to sort the remaining articles into three types:
3. Survival and development rights (Rights to the resources, skills and contributions needed for survival and full development.)
4. Protection rights (These rights include protection from all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation and cruelty.)
5. Participation rights (Rights to have a say in any matters that affect survival, development and protection.)

Learners can use [**Resource 1** (page 16)](#_Resource_1:_Describing) to organise their lists.

1. Ask learners to:
* Highlight three articles that they believe might present the greatest challenges to governments.
* Discuss and explain their choices with other learners.
* Present an agreed list to the rest of the class.

### Section 2: How well is the UK Government implementing the UNCRC?

### Teacher introduction

This is a potentially challenging activity which uses the context of the UNCRC to help learners to understand the importance of the separation of power between government, parliament and independent regulators such as OFSTED. It also shows that the UK Government still has progress to make in implementing the UNCRC and raises the question of UK parliamentary sovereignty. Success with this activity will depend on careful teacher preparation including the differentiation of activities and resources to match learners’ needs.

All UK government policies and practices must comply with the UNCRC. The UK Government reports to the UN every five years on the progress being made implementing the UNCRC. The UK Government last reported in May 2014. **The Government report** can be found at: <http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRC%2fC%2fGBR%2f5&Lang=en> (Learners should be directed to particular pages of this detailed report – see activities below.)

The Government’s report includes a section from The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child; How children say the UK is doing - a survey by Roger Morgan, Children’s Rights Director for England. The survey was published in March 2014 by OFSTED, the independent regulator for standards in education. **The independent regulator’s report** includes the views of 2660 young people and can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-united-nations-convention-on-the-rights-of-the-child-how-children-say-the-uk-is-doing> (This report is particularly accessible to young people.)

In 2015, Parliament’s Joint Select Committee on Human Rights published its own independent report on how well the Government had implemented the UNCRC.

One of Parliament’s roles is to scrutinise the Government’s work. Select Committees use evidence and information from expert witnesses to help them hold the Government to account. **The Parliamentary report** can be accessed via <http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/joint-select/human-rights-committee/news/childrens-rights-report/>

(Learners should be directed to particular pages of this detailed report and supported in their analysis of its recommendations – see activities below.)

### Activities

1. Introduce learners to the reports above. Discuss and explain why the Government, the independent regulator and a parliamentary select committee have all had a part to play in evaluating the implementation of the UNCRC in the UK.

Ask learners to study the extracts below. (Each extract has been taken from one of the reports described above.) Learners will need to refer to the UNCRC summary from Activity 1.

| **Information** | **Extract** |
| --- | --- |
| **A** | 93.5% of UK children agreed that – *Every child has the right to have the education they need (at school, or college or from a tutor).* |
| **B** | We remain very concerned about the use of force on children in custody and believe that the recent provisions with regard to secure colleges in the Criminal Justice and Courts Act cannot be considered compatible with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. |
| **C** | The Government’s Drug Strategy confirms our commitment to provide accurate information to young people, and their parents/carers, about drugs and alcohol through education and the FRANK service.  |
| **D** | All the evidence we have received suggests that the treatment of child migrants is an area where, despite some improvements, if anything the situation has grown worse overall during this Parliament. The Home Office seems still to prioritise the need to control immigration over the best interests of the child. This is unsatisfactory. |
| **E** | The evidence is clear that work remains the best route out of poverty – children are around three times as likely to be in poverty if they live in a workless family. The Strategy outlines action to raise the incomes of poor children’s families by helping them get into work and by making work pay.  |
| **F** | 70.6% of UK children agreed that – *If you are old enough to understand, you have the right to have your views taken into account by people making decisions about you.* |
| **G** | The most frequent reasons given by 1,396 of the children who said they were usually or always receiving this right were: * being asked for your opinion and listened to
* having choices in education
* having choices of activities and social life.

The most frequent reasons given by 79 of the children who said they were rarely or never receiving this right were: * not being listened to
* not having a say in placement decisions in state care
* not having choices about daily activities
* not being happy with the decisions that have been made.

One discussion group questioned how well children’s interests and staff interests were balanced when decisions were made that affected both. Overall the group thought that decisions are more often made in staff rather than children’s interest. |
| **h** | In *England*, all schools must by law have a behaviour policy with measures to prevent all forms of bullying among pupils including cyber bullying. In addition we have strengthened teachers’ powers to tackle disruptive behaviour and allow them to search pupils for banned items, delete inappropriate images or files on electronic devices and issue same-day detentions. The Government has produced advice for schools on preventing and tackling bullying which sets out schools’ legal obligations and signposts to expert organisations that can provide specific advice on a range of issues including cyberbullying.  |
| **i** | In *England*, over 99 per cent of schools have measures in place that enable pupils to have a say in the running of the school; and 95 per cent have a school council. Ofsted seeks the views of pupils as part of school inspection. |
| **j** | A recent report published by Save the Children finds that the number of children living in relative poverty in the UK may increase to five million by 2020 despite the cross-party commitment to eradicate child poverty by that year. Together, the Scottish Alliance for Children’s Rights, noted in its submission to us that forecast trends for Scotland suggest “around 65,000 more children will be pushed into poverty by 2020”, as a direct result of the current UK Government’s tax and benefit policies. |
| **k** | Overall, disabled children were less likely than children generally to report freedom to hold their own opinions and religion, being free to say what they really think or to express their views on things that affect them. |

Learners can use [**Resource 2** (page 18)](#_Resource_2:_Analysing) to:

* Link each extract with its likely source: the Government report, the independent regulator’s report or the Parliamentary report.
* Link each extract with the appropriate articles from the UNCRC.
* Analyse each extract for indications about how well the UK Government is implementing the UNCRC using the code on [**Resource 2** (page 18)](#_Resource_2:_Analysing) to record their findings.

Working individually or in groups of three, learners can use their completed copy of [**Resource 2** (page 18)](#_Resource_2:_Analysing)and

* the independent regulator’s report (pages 4 to 6 and 29 to 33)
* the Government report (pages 3 to 4, 13 to 15 and 52 to 53)
* the Parliamentary report (pages 51 to 57)

to:

1. Evaluate\* how well the Government is implementing the UNCRC.
2. Describe how the UK Government could improve its implementation of UNCRC.

\*There is an opportunity here to teach learners how to write an effective evaluation with a reasoned conclusion. Use the appropriate marking guidance from the evaluation question on the Sample Question Papers (J270/02 or J270/03) to support your teaching.

### Section 3: Is the age of criminal responsibility set at the right level in England and Wales?

### Teacher introduction

Under the UNCRC, national governments can decide the benchmark ages when young people qualify for particular rights and duties. While the UN would prefer children to be protected from adult responsibilities up to the age of eighteen, national governments have different policies about benchmark ages. For example, governments responsible for the law in England, Wales and Northern Ireland have decided that young people are likely to know the difference between right and wrong by the time they are ten. So, ten year olds can are thought to be capable of knowingly committing a crime, and are considered old enough to stand trial and be convicted. However, the Scottish Government has decided that children should be 12 years old before they can be prosecuted for any crimes they commit.

Pressure groups such as the Howard League for Penal Reform and the Children’s Society are campaigning for the age of criminal responsibility to be increased. The UN supports a higher age but the UK Government has no plans for change in England or Wales.

|  |
| --- |
| *‘The UK Government believes that children aged 10 are able to differentiate between bad behaviour and serious wrongdoing and it is right that they should be held to account for their actions. However, the UK Government also believes that custody for under-18s should be an option of last resort.’* UK Government report to the United Nations (May 2014) |

### Activities

Learners could:

1. Complete an internet search to record the ages of criminal responsibility in the countries listed on [**Resource 3** (page 19)](#_Resource_3:_The).
2. List the possible reasons for these differences and discuss these in a small group to decide the ‘best three reasons’. Share their group’s reasons with the rest of the class and engage in a teacher-moderated discussion.
3. Research the case for an increase of the age of criminal responsibility to 12 or 14. Use [**Resource 3** (page 19)](#_Resource_3:_The) to record at least three arguments for doing so. (Three arguments for leaving the age of criminal responsibility at ten-years-old have already been included on [**Resource 3** (page 19)](#_Resource_3:_The).)
4. Advocate\* their own view on the ‘correct’ age for criminal responsibility and choose one key point to support that view.

(Appropriate websites to support these activities are suggested on [**Resource 3** (page 19)](#_Resource_3:_The).)

\*There is an opportunity here to teach learners how to advocate a viewpoint. Use the appropriate marking guidance from the advocacy questions on the Sample Question Papers (J270/02 or J270/03) to support your teaching.

### Section 4: Are UK ‘benchmark ages’ fair?

### Teacher introduction

The UK Parliament sets benchmark ages for a wide range of activities from getting a tattoo to the right for adult support for young people in trouble with the police.

In deciding benchmark ages, politicians take the following into account:

* their duty to protect young people from harm
* young people’s age-related levels of responsibility
* international law, particularly the UNCRC and the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)
* representations from pressure groups
* public opinion.

Benchmark ages are subject to considerable debate inside and outside parliament with pressure groups often heavily involved. For example, the benchmark age for buying a pet was increased in 2006 after pressure on the Government from the *Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA)*.

### Activities

Learners could:

1. Complete the **‘When should you?’** column on [**Resource 4** (page 21)](#_Resource_4:_Benchmark) by deciding the benchmark age at which they think people should be able to do the listed activities. (They may find it more interesting to work with other learners to share opinions.)
2. Conduct their own research to find out the current benchmark ages for each activity. Add these to the **‘When can you?’** column on [**Resource 4** (page 21)](#_Resource_4:_Benchmark). (Learners may find the *Children’s Legal Centre’s* website is a useful starting point for their research <http://www.lawstuff.org.uk/>.)
3. Extend their research to find further benchmark ages. Record those that are surprising or disturbing.
4. State and explain which four age laws they would change. Compare their views with other learners in their group or class. Produce an oral or written report on the agreements and disagreements from the discussion.

### Section 5: Should people have the right to vote at sixteen?

### Teacher introduction

Over the last twenty years there have been calls for a reduction in the voting age to sixteen. The campaign has become much stronger recently. Sixteen year olds have already been able to vote in the 2014 referendum on Scottish independence. This right has been extended for elections to the Scottish Parliament and local government elections in Scotland. In all other UK elections, the voting age remains at eighteen.

At Report Stage of the *European Union Referendum Bill 2015–16* in the House of Lords on 18 November 2015, an amendment to extend the franchise for the European Union referendum to people aged sixteen and seventeen across the whole of the UK was agreed with 293 votes in favour and 211 votes against. The Conservative Party is not in favour and so the Government used its majority in the House of Commons to reject the Lords’ proposal. (The Labour Party, the Scottish National Party, the Liberal Democrats, Plaid Cymru and the Green Party all support voting at sixteen.)

Nevertheless, in autumn 2015, the UK Government had granted the National Assembly for Wales powers to lower the voting age to sixteen for Welsh Assembly elections. So in 2016, whether you can vote at sixteen depends where you live and the type of election taking place. (For more information on the voting age debate, refer to Parliamentary Briefing Paper number 1747 on Voting Age by Isobel White: <http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN01747/SN01747.pdf>)

It may be useful to study the arguments used in the Lords’ 3rd amendment to the European Union Referendum Bill on 18th November 2015 from the Lords’ Hansard web pages: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201516/ldhansrd/text/151118-0001.htm#15111848000479> and the reasons given by the Government for using its majority in the Commons to reject the Lords’ proposal <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/house-of-commons-votes-against-lowering-voting-age-for-eu-referendum-a6764966.html>. (This is a good example of the different roles and powers of the House of Commons and House of Lords.)

### Activities

Learners could:

1. Study [**Resource 5** (page 22)](#_Resource_5:_Should). (Three arguments against reducing the voting age to 16 have been included on the sheet.) Conduct research to find three of the strongest arguments for votes at 16 in all UK elections. Summarise the three arguments by placing them in the appropriate speech bubbles on [**Resource 5** (page 22)](#_Resource_5:_Should).

Learners might find the following websites helpful:

* Pressure group, Votes at 16 <http://www.votesat16.org/>
* Political party, Liberal Democrats <http://change.libdems.org.uk/votes-for-16-year-olds>
* Polling organisation, YouGov <https://yougov.co.uk/news/2012/02/15/and-against-lowering-voting-age/>
1. Decide their own position on this issue and find other learners who share it. Design a slide, web page or blog post to advocate their view.

### Suggested answers to worksheet questions

### Resource 1: How does The UNCRC safeguard young people’s rights?

1. The UNCRC’s ‘guiding principles’ are contained in articles 2, 3, 6 and 12.
2. Articles connected with children’s survival and development are: 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 14, 18, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31 and 42.

Articles connected with children’s protection are: 4, 11, 19, 20, 21, 22, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40 and 41.

Articles connected with children’s participation are: 4, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17.

1. The articles that have presented some of the greatest challenges for governments include: 12, 17, 19, 25, 27, 28, 29, 34 and 38

### Resource 2: The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child – how is the UK doing?

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Extract** | **Source** | **UNCRC article** | **UK Government’s performance** |
| **A** | Independent regulator’s report | 28 | ✓ |
| **B** | Parliamentary report | 37 | 🗶 |
| **C** | Government report | 33 | ✓ |
| **D** | Parliamentary report | 22 | 🗶 |
| **E** | Government report | 27 | ? |
| **F** | Independent regulator’s report | 12 | 🗶 |
| **G** | Independent regulator’s report | 3 | ? |
| **H** | Government report | 28 / 29 | ✓ |
| **I** | Government report | 12 | ✓ |
| **J** | Parliamentary report | 27 | 🗶 |
| **k** | Independent regulator’s report | 2 | 🗶 |

1. The UK Government’s performance is mixed.

Areas of strength include life expectancy, security, education and tolerance.

Areas of weakness include participation and engagement, well-being and legal rights. The parliamentary select committee was concerned about the effect of benefit cuts on young people in the least wealthy families. The UN is concerned about armed forces personnel under eighteen, the low age for criminal responsibility in England and Wales and the welfare of young people in custody. UK teenagers in families, in boarding education and in foster care tend to be happier than those in institutional care.

1. Suggestions for improvement should link to the areas of relative weakness above. Learners should also refer to the recommendations made in parliamentary select committee report, pages 51 to 57.

### Resource 3: The age of criminal responsibility – should it be increased?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Age** | **Country** |
| **7** | India |
| **7** | Nigeria |
| **8** | Indonesia |
| **8** | Kenya |
| **9** | Philippines |
| **10** | England, Wales and Northern Ireland |
| **10** | Ukraine |
| **11** | Turkey  |
| **12** | Morocco |
| **12** | Scotland |
| **13** | France |
| **13** | Poland |
| **14** | China |
| **14** | Germany |
| **15** | Egypt |
| **16** | Argentina |
| **18** | Brazil |
| **18** | Peru |

1. Reasons for differences in the benchmark age for criminal responsibility include:
* different views about the age at which children know right from wrong
* cultural and religious factors
* levels of youth crime in a country
* justice systems giving different priorities to a victim’s rights compared to the offending child's best interests.
1. Reasons for increasing the benchmark age for criminal responsibility in England and Wales include:
* Ten year olds are often unclear about the difference between right and wrong, and have little knowledge about what is legal or illegal. In other areas of English law, children are not thought able to make sensible decisions until much later in life – whether it involves buying a pet, smoking, drinking, getting a job or marrying.
* In May 2013, the UN has recommended that the UK should raise its minimum age of criminal responsibility.
* The age of criminal responsibility in England, Wales and Northern Ireland is the lowest in Europe.

### Resource 4: Benchmark ages – are they fair?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Right or responsibility** | **When can you?** |
| Work up to five hours on a Saturday between 7.00am and 7.00pm | 14 |
| Buy a pet | 16 |
| Join a social media site | 13 |
| Buy standard liquor chocolates | 16 |
| Get a body piercing  | Any age |
| Leave education and training | 18 |
| Give consent to medical, dental and surgical treatment | 16 |
| Fly commercial transport aeroplanes, helicopters, gyroplanes and airships | 21 |
| Have a tattoo | 18 |
| Get married without parental permission | 18 |
| If you were [adopted](http://www.adoptionuk.org/information/217131/wanting_to_know_more/), you can see your original birth certificate (and have your name added to the Adoption Contact Register) | 18 |
| Get advice on sexual health from a doctor of your own choice | 16 |
| If convicted of a [serious criminal offence](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/YoungPeople/CrimeAndJustice/CrimeAndTheLaw/DG_10027708)(in a Youth Court), you can be held in secure accommodation for no more than 24 months. You could also get a fine for a maximum of £1,000.  | 14 |

### Resource 5: Should people be able to vote at sixteen?

1. Three arguments for reducing the voting age to 16 for all UK elections include:
* Sixteen year olds conducted themselves very well in the Scottish referendum.
* Young people know more about politics as a consequence of studying citizenship.
* If people are sufficiently responsible to be able to pay taxes, marry and join the army at sixteen, they should be able to vote.

# Topic Exploration Pack

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# Young people’s rights and the ‘age laws’

## Student activity section

### Resource 1: The UNCRC – what rights are protected?

Complete the chart below using the summary of UNCRC’s main 42 articles to help you and guidance from your teacher.

Simple summary <http://unicef.org.uk/Documents/Publications/Child_friendly_CRC_summary_final.pdf>

Detailed summary <http://www.unicef.org.uk/Documents/Publication-pdfs/UNCRC_summary.pdf>

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| --- |
| **UNCRC’s four ‘guiding principles’** |
| **Article number** | **Article number** | **Article number** | **Article number** |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Description** | **Description** | **Description** | **Description** |
|  |  |  |  |

### Resource 1 continued

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| **UNCRC – children’s rights protected by international law** |
| **Survival and development\*** | **Protection\*** | **Participation** |
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\* Note that one of the UNCRC’s 42 articles should be included in all three columns. Three articles should be included in both the ‘survival and development’ and ‘protection’ columns.

### Resource 2: The UNCRC – how is the UK doing?

Complete the chart below, using the guidance below.

* Study extracts a–k from a document your teacher will give you.
* Link each extract with its likely source: the Government report, the independent regulator’s report or the Parliamentary report. (Your teacher will discuss these sources with you.)
* Link each extract with one of the 42 articles from the UNCRC. (Refer to the copy of the Convention you used to help you with **Resource 1**.)
* Use the code below to evaluate the UK Government’s performance is implementing the UNCRC. *The first row has been completed for you.*
	+ This extract shows that the UK Government is implementing the UNCRC effectively.

? This extract is unclear about how well the UK Government is implementing the UNCRC.

X This extract shows that the UK Government should improve its implementation of the UNCRC.

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| **Extract** | **Source** | **UNCRC article** | **UK Government’s performance** |
| **a** | Independent regulator’s report | 28 | ✓ |
| **b** |  |  |  |
| **c** |  |  |  |
| **d** |  |  |  |
| **e** |  |  |  |
| **f** |  |  |  |
| **g** |  |  |  |
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| **j** |  |  |  |
| **k** |  |  |  |

### Resource 3: The age of criminal responsibility – should it be increased?

Complete the chart below, using guidance from your teacher.

**Try the following websites to support your research**

For ages of criminal responsibility in different countries:

* Child Rights International Network has details of the age of criminal responsibility across each part of the world. <https://www.crin.org/en/home/ages>

For reasons to increase the age of criminal responsibility in England and Wales:

* Include Youth’s booklet Raise the Age. Find this through their website <http://www.includeyouth.org/>
* Age of Criminal Responsibility Bill – 2nd reading, House of Lords, 8th November, 2013. Find this through the Parliament UK website <http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2013-14/ageofcriminalresponsibility.html>

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| **Age** | **Country** |
| **7** | India |
| **7** | Nigeria |
| **8** | Indonesia |
| **8** | Kenya |
| **9** | Philippines |
| **10** | England, Wales and Northern Ireland |
| **10** | Ukraine |
| **11** | Turkey  |
| **12** | Morocco |
| **12** | Scotland |
| **13** | France |
| **13** | Poland |
| **14** | China |
| **14** | Germany |
| **15** | Egypt |
| **16** | Argentina |
| **18** | Brazil |
| **18** | Peru |

### Resource 3 continued

**Arguments against increasing the age of criminal responsibility in England and Wales**

1. Children aged ten know the difference between right and wrong. They realise when they have done something seriously wrong and so should be held responsible.
2. Young people would be more likely to break the law if they thought nothing would happen to them. Raising the age of criminal responsibility would lead to more law-breaking by young people.
3. UK law can already take into account a young person’s age and the seriousness of their crime. Children under eighteen are usually tried in special youth courts and they are not normally placed in adult prisons. Their long-term rights are safeguarded and, if necessary, they learn an important lesson that crime does not pay.

**Arguments for increasing the age of criminal responsibility in England and Wales**

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| **1.**  |
| **2.**  |
| **3.**  |

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| My view of the correct age for criminal responsibility in England and Wales … |

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| --- |
| The main piece of evidence to support my viewpoint … |

### Resource 4: Benchmark ages – are they fair?

Complete the chart below, using guidance from your teacher.

The *Children’s Legal Centre’s* website is a useful starting point for your research on benchmark ages <http://www.lawstuff.org.uk/>.)

**Benchmark ages – at what age ‘should you’ and ‘can you’?**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Right or responsibility** | **When should you?** | **When can you?** |
| Work up to five hours on a Saturday between 7.00am and 7.00pm |  |  |
| Buy a pet |  |  |
| Join a social media site |  |  |
| Buy standard liquor chocolates |  |  |
| Get a body piercing  |  |  |
| Leave education and training |  |  |
| Give consent to medical, dental and surgical treatment |  |  |
| Fly commercial transport aeroplanes, helicopters, gyroplanes and airships |  |  |
| Have a tattoo |  |  |
| Get married without parental permission |  |  |
| If you were [adopted](http://www.adoptionuk.org/information/217131/wanting_to_know_more/), you can see your original birth certificate (and have your name added to the Adoption Contact Register) |  |  |
| Get advice on sexual health from a doctor of your own choice |  |  |
| If convicted of a [serious criminal offence](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/YoungPeople/CrimeAndJustice/CrimeAndTheLaw/DG_10027708)(in a Youth Court), you can be held in secure accommodation for no more than 24 months. You could also get a fine for a maximum of £1,000.  |  |  |
| ***(Rows left blank for you to record the results of your own research. Find further benchmark ages. Record those that are surprising or disturbing.)*** |
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### Resource 5: Should people be able to vote at sixteen?

Fill in the empty speech bubbles below with the strongest arguments **for** reducing the voting age to sixteen. Use guidance from your teacher to help you.

**For reducing the voting age to 16 Against reducing the voting age to 16**

Eighteen year olds have much more complex adult rights and duties. Sixteen year olds do not. They need parental permission to do such things as to marry and join the army.

Most sixteen years olds live at home and attend school. They lack the life experience to make voting decisions and will be too easily influenced by parents and friends.

Many sixteen year olds lack the maturity to take citizenship seriously because real responsibility is still too far away for them.