

**The Power of Positive Relationships – inspiring children to achieve
their true potential
Tuesday 5th May, Central Glasgow**

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Bruce Adamson

The Children and Young People's
Commissioner



Bruce Adamson is a lawyer who has over 20 years of experience in children's rights.

A Member of the Children's Panel for 13 years, he worked directly with vulnerable children and their families, listening to their experiences and making decisions about their safety and wellbeing.

Mr Adamson has been on advisory boards for several public authorities and civil society organisations and is a former Chair of the Scottish Child Law Centre. While working for the Scottish Human Rights Commission, he was central to the development of law, policy and practice covering the broad spectrum of children's rights.

In 2013, he was the United Nations Representative for the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions, representing institutions from over 100 countries to improve human rights in Scotland and across the world.

Mr Adamson has acted as an international expert for the Council of Europe, the European Union and the OSCE.

The role of Commissioner

The Children and Young People's Commissioner has legal duties defined by the Commissioner for Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2003. In particular, he must:

- Promote awareness and understanding of the rights of children and young people
- Review law, policy and practice to examine their effectiveness in respecting the rights of children and young people
- Promote best practice by service providers
- Promote and commission research on matters relating to the rights of children and young people
- Encourage the involvement of children and young people in his work, and – in particular – consult with them on the work that he should be doing to improve the rights of children and young people.

Robin Macpherson FRSA

Assistant Rector, Dollar Academy

Robin Macpherson FRSA is an Assistant Rector at Dollar Academy in Scotland where he teaches History. From August 2020 he will be Head of College at Robert Gordon's College in Aberdeen. He has worked in Scotland, England and the UAE, spent 7 years as a Head of History and has been an examiner for the SQA, Edexcel and the IBO. He was content director of the Telegraph Festival of Education, and organizes both researchED Scotland and EduMod at the Fringe. He co-authored "What does this look like in the classroom? Bridging the gap between research and practice" with Carl Hendrick and has published history textbooks for Cambridge University Press. He is a board member of the educational charity Remembering Srebrenica Scotland and chairs the Education Committee. His Twitter handle is @robin_macp (where all views are his own).



Charlene Tait

Deputy Chief Executive, Scottish Autism

Charlene Tait is Deputy Chief Executive of Scottish Autism. She has worked with and on behalf of autistic people for thirty years. In that time, she has been engaged in direct practice, strategic development and academia.

Her main areas of interest are in family support and enabling quality lifestyles for autistic people, including access to education, employment and leading a happy, healthy, fulfilling life. She also champions the development of practice based research within Scottish Autism and beyond, the central aim of which is, to build an evidence base related to an individualised, personalised approach to practice.



Dr John McDermott

Counselling Psychologist with Studio III Clinical Services

John works with care providers in Ireland and the UK in the field of autism and intellectual disability. Much of his work involves guiding practitioners around practice or working with parents, while also offering therapy to individuals where appropriate. He provides training with emphasis on systemic



and relational dimensions to client wellbeing. John also works with children in care settings who may have experienced developmental trauma.

Eileen Prior FRSA

Executive Director, Connect, formerly SPTC

Eileen Prior FRSA is Executive Director of Connect, formerly SPTC, a long-standing charity which is focussed on strengthening parental engagement in education to improve outcomes for young people.

Eileen joined Connect in 2010 and has been responsible for strengthening the organisation's position as a key source of support, information and advice around family engagement: the charity provides a range of supports and training to parents, parent groups and educators, including professional learning programmes.



Having spent most of her career as a PR professional, both running her own business and as a director of the Scottish operation of Weber Shandwick, Eileen previously served on the GTCS and as a volunteer board member with a range of organisations which promote parental involvement in children's services. She currently serves as a member of SQA's Advisory Council.