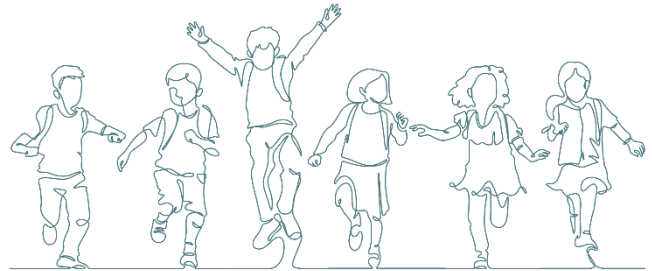

A Briefing for the Scrutiny Committee Stage of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill

5 February 2025



1 Overview

The Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill is a powerful opportunity for the Government to drive forward their ambition for the healthiest generation of children ever. However, whilst the Bill contains important provisions it is not a cohesive offering for improving the wellbeing of all children in this country, despite the inclusion of wellbeing in the Bill's title. The Bill will only improve the wellbeing of every child if their lives are considered holistically.

Supplementing the provisions in the Bill with a national programme of children and young people's wellbeing measurement would provide both strategic focus and a meaningful framework to understand and enhance the Bill's impact. **The TCPA therefore supports amendment NC42, which places a duty on the Secretary of State to introduce a national programme to regularly measure and report on the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people.**

For children and young people, who are rapidly developing physically, emotionally and socially, their environments can have profound impacts on their wellbeing and opportunities over their life-course. Children's wellbeing depends on a supportive built environment that includes safe and nurturing homes, active and inclusive schools, opportunities for healthy physical development free from pollutants, safe spaces to play and move without fear, and the ability to have a voice in shaping their communities.

Arguably nothing says more about the state of a nation than the wellbeing of its children.

The Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) works to challenge, inspire and support people to create healthy, sustainable and resilient places that are fair for everyone. The TCPA is a charity, working across the UK and beyond.

In December 2024, alongside Playing Out, Fields in Trust, childhood expert Tim Gill and architect Dinah Bornat, the TCPA published *Raising the healthiest generation in history: why it matters where children and young people live*¹. The report is based on all the written and oral evidence from the inquiry by the Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee into children, young people and the built environment which failed to report to government due to the 2024 general election. The findings of the report support and lend weight to the call for Bill amendment NC42, which places a duty on the Secretary of State to introduce a national programme to regularly measure and report on the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people.

2 Why amendment NC42 is needed

National wellbeing measurement programme

Giving evidence to the Committee on the 21 January, Mark Russell, Chief Executive of The Children's Society said *'The Government talk about wanting to be child-centred. A measurement of children's wellbeing would be real data on what real children think about their lives, and that would provide a huge amount of information for local authorities to ensure that local services meet the needs of young people.'* A national wellbeing measurement programme would provide all levels of government with data and insight into the needs and desires of children and young people to support their wellbeing, including in the places they live. This insight could shape services, policy and decision-making, placing children's voices at the heart of everything government does including decisions around the built environment.

Implementing a national programme of children and young people's wellbeing measurement would therefore greatly strengthen the measures in the Bill and its potential for supporting all young people to thrive.

3 More information

- Please see [here](#) for more information about the *Raising the healthiest generation in history* report.
- Please see [here](#) for more information on the TCPA's work on children and young people.

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¹ <https://www.tcpa.org.uk/resources/raising-the-healthiest-generation-in-history/>