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Child Protection

[New Bill to strengthen family law and regulate child contact centres](#)

A new Bill designed to strengthen the family law system and to ensure the best interests of children are at the centre of contact and residence cases has been introduced to the Scottish Parliament. The Scottish Government's Children (Scotland) Bill includes a range of measures, including the objective to regulate child contact centres and appoint a body to oversee standards. The Care Inspectorate is undertaking a feasibility study in relation to taking on this responsibility. Other measures in the proposed Bill include amending the Looked After Children (Scotland) Regulations 2009 to put a duty on local authorities to place siblings under 18 years of age together when they are looked after away from home.

[Family Justice Modernisation Strategy launched](#)

The Scottish Government has also published a Family Justice Modernisation Strategy, along with evidence on the effectiveness of integrated domestic abuse courts (IDACs). The Strategy sets out ongoing work done to improve the operation of family justice, work to be taken forward through the Children (Scotland) Bill and longer term ambitions.



[Inspection report on services for children in need of care and protection in Aberdeen](#)

The Care Inspectorate has published a report of a joint inspection of services for children and young people in need of care and protection in Aberdeen City. The report was prepared following a joint inspection carried out in partnership with Education Scotland, Healthcare Improvement Scotland and HMICS. Inspectors identified a number of key strengths, and areas which could improve, in the way children and young people in need of care and protection are supported and cared for in Aberdeen. Care Inspectorate Chief Executive Peter Macleod said: “Careful attention to the governance and oversight of child protection has paid dividends in supporting improvements. Partners now need to ensure they pay equal attention to governance arrangements for looked after children and young people and those who are care experienced in order to achieve similar results.”

[Major research on effectiveness of home CSOs in Scotland](#)

New research on home Compulsory Supervision Orders (CSOs) has been published by the Scottish Children’s Reporter Administration and Scottish Government. The report finds home CSOs are being used as a flexible legal measure to help keep children and young people safe and as part of a tiered approach to child protection, securing a child’s residence with one of their parents and controlling contact with those who are a risk to them. The study concluded that home CSOs work best as short to medium measures and must be tailored to address specific needs to be an effective intervention. Home CSOs were more effective when introduced at the right time and the report highlights the danger of making an intervention too late, particularly for young people not going to school or involved in offending.

- Seven reports in total have been published, including specific analysis on [wellbeing outcomes](#), [care planning and interventions](#) and [decision making in Children’s Hearings](#).

[Consultation opened on payment scheme for abuse survivors](#)

The Scottish Government is consulting on the design of the statutory financial redress scheme for survivors of historical child abuse in care. Their proposals suggest those responsible for the abuse of children in care should make financial contributions to the new redress scheme. The Government proposes a two-stage payment approach, comprising a flat rate payment, with the option of applying for an additional payment reflecting the nature and severity of abuse and the lifelong impact on survivors. The consultation also seeks views on creating a new public body to administer the scheme and an independent panel to decide on applications. Proposals are made in the document to define ‘historical abuse’ as abuse which took place prior to 1 December 2004. The consultation closes on 25 November.

[SPICe briefing on Disclosure \(Scotland\) Bill](#)

A briefing on proposed legislation to improve the disclosure regime in Scotland has been published by the Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe). The Disclosure (Scotland) Bill contains a range of measures, including reducing the four



main levels of disclosure to two; a mandatory PVG Scheme for people working with vulnerable groups; and replacing the concept of 'doing regulated work' with a list of core activities giving rise to 'regulated roles' that trigger mandatory PVG membership. The SPICe briefing sets out the context for the Bill and provides a detailed summary of its provisions.

[Barnardo's highlights multi-agency work to tackle child sexual exploitation](#)

An article on how Barnardo's Scotland works with Police Scotland to combat child sexual exploitation (CSE) has been published. The charity has stressed the importance of a multi-agency approach to tackling CSE and called for a focus on disruption and preventing exploitation and abuse from happening in the first place.

Early Learning and Childcare

[New toolkit for communities to tackle impact of child poverty](#)

A new toolkit to help communities work together to improve the early learning outcomes of children living in poverty has been launched by Save the Children. Nursery World reports that the Early Learning Communities Toolkit provides a step by step process to support partnerships in communities to develop and implement a local strategy, specific to the community's needs. The resources have been created by Save the Children under a Creative Commons licence to provide full access to more communities and children across the UK, so knowledge and ideas can be shared with others.

[Bertram continues to expand in Scotland](#)

Nursery World has reported on the continued expansion of Bertram Nursery Group. The Group has acquired Paint Pots Day Nursery, an 80-place setting in Perth, which follows the recent purchase of the Enchanted Forest nursery group earlier this year.

[Minutes from Early Learning and Childcare Strategic Forum meeting](#)

Minutes from a recent meeting of the Early Learning and Childcare Strategic Forum have been published by the Scottish Government. The June meeting included updates on the expansion programme and the Parental Engagement Strategy.

[Funding for new mother mental health support announced](#)

Plans to put £1 million into mental health support for new mothers have been announced by the Scottish Government, as part of wider plans to invest £50 million in perinatal mental health services. The initial investment will support the third sector to provide counselling, befriending and peer support for women and their families. The Government wants to ensure new and expectant mothers have more consistent access to psychological assessment and treatment. Money will also be used to increase staffing and training and Mother and Baby Units.



[Views sought on increasing Ofsted fees for early years providers \(England\)](#)

The Department for Education is seeking views on proposed changes to early years fees paid to Ofsted. The consultation proposes an increase to the application fee and annual fee paid to Ofsted by early years providers in England, to be introduced from April 2020. Views are also sought on the principles that should underpin a revised Early Years Register fee model from April 2021.

[Ofsted publishes new education inspection framework \(England\)](#)

Ofsted has confirmed its new education inspection framework, to be introduced in September. The new framework will be used for inspecting early years, schools, and further education providers, aiming to focus less on test data and more time looking at what is taught and how it is taught.

Health

[Long term treatment for peanut allergy found to be safe and effective](#)

A treatment to protect children from peanut allergy has been described as safe and effective over the long-term by researchers in a new study. Published in the Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology, the research tested sublingual immunotherapy (SLIT), which involves putting a miniscule amount of liquefied peanut protein under the tongue, and found that the treatment provided “clinically meaningful desensitization in the majority of children with peanut allergy that was balanced with ease of administration and a favorable safety profile”.

[Loss of outdoor play facilities has impact on child health, campaign warns](#)

The Association of Play Industries (API) has raised concerns about the impact of the loss of outdoor play facilities, Nursery World reports. The body commissioned Mumsnet to carry out research about outdoor play among parents of children aged between two and 12. The survey found parents believed the lack of outdoor play facilities had led to health problems among children, such as obesity. Other concerns were raised about the impact on mental health and sleeping. The API is calling for urgent investment in playgrounds “before they disappear for good”.

Learning Disability

[Latest stage of Mental Health Act review begins](#)

Stage 3 of the independent review of learning disability and autism in the Mental Health Act has begun, the ALLIANCE reports. The group is consulting on possible changes to the law, to ensure it protects people with a learning disability or autism and their human rights. The review seeks views on a range of ideas for future mental health law for autistic people and people with learning disability. They suggest a learning disability should no longer be seen as a mental disorder but as a disability. The consultation will explore how decisions can be made with respect for each



person's rights, will and preferences and look at potential reforms for offenders with autism or learning disabilities. Stage 3 of the consultation will run until 1 November.

[SCLD responds to UNCRC incorporation consultation](#)

The Scottish Commission for Learning Disability (SCLD) has set out its response to the Scottish Government's consultation on the incorporation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) into Scots law. In a blog post, Policy and Implementation Officer Oonagh Brown said SCLD supports "full and direct incorporation" of the UNCRC but expressed concerns about children and young people with learning disabilities being "left behind" or considered as "afterthought".

Looked After and Accommodated Children

[CELCIS paper on children without parental care and suitability of alternative care](#)

A paper setting out research on children without parental care and suitability of alternative care has been published by the Centre for excellence for Children's Care and Protection (CELCIS). The paper covers three models of alternative care: family-based care; small residential care settings; and large residential care facilities. Conclusions include the need for: more investment to prioritise prevention of family separation, providing a continuum of suitable care settings and rigorous standards and regulation to prevent maltreatment.

[Debate on settlement status of EU children in UK care](#)

A debate on the settlement status of EU children in, or with experience of, the UK care system took place in the House of Commons on 3 September. Leading the debate, Labour MP Steve McCabe stressed the need to place particular attention on protecting vulnerable children who are EU citizens as Britain prepares to leave the EU, noting difficulties in the registration system that could see some children wrongly denied settled status. Government Minister Seema Kennedy said measures were in place to ensure the children discussed secure permanent status, also noting that she would work with devolved administrations on this matter.

Mental Health

[Latest CAMHS waiting times figures published](#)

Waiting times for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) during the quarter ending 30 June have been published by ISD Scotland. The report found waiting times rose for CAMHS users in the last quarter and overall less people are using the service. 69.7% of children and young people were seen within 18 weeks, down from 73.6% for the previous quarter. There was a slight increase in patients not attending their first appointment. 8,384 children and young people were referred to CAMHS in Scotland which is a decrease from the previous quarter figure of 9,748.



Workforce

[BASW launches anti-poverty practice guide for social workers](#)

An anti-poverty practice guide has been launched by the British Association of Social Workers (BASW). The guide is designed to support the practice of social workers when working with people living in poverty, sharing knowledge acquired from researchers, professionals, and families and communities.

[Free representation for SSSC registered workers in Strathclyde](#)

The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) is working with the University of Strathclyde Law Clinic to help SSSC registered workers in Strathclyde access free representation when they are involved in fitness to practise investigations and hearings. SSSC also works with the Aberdeen Law Project and Fife Law Centre to make the fitness to practise process more accessible for workers in their local area.

[SSSC to host cyber resilience events](#)

The SSSC is running two events to share information about cyber risks and resilience in the health and social care environment. Supported by the Scottish Government, the events will take place in Edinburgh (16 September) and Perth (18 September), and are aimed at managers, supervisors and learning and development professionals.

[SSSC addresses confusion around modern apprentices and SSSC registration](#)

The SSSC has moved to address apparent confusion about whether apprentices need to register with them. If they work in a role that requires SSSC registration, apprentices must register for that role, which is a separate registration from the apprenticeship registration, also managed by the SSSC.

[Iriss workshop to 'get your message noticed'](#)

A Hands on Workshop (HOW) to help social service workers "get your message noticed" is to be hosted by Iriss. The workshop will cover subjects such as: how to communicate with impact and how to make sure messages are understood and acted on. The event will take place in Edinburgh on 25 September.

[Iriss 'evidence café' for social workers](#)

Iriss is to host an 'evidence café' for social workers in Glasgow on 3 October. The theme of the event will be the Evidence Search and Summary Service Outline 'Newly qualified social workers, supervision and child protection'.

[Cross party group publishes report on social care workers \(England\)](#)

A report on the professionalisation of social care workers in the UK has been published by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Social Care at Westminster.



Among the recommendations is a call for the formation of a governing national care body, comprised of service providers, commissioners, trade unions and service user and carer groups. Within this recommendation is the suggestion that it should work in collaboration the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to define a “fully agreed matrix of recognised compatibility standards between England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland”.

Other

[New Scottish Child Payment to launch ahead of schedule](#)

A new Scottish Child Payment benefit is to be launched ahead of schedule, the Scottish Government has announced. From Autumn 2020, low income families will be able to apply for a new £10 a week payment for every child aged 0-6, with the first payments reaching families by Christmas. The scheme was initially due to launch in 2021.

[Scottish Government sets out Programme for Government 2019-20](#)

The Scottish Government has published its policy and legislative programme for the next year. Legislation to be introduced includes a Bill to establish a financial redress scheme for survivors of historical child abuse whilst in care, and legislation to maintain alignment with EU law in devolved areas after Brexit. Also included in the Programme is a taking forward the recommendations of the Children and Young People’s Mental Health Taskforce; steps to increase the pace of health and social care integration (including improved strategic inspection); updated GIRFEC policy and guidance documents; investment in the Access to Childcare Fund; and a range of actions in advance of the outcome of the Independent Care Review.

[Children in Scotland backs call for EU Commissioner for Children](#)

Children in Scotland has given its support to an international petition calling for the appointment of an EU Commissioner for Children. The Eurochild petition calls for the appointment of a Commissioner to “child-proof” EU policies and ensure the European Commission delivers on children’s rights for the 100 million children living in the EU. The petition closes today, 6 September.



Disclaimer

This weekly bulletin is produced as an update on the key issues concerning children and young people.

Each item in the bulletin has a hyperlinked headline that will take the reader to the original source.

We collate items from our parliamentary and Scottish Government monitoring covering health and social care news from throughout the UK, and current research and policy development. We use a variety of sources for the bulletin, including alerts from [Newsdirect](#), [Community Care](#), [Children & Young People Now](#) and [ISD Scotland](#).

We aim to be representative rather than comprehensive, so we try to cover only the main Scottish stories, along with some stories from the rest of the UK. The purpose of the bulletin is to alert readers to items of interest. It should be noted that these items are the works of others and are neither authorised nor endorsed by the Care Inspectorate, with the exception of publications which are identified as Care Inspectorate publications.

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