

[COVID-19 - General](#)[Child Protection](#)[Early Learning and
Childcare](#)[Justice](#)[Looked After and
Accommodated Children](#)[Mental Health](#)[Other Health and Social
Care](#)[Other](#)**COVID-19 - General**[First Minister's Statement: COVID-19 \(Lockdown: Next Steps\)](#)

The First Minister has announced that phase 3 of emerging from lockdown would continue for some time and warned a move to phase 4 might not take place at the next review in three weeks. Shielding will be paused from 1 August and guidance will be available for people who have been shielding and their employers. The First Minister also announced in her statement:

- Schools will [reopen](#) from Tuesday 11 August. Local authorities may opt for a phased return to school but all pupils are expected to be back in school by Tuesday 18 August. Physical distancing will not be [expected](#) in the school estate, although it is recommended where possible in secondary schools.
- Test & Protect will be in place with priority access to testing for symptomatic pupils and staff, and surveillance testing.
- From Monday, counselling services, including drug and alcohol addiction programmes will be able to provide essential services.

[HIS resource to support continued engagement](#)

NHS boards and Health and Social Care Partnerships will have access to a new online resource to help them continue to engage with local communities while pandemic restrictions remain in place. The new online resource, Engaging Differently, has been created by Healthcare Improvement Scotland and contains advice and examples to help organisations achieve a mix of approaches to engagement, including



the repurposing of existing methods to ensure the focus is not solely on digital and online technology.

[Human rights to be at centre of COVID inquiry](#)

Human rights will “absolutely be at the centre” of the future public inquiry into COVID, the First Minister has confirmed. Nicola Sturgeon was responding to Labour Leader Richard Leonard following her statement in Parliament on the next steps out of lockdown. Mr Leonard pointed to the impact of COVID-19 in care homes and highlighted the Scottish Human Rights Commission’s call for an independent inquiry.

[Care Inspectorate Wales recovery plan \(Wales\)](#)

Care Inspectorate Wales has published its recovery plan as the organisation plans to how long this phase will last and will keep it under weekly review. There are no plans to return to the full inspection programme during the recovery period, but Care Inspectorate Wales will adopt an increased focus on monitoring to gain further assurance about the quality and safety of services. The plan includes proposals for registration, enforcement and other activity.

Child Protection

[SCRA publishes annual statistics](#)

The Scottish Children’s Reporter Administration (SCRA) has published its Official Statistics for 2019/20. The statistics show that in 2019/20, 12,849 children and young people in Scotland were referred to the Children’s Reporter; 10,823 on non-offence (care and protection) grounds and 2,840 on offence grounds.

Early Learning and Childcare

[Updated guidance on easing of blended childcare restrictions](#)

The First Minister has written to all childcare providers to explain the easing of blended childcare restrictions from 10 August. The guidance confirms the detail of “age-appropriate public health measures” to be implemented as the changes come into effect. Respective guidance documents for [early learning and childcare services](#); [childminding](#); [out of school care](#) and [fully outdoor services](#) have been published.

[Online support sessions for childminders](#)

The Scottish Government and Care Inspectorate are hosting a series of online support sessions on the guidance for childcare settings operating during the recovery period. The next session is for childminder settings on 4 August at 18:30. The Scottish Childminding Association will also be part of the session.



[Impact of childcare closures on mothers and pregnant women](#)

Campaign group Pregnant Then Screwed has published a survey of almost 20,000 mothers and pregnant women, showing almost a half of mothers (46 per cent) made redundant during the COVID-19 pandemic blame a lack of childcare provision. Nursery World said the survey suggests 15 per cent of mothers have been made redundant or expect to be made redundant in the next six months. Other findings suggest 72 per cent of mothers were forced to work fewer hours due to lack of childcare while 33 per cent have been forced to give up their childcare place due to the pandemic.

[Latest CMA review update on childminding refunds](#)

The Scottish Childminding Association has provided an update on the Competition and Markets Authority review into refunds and cancellations during COVID-19. The CMA has confirmed it will issue advice to the sector on staying within the regulations and understanding their obligations so that parents and providers receive support and get the best results, rather than taking enforcement action.

Justice

[Impact of lockdown on young people with experience of justice system](#)

The Centre for Youth and Criminal Justice has contributed evidence to the [Independent Children's Rights Impact Assessment](#), the largest study of the impact of COVID-19 policies on the rights of children in the world. The assessment is being undertaken by the Observatory of Children's Human Rights Scotland and commissioned by the Children and Young People's Commissioner. The CYCJ gathered the views of young people with experience of the justice system and youth justice practitioners on the restrictions. The biggest issues facing children and young people were isolation and lack of contact with others. Boredom, lack of activity and being stuck at home were also reported to be significant issues in complying with restrictions.

Looked After and Accommodated Children

[Report calls for action to bridge 'digital divide' for care leavers](#)

A report looking at how Scotland's care leavers have been affected by digital exclusion during the COVID-19 pandemic has been published by the Centre for excellence for Children's Care and Protection (CELCIS). The report concludes that digital access is a key rights and inequality issue which has been amplified during the pandemic and calls for co-ordinated activity at national and local levels to implement solutions.



Mental Health

[Committee reports on mental health support for children](#)

The Scottish Parliament's Public Petitions Committee has published its report on mental health support for young people in Scotland. The report follows an inquiry prompted by a petition lodged in 2016 on prescribing medication to treat mental ill health in patients under 18 years of age, which led to further questions about the delivery of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services. MSPs have been a range of recommendations to Government, including:

- Better guidance, joint working and signposting to ensure minimum level of service provision and support for parents, carers and children.
- A public health campaign aimed at all young people to raise awareness of the possible impact of the COVID-19 public health emergency on their mental health and signpost them to sources of support.
- Work with relevant partners to develop an online mental health first aid training course for all people who work with children and young people including those who work in educational settings, health settings and third sector organisations.

Other Health and Social Care

[Iriss advertising for new Chief Executive](#)

The Institute for Research and Innovation in Social Care is advertising for a new Chief Executive Officer. The closing date for applications is 24 August.

Other

[Jackson Carlaw resigns as leader of Scottish Conservatives](#)

Jackson Carlaw has announced his resignation as leader of the Scottish Conservatives, the BBC reports. Mr Carlaw said he had come to the "painful conclusion" that he was not the best person to lead the party ahead of the elections in 2021.

**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](#).

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