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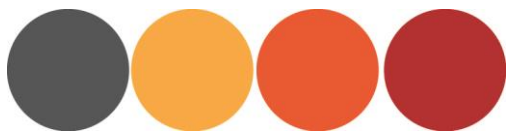
**COVID-19 – General**

[Schools and ELC settings to begin phased return](#)

In her statement to parliament this week, Nicola Sturgeon announced the current lockdown, including the requirement to stay at home, would remain in place until at least the end of February. The First Minister set out plans, to be confirmed in two weeks, for a phased return for some school and early year pupils. From the week beginning Monday 22 February, subject to the continued decline in infection:

- Early learning and childcare services would return full time for all children below school age
- Children in Primary 1-3 would return full time
- Senior phase pupils would return part time for practical work required for national qualifications, with no more than 5-8% of pupils present at one time
- There would be a small increase in existing provision for ASN pupils
- The next phase of education return would be set out, including the return of in-person college and university teaching

The FM also confirmed an expansion of testing in educational settings, with staff in schools and early years settings, and senior phase pupils to be offered twice weekly home testing kits as soon as possible.



## **Early Learning and Childcare**

### [Out of school care financial survey](#)

The Scottish Out of School Care Network has published the findings of an online survey of out of school care services, which closed on 22 January. The survey shows expenses continue to outstrip income even if services are closed, with some landlords still charging rent and the need to pay insurance needs. Some services when open were unable to access furlough as they needed all staff to cover bubbles, increased cleaning, paperwork or to cover staff absences. Some staff are either self-employed or on zero hour contracts so have been able to access very little in the way of financial support.

### [SOSCN request urgent financial support for sector](#)

Irene Audin, Chief Executive of the Scottish Out of School Care Network, has written to Maree Todd, Minister for Children and Young People, highlighting the need for financial and other support to the school age childcare sector in Scotland as a result of the pandemic. She writes that many services are facing the real prospect of closure within the coming months and shares findings from the recent financial survey.

### [Free networking events for out of school care sector](#)

SOSCN are hosting free networking meetings for people working in the out of school care sector. The first meeting on 19 February will focus on financial sustainability and SOSCN will present findings from its recent survey. On 19 March, SOSCN will present its draft manifesto for school age childcare ahead of the Scottish Parliament elections in May.

## **Education**

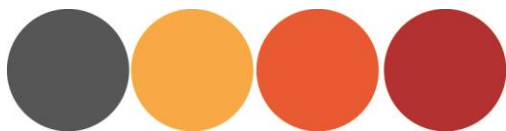
### [Support for teachers affected by impact of pandemic](#)

Education Scotland and the General Teaching Council for Scotland are working with social enterprise KnowYouMore to help support teachers who are new in post, or working in pastoral or child protection roles. The Scottish Government announced the plans to help support the physical and emotional welfare of children in the wake of the pandemic. Sessions are already being offered to headteachers as part of a support package and the programme now includes support for more than 500 teachers in their first four years of post-probation to discuss any personal or professional pressures they are facing as a result of delivering remote learning.

## **Looked After and Accommodated Children**

### [Fund to support implementation of Promise changes](#)

The Scottish Government has announced the launch of the £4 million Promise Partnership Fund which will help organisations implement changes under the



recommendations The Promise on improving support for care experienced children and young people. Private, public and third sector organisations can apply and care-experienced young people will assist in the final funding decisions.

### [SSSC action plan to meet The Promise](#)

The Scottish Social Services Council has published Realising Potential, its new plan setting out the approach to keeping The Promise for care experienced children and young people. A range of activities will be carried out by the SSSC including reviewing the Codes of Practice, developing new insights into the challenges faced by care experienced people and working on new learning resourced.

### **Mental Health**

#### [New animation on children's mental health](#)

This week (1-7 February) is Children's Mental Health Week. Public Health Scotland, the Scottish Government, COSLA and NHS Education for Scotland have developed an [animation](#) to highlight the role everyone plays in support children's mental health.

### **Other**

#### [Survey for parents and carers on post-lockdown needs](#)

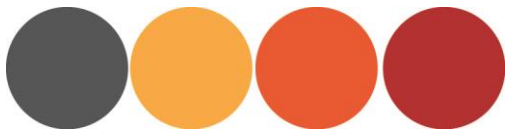
Children 1<sup>st</sup> has launched a national survey for parents to share their views about what support their children will need when they return to school. The charity operates Parentline and other local support services for parents and carers. They recognise the views of many parents that the current lockdown is more difficult than the first and is asking the Scottish Government and education sector to put children and young people's emotional and social wellbeing at the heart of COVID recovery.

#### [SSSC Children's Rights Report](#)

The Scottish Social Services Council has published its first Children's Rights Report. The report reflects on the SSSC's work over the last three years in this area, including many aspects of the UNCRC, and notes the importance of a regulated social care workforce in ensuring Scotland can keep The Promise for care experienced children and young people.

#### [Ofsted inspections to be done remotely](#) (England)

Ofsted has confirmed that all planned inspection activity will be carried out remotely until 8 March 2021, following the advice to the public from the UK Government to "act as if you have the virus".



## 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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