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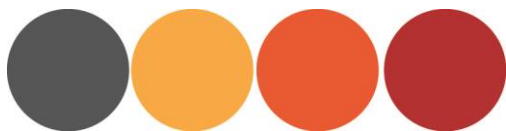
[Other](#)

COVID-19 - General

[Audit Scotland report on Scottish Government pandemic response](#)

Audit Scotland has published a report on the COVID-19 pandemic and the response within the NHS and Scottish Government. The report suggests the Scottish Government “could have been better prepared” to respond to the pandemic and “did not fully implement improvements identified during subsequent pandemic preparedness exercises”. Recommendations for the Scottish Government include:

- update and publish national pandemic guidance for health and social care as a priority
- ensure that the work undertaken as part of the re-mobilise, recover, re-design programme of work has clear priorities that align with the remobilisation framework
- work with partners to update the integrated workforce plan.



[Lockdown update including return to full-time schooling](#)

Nicola Sturgeon gave an update to parliament on lockdown restrictions and set out a timescale for the resumption of full-time schooling. The First Minister confirmed pupils in P1-3, as well as children in early learning settings, will return to school on Monday 22 February. Limited numbers of S4-S6 pupils who are required to complete practical work to achieve an SQA certificate will also return from next Monday. A further update on the return of schools is expected on Tuesday 2 March. The “stay at home” requirement will remain in place for now but the government hopes to publish a revised strategic framework next week which will set out how Scotland can exit lockdown and what conditions will need to be met before restrictions are eased.

Child Protection

[Case study findings by Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry](#)

The Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry has published the fourth in their series of case study findings in relation to the provision of residential care by The Christian Brothers at St Ninian’s Residential Care Home, Falkland, Fife, between 1953 and 1983. The findings reportedly conclude that the “regime at St Ninian’s exposed children to risks of sexual, physical, and psychological danger.”

Early Learning and Childcare

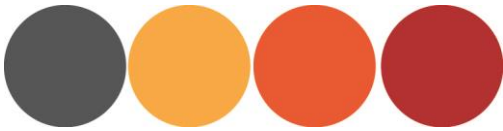
[Assessments of ELC during the pandemic](#)

The Scottish Government has published a Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment (BRIA) and an [Equalities Impact Assessment \(EQIA\)](#) on the provision of early learning and childcare (ELC) during the pandemic in January and February 2021. This BRIA is focused on the set of ELC and formal childcare measures: nurseries and other registered day care of children providers may only open to children from key worker families, or vulnerable children; childminders currently caring for 12 or more children may only open to children from key worker families, or vulnerable children; childminders caring for fewer than 12 children can operate as normal. The EQIA aims to update the impact assessments undertaken during the COVID-19 pandemic, using the most up to date evidence, to explore the impacts of limited access to ELC, with the intention of supporting ongoing policy development.

Health

[New guidance on healthy eating in schools](#)

The Scottish Government has published new guidance supporting the implementation of the Nutritional Requirements for Food and Drink in Schools (Scotland) Regulations 2020. "Healthy eating in schools: guidance 2020" is intended to help those who are involved in providing food and drinks in schools to implement the new regulations. This publication replaces Healthy eating in schools (2008).



While the regulations relate to food and drink served on school premises, this new guidance is relevant for anyone who provides food and drink to school aged children.

Looked After and Accommodated Children

[Where children living in children's homes receive their education \(England\)](#)

Ofsted has published research into where children living in children's homes receive their education and what the quality of this education is like. The research is intended to address the shortfall in research identifying where children living in children's homes are educated. By identifying the provision accessed by children in children's homes, this study also allows insight into the quality of education received by these children.

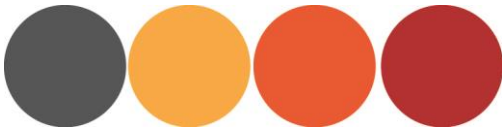
Other

[Scottish Child Payments begin](#)

The new Scottish Child Payment started on 14 February and the first decisions and payments are expected to arrive from later this month. The new benefit will give qualifying parents and carers £40 every four weeks for each child under six. Social Security Scotland has now started final eligibility checks and issuing decisions.

[Final speech by Children's Commissioner \(England\)](#)

The Children's Commissioner for England, Anne Longfield, in making her final speech, has reflected on her time in the role and discusses what is needed to reflect and rebuild for children after the COVID-19 pandemic.

**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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