

[Covid-19 - General](#)[Disability](#)[Early Learning and
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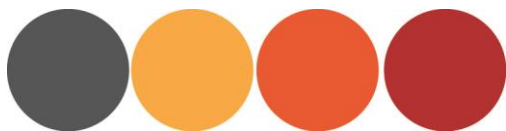
Covid-19 - General

[Spring Covid-19 booster rollout and under 11s first vaccinations](#)

The Scottish Government has announced that all those aged 75 and over, resident in care homes and individuals aged 12 years and over who are immune suppressed will be contacted for a spring booster. Children aged five to 11 years old have also been sent letters inviting them for their first vaccine by the Scottish Government following advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI). People eligible for the booster will be contacted at least 24 weeks after their last booster.

[Draft terms of reference for UK Covid-19 inquiry published](#)

Draft terms of reference for the UK Covid-19 Inquiry have been published by the Cabinet Office. Following consultation with the Inquiry Char, Baroness Hallett, and ministers in the devolved administrations, the draft terms of reference state that the inquiry will examine, consider and report on preparations and the response to the pandemic in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, up to and including the inquiry's formal setting-up date. In doing so, it will consider reserved and devolved matters across the United Kingdom, as necessary, but will seek to minimise duplication of investigation, evidence gathering and reporting with any other public inquiry established by the devolved administrations. A final terms of reference will be published once Baroness Hallett has consulted with the public, including with bereaved families and other affected groups. [The public engagement period is expected to last for four weeks.](#)



Disability

[NES webinar on attachment, trauma and people with learning disabilities](#)

NHS Education Scotland (NES) is running a webinar on 18 March, 10-11.30am to assist staff working in learning disability services. The webinar is designed to help staff understand attachment, relationships and support recovery from trauma.

Early Learning and Childcare

[Care Inspectorate publishes Early Learning and Childcare statistics 2020](#)

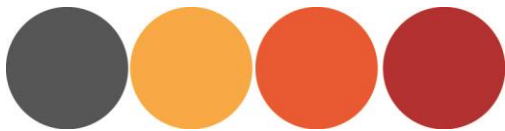
The Care Inspectorate has published its latest annual statistical report on the provision and use of registered daycare of children and childminding services in Scotland. Accurate at 31 December 2020, the report highlights these key points:

- Compared to 2019, there are slightly fewer early learning and childcare (ELC) services operating, but despite this, the number of places available has once again increased.
- The number of children registered in total has decreased compared to 2019. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has likely driven this decline, with an increase in parents working from home, a large number of people furloughed and service closures among the main reasons for this reduced use of early learning and childcare services during 2020.
- The proportion of services that provide funded places for 3- and 4-year-olds (and eligible 2-year-olds) has continued to increase in 2020.
- Most (84.0%) local authority run nurseries offered whole day places (or a choice of a whole or a part day place) in 2020. This rate has continued to increase year on year.

[Professor Ken Muir's findings on education reform published](#)

The Scottish Government has published Professor Ken Muir's report to the Scottish Government on education reform, recommending the establishment of: a new qualifications and assessment body to replace the SQA; a national education agency for Scottish education; and a new inspectorate body with its independence enshrined in legislation. The report suggests that "as a matter of urgency the new independent Inspectorate should re-engage with the Care Inspectorate to agree a shared inspection framework designed to reduce the burden on early learning and childcare practitioners and centres".

The Scottish Government has [broadly accepted](#) the report's recommendations, with Education Secretary Shirley-Anne Somerville's response stating that she will consider the ELC recommendation in context of the National Care Service reforms before coming forward with specific proposals to consult with the sector before the summer.



[Pilot programme for further Business Gateway support for childminding services](#)

Business Gateway hosted pilot webinars in February for childminding services and has now progressed to phase two of the support programme. This phase will see a further series of small groups available throughout March to help childminders gain advice on financial management, social media and marketing. The timetable for the free event and available tickets can be found [here](#).

[Bright Horizons invests £10million to boost salaries and apprenticeship programme](#)

Bright Horizons is investing £10m to boost staff salaries and enrol 700 staff into its apprenticeship scheme, Nursery World reports. The provider is also restructuring its pay scale to ensure all staff members get a wage that more closely reflects the increase in cost of living that will be experienced from 1 April.

[Ofsted to make early years focus in five-year strategy \(England\)](#)

Ofsted is to make early years its focus when it publishes its five-year strategy in the spring, Nursery World reports. Ofsted Chief Inspector Amanda Spielman said Ofsted was “determined that momentum around education recovery shouldn’t just start at age four” when she spoke at the Nursey World Summit on 8 March.

Justice

[Chair appointed to drive Bairns’ Hoose programme](#)

The Scottish Government has announced that Val de Souza will chair the national governance group to drive forward the programme to establish the Bairns’ Hoose model. Ms De Souza has worked for more than 30 years in the social justice sector having a number of senior leadership roles in health, social care and social work, across justice, children and adult services, in both the statutory and voluntary sectors.

[CYCJ developing new collaborative network](#)

The Children and Young People’s Centre for Justice (CYCJ) is looking to work with 12 – 16-year-olds who have experienced the justice system as part of its Collaborative Network. The network will include organisations that provide advocacy, throughcare and aftercare support and youth work. A [survey](#) is open to all 12 – 16-year-olds who have experience of the justice system and is designed to give young people a opportunity to share how they think the Collaborative Network could help them.

Looked After and Accommodated Children

[CMA reports on children’s social care market, including Scotland recommendations](#)

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has published the results of its market study into children’s social care, including recommendations for Scotland. The report



finds a shortage of appropriate places in children's homes and with foster carers, meaning some children are not getting what they need from their placement. One of the recommendations of the report is the development of national and regional bodies to support local authorities attaining suitable placements for children in need. The CMA has set out a number of [Scotland-specific recommendations](#), including the creation of "an appropriate oversight regime that is capable of assessing the financial health of the most difficult to replace providers of children's homes and of warning placing authorities if a failure is likely".

[Interview with Head of Oversight at The Promise](#)

Fiona McFarlane, Head of Oversight at The Promise Scotland, has given an interview in which she spoke of a "sustained commitment" to delivering The Promise for care-experienced children and young people. Speaking to STV, Ms McFarlane suggested that for many care experienced young people their lives won't have improved over the course of the pandemic and asserted that Promise Scotland is "here to drive change, to support collaboration and to bring people on that journey, but that change has to be delivered by a whole range of organisations".

[Scottish Government announces support for those affected by historical adoption](#)

The Scottish Government has announced new specialist support and counselling to help women and families affected by historical adoption practices. The support is available through new funding of roughly £145,000. The Scottish Government has made a new appeal to woman and families to share their experiences through a new [webpage](#) and questionnaire, with responses open until 20 April. A phone line has also been set up in collaboration with Health in Mind to support people who are or are considering taking part in the questionnaire.

Play

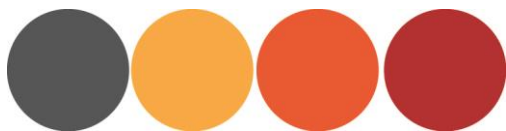
[Play Scotland supports blog on hands-on learning with physical objects](#)

Play Scotland has highlighted a blog relating to new research looking into the way hands-on learning with physical objects can encourage children's engagement in everyday learning. The [report](#) was conducted by PEDAL in conjunction with the LEGO Foundation and generally found that physical objects promote children's active involvement in learning and a playful learning experience. PEDAL is part of the Education faculty at the University of Cambridge.

Other Health and Social Care

[BASW released first annual survey of members report](#)

The British Association of Social Workers (BASW) has released the results of its first annual members survey. Over 2,000 social workers from across the UK responded to the survey, giving insight into their needs and what motivated them to do their job. Wanting to support people was the biggest reason people became social workers,



with over 50% of respondents finding positively impacting people's health and social wellbeing to be the most rewarding aspect of the job.

[Health and social care: national workforce strategy](#)

The Scottish Government and COSLA have published their vision for the health and social care workforce. The workforce strategy covers health and social care recovery, and the Five Pillars of the Workforce Journey – Plan, Attract, Train, Employ and Nurture. The approach to implementation and short-term action plan for the next 24 months concludes the strategy.

[SSSC celebrates Scottish Apprenticeship Week 7-11 March](#)

The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) is highlighting the role apprenticeships play in supporting individuals, employers and people who use social care and early year services in Scotland. The theme of this year's Scottish Apprenticeship Week, taking place across 7 – 11 March, is 'Apprenticeships Work' highlighting the skills employers need now, and in the future.

[Children's Commissioner opening virtual sessions](#)

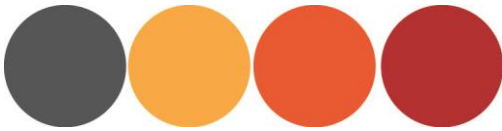
The Children and Young Peoples Commissioner is opening up virtual sessions to connect with children and young people across Scotland. The Commissioner wants to know if children's rights are being upheld and what's gone wrong when rights haven't been respected. The virtual roadshow will run until 31 March and you can find out more information [here](#).

[Barnardo's appoints new CEO](#)

Barnardo's has announced Lynn Perry MBE as its new permanent CEO. Ms Perry has worked at the charity since 2008 and since 2019 has served as the Corporate Director for Children's Services with responsibility for 800 services across the UK.

[Audit Scotland releases annual local government finance report](#)

Audit Scotland has published its 2020-21 overview report on local government finances. The report details the full-year impact of Covid-19 on services, funding and income, as well as looking at the scope of council finances moving forward. According to the report, the long-term funding position for councils remains uncertain and there are significant challenges ahead as councils continue to respond to the impacts of Covid-19 on services, finances and communities.

**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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