

9 – 15 July 2022



bulletin

[Child Protection](#)[Disability](#)[Early Learning and
Childcare](#)[Health](#)[Justice](#)[Mental Health](#)[Looked After and
Accommodated Children](#)[Other Health and Social
Care](#)

Child Protection

[Minister sets out timeline for contact centre regulation](#)

Community Safety Minister Ash Regan has provided a timeline for the regulation of child contact centres in a letter to a committee at the Scottish Parliament. Writing to the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee giving a general update on progress in implementing the Children (Scotland) Act 2020, Ms Regan said secondary legislation relating to child contact centre regulation is due to be laid parliament in late 2022/early 2023, with the Care Inspectorate needing up to 18 months to carry out preparatory work, conduct initial assessments and register child contact centre services.

[Findings published following Inquiry roundtable on psychology of those who abuse children](#)

The Chair of the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry has published her findings following a roundtable event examining the psychology of individuals who abuse children. At a two-day event in March, a panel of eight experts discussed the characteristics, motivation, and techniques of those who abuse children in care. Among the key findings to emerge: There is no single abuser type nor is there homogeneity in their characteristics; There is no definitive answer as to why the abuse



happens; The abuse of children is likely to arise from the actions and choices of a person with a particular bio-psycho-social make-up and their own unique history when they interact with children in particular circumstances.

[Online grooming rises by 80% in four years, according to NSPCC](#)

Online grooming crimes recorded by police have risen more than 80% in four years across the UK, according to the NSPCC. Data from 41 UK police forces shows an 84% rise in online grooming crimes since 2017-18, taking the total number of offences to roughly 27,000. In 2021/22 there were 6,156 Sexual Communication with a Child offences, an increase on the previous year and almost 120 offences per week on average. The research also highlighted that Meta-owned platforms, such as Instagram and Facebook, were used in 38% of offences where the means of communication was known.

[Online Safety Bill delayed](#)

The Online Safety Bill has been put on hold until a new Prime Minister is in place in the autumn, the BBC reports. The Bill was in its final stages and was set to be discussed in Parliament next week but will now be delayed. Campaigners seeking changes to the existing regulations expressed concern at the delay.

Disability

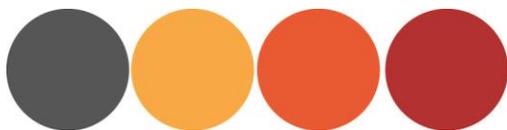
[Summer activity programme cut for additional needs children](#)

Families of young people with complex disabilities are calling for equal treatment after reports of reduced activities for children, reports the BBC. After contacting all 32 local authorities, BBC Scotland learned only three councils could confirm they offered an equal number of activities designed for children with complex needs compared with mainstream pupils.

Early Learning and Childcare

[ELC inspection consultation launched](#)

The Scottish Government has launched a consultation on inspection of early learning and childcare (ELC) and school age childcare services in Scotland. The consultation sets out a vision for inspection of ELC and school age childcare services, outlining eight draft guiding principles for inspection. It seeks views on the strengths of existing arrangements, where improvements could be made and specific proposals to streamline and improve inspections. The consultation also seeks views on a shared inspection framework “to bring the currently separate inspection approaches together to provide clarity to the sector, support high quality provision of services and better support outcomes for children and families”. The consultation will run until 28 October 2022.



[Care Inspectorate launches bitesize session for new ELC framework](#)

Our early learning and childcare improvement team has produced a bitesize session to introduce the new quality framework for early learning and childcare (ELC) inspections. This is the first in a series that will support you to get the most out of the framework when you use it. You can view the bitesize session [here](#).

[Early Years Scotland publishes Strategic Plan 2022 - 2025](#)

Early Years Scotland (EYS) has published its latest Strategic Plan, setting out organisational objectives for the next three years. The Plan notes a focus on family engagement and support, to be incorporated into all EYS services.

[Nuffield Foundation publishes early childhood report \(England\)](#)

Early childhood is “increasingly marked by inequality and uncertainty”, which has been “compounded” by the impact of the pandemic and rising poverty, according to a new report by the Nuffield Foundation. The report, *Bringing up the next Generation: from research to policy*, suggests that public policy continues to focus on school age children more than babies and young children. The Foundation calls for a new early childhood strategy and has put forward four goals to help change the current system, including an early education and care system supporting all young children’s learning –with a focus on tackling disadvantage.

Health

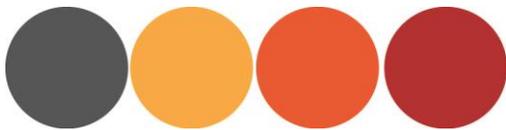
[New resources on sexual health for young people](#)

The Awkward Moments campaign has been launched to provide information on sex and consensual relationships for 16–19-year-olds. The programme was commissioned by NHS Lothian (Healthy Respect), NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde and NHS Lanarkshire on behalf of a partnership with other health boards. The campaign aims to help Scottish people (aged 16-19) to recognise what good consensual intimate experiences can look like. Resources available for young people, or professionals who work with young people, include informational videos and content for informal youth setting educators to deliver a discussion session.

Justice

[Covid-19 Children and Families Collective Leadership Group recommendations published](#)

The Scottish Government has published the recommendations of the Covid-19 Children and Families Collective Leadership Group. The short-life group was set up to deliver improvements in the experience and reduce the number of under-18s in custody. The group recommends that a trauma-informed review of the pathway to young offender institutions be undertaken, as well as calling for a review of key policies through the lens of UNCRC and other human rights treaties.



Looked After and Accommodated Children

Young inspection volunteers' recruitment drive

We are currently recruiting young inspection volunteers. Our young inspection volunteers play a vital role in improving services, by talking to children and young people about their experiences. We are looking for volunteers aged 16-27 with personal experience of care services. If you know someone who may be interested, please let them know, or help by sharing our messages across social media. Potential volunteers can find out more and request an application form by emailing get.involved@careinspectorate.gov.scot

SCRA publishes update on research projects

The Scottish Children's Reporter Administration has published an update on a number of workstreams across its research programme. A wide range of studies are covered, including Born into Care, Staying Connected: Care-experienced children and young people with a sibling in custody, and Children Under the Age of 12 in Residential Care.

Children placed far away from families, according to Ofsted report (England)

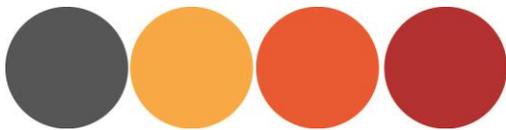
Ofsted has published a report that suggests children are often placed in homes far away from their families because of a lack of suitable places near to where they live. The report, which asks 'What types of needs do children's homes offer care for?', finds that children with mental health problems, or experience of abuse and neglect, are likely to be living the furthest away from their home prior to coming into care, and above the average distance of 36 miles. The research aims to contribute to the wider conversation around why there may be barriers to achieving sufficiency of places in children's homes. Other findings in the report include that there was no link between the types of needs that homes said they could accommodate and inspection grades.

Westminster committee publishes report on secure schools (England)

A Westminster committee has published a report on secure training centres and secure schools in England. The Public Accounts Committee found that the closure of secure training centres and delays to the opening of new secure schools has led to many children receiving "substandard" care, with concerns raised around highly vulnerable girls. The committee notes the first secure school is unlikely to open before February 2024, despite the Ministry of Justice planning for the first of two of the facilities to be open by Autumn 2020.

Report on treatment of unmarried women and adopted children 1949-76 (England)

A report on the adoption of children of unmarried women between 1949-1976 has been published a committee at Westminster. The Joint Committee on Human Rights looked at the experiences of unmarried women and their children who were adopted during the 1950s, 1960s and 1970, and has called for the UK Government to issue a



formal apology to those unmarried mothers who lost children to the scheme during this period.

Mental Health

[Consultation on new suicide prevention strategy and action plan](#)

The Scottish Government has launched the third and final stage of its consultation on a new suicide prevention strategy and action plan. The strategy, which aims to take a cross-departmental and societal approach, will run over the course of ten years, with the initial action plan running over three years and implementing the first stage of the strategy. The consultation seeks views on the proposed vision, priorities and outcomes set out across the strategy and action plan. The closing date for response is Tuesday 23 August.

Other Health and Social Care

[Summary of children's services plan published](#)

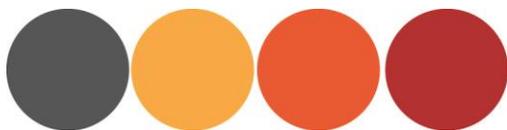
The Scottish Government has published a summery review of children's services plans for 2020 – 2023, in line with the Children and Young Peoples (Scotland) Act 2014. According to the summary, there is clear incorporation of children's rights and the UNCRC as well as a good narrative of children's services offered. However, it also states that there are further areas for development which include engagement with parents/carers/families, the wider community, and local workforce, including the third sector. A third of plans needed to include more information on the provision of related services, while budget and resource information was also highlighted as an area for improvement.

[SPSO sets out plan to develop child friendly complaints system](#)

The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) has confirms it has been awarded funding by the Scottish Government to develop a child-friendly way for public bodies to handle complaints. A two-year project has been launched to develop and implement new guidance for the public bodies the SPSO works with. The guidance will cover complaints: made by children and young people themselves; made on behalf of the children and young people; or concerning children and young people.

[SSSC works with Scottish Refugee Council to deliver sessions for employers](#)

The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) is working with the Scottish Refugee Council to deliver sessions for social service employers in relation to the recruitment of refugees. The sessions, limited to 15 attendees, will take place on 2 August, 25 August and 16 September, providing insight and answering common questions on terminology, challenges faced and how employers can better support refugees.



[Child poverty figures published for across UK](#)

New figures on child poverty across the UK have been published by Loughborough University on behalf of the End Child Poverty coalition. According to the figures, Scotland (21%) and Northern Ireland (24%) continue to have lower child poverty rates compared with the rest of the UK, with child poverty across the UK falling during 2020/21 from 31% to 27%. However, [Children 1st](#) has issued a response to the study, noting that levels of child poverty across Scotland remain “stubbornly high” and are still above the requirement in the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act to ensure fewer than 18% of children are living in poverty by 2023/24.

[Ukraine super sponsor scheme paused](#)

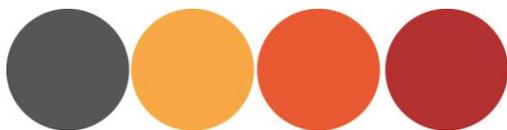
The Scottish Government has announced a three month pause on new visa applications for displaced Ukrainians. According to the Government, temporary suspension is needed to ensure safe accommodation can continue to be provided to those who have already applied and may now travel to Scotland. A total of 21,256 visas have been issued naming a Scottish sponsor – more than 20% of the UK total. Guidance for [local authorities and hosts](#), as well as for [displaced people](#), has been updated to reflect the change.

[Conversation café for virtual Pride week 25 July](#)

The Care Inspectorate’s LGBT charter champions group is running a series of conversation cafés from 25 July 2022 as part of our virtual Pride week ‘Pride in Care 2’. We are bringing people together virtually in small groups to ask questions about LGBT+ inclusion so that we can share learning and good practice.

[ADCS President urges UK Government to ban social work agencies \(England\)](#)

The President of the Association of Directors of Children’s Services (ADCS) has called on the UK Government to “regulate or preferably ban” social work agencies, reports Children and Young People Now. Speaking to the ADCS annual conference, Steve Crocker laid out many concerns he has regarding social work agencies, such as only allowing “teams” to be hired together by local authorities, rather than one worker, and recruiting straight out of university which he argued could “compromise on quality”.



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.

It should also be noted that the Care Inspectorate has no liability in respect of the content of external websites which may be signposted on this site.