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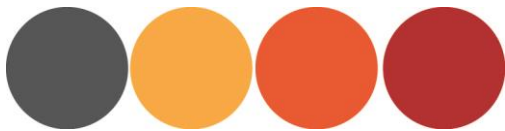
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Disability

[Blog on Scottish charity for people with physical disabilities impacting their speech](#)

Michael McEwan of Health and Care Scotland has published a blog about charity Speech Bubble Drama, which is the only Scottish charity to run drama workshops for young people aged five to 24 with physical disabilities impacting their speech. The project gives young people an opportunity to be creative and express themselves on their own terms and dictate the level of support they need to do that. Speech Bubble Drama provides much needed opportunities for disabled young people to be creative in a way that highlights their abilities rather than their disability. Speech Bubble want to improve the wellbeing amongst the young people by improving their communication skills and confidence. By doing this they promote positive representation of disability in the arts and to see more people included and integrated with the wider community.



Early Learning and Childcare

[SOSCN publish blog on the Access to Childcare Fund, and the learning so far](#)

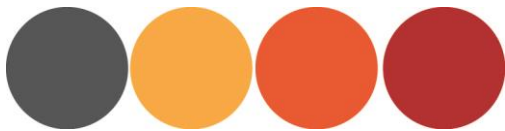
The Scottish Out of School Care Network (SOSCN) has published a blog on learning so far from the Access to Childcare Fund. The Access to Childcare Fund is funded by Scottish Government and managed by Children in Scotland. In 2020, 15 projects across Scotland received grants to address challenges and barriers encountered by parents accessing school aged (SAC) childcare. As phase one is now complete it has led to recommendations going forward. Recommendations include funding must be available to subsidise the cost of childcare (and associated costs, such as transport) to support families on low incomes to access these services and obtain the associated benefits, childcare should be recognised as an important part of the wider children's services landscape, transport arrangements must be viewed as part of a holistic childcare offer, and finally childcare providers should consider how they incorporate children's views into service design, delivery and evaluation. Scotland's move towards incorporating the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child will provide further impetus for this.

[Education Children and Young People Committee calls for mapping exercise](#)

The Education, Children and Young People Committee has written to the Cabinet Secretary, Shirley Anne Somerville to request a mapping exercise to establish the impact of movement of staff from private, voluntary, and independent (PVI) sector to Local Authority settings on the success of the delivery of the 1140 hours policy. The letter stated that the committee had heard from National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA) that there is "currently a crisis in the ELC workforce" caused by the expansion in local authority employment, and the Scottish Childminding Association had highlighted that during ELC expansion the sector had lost 1400 childminders, or 8000 child-minding places due to difficulties in PVI recruitment.

[Ofsted publish review of early years education for children born in lockdown \(England\)](#)

Ofsted has published a review of early years education, focusing on how early years practitioners deliver high-quality education for children from birth to four years old. The review underpins the inspectorate's new strategic focus on early education and giving children 'the best start in life' following the Covid-19 pandemic. The report stresses the value of play and teaching, and the importance of developing communication skills. What matters most is that practitioners have considered what they want children to know and be able to do, before deciding how best to teach. Making sure children catch up after the pandemic is still a key challenge in the early years, so practitioners need to think carefully about what content to prioritise. However, the report does not prescribe how to teach a high-quality early year's curriculum.



Education

[Glasgow care experienced children 'outperforming' national average report finds](#)

Glasgow City Council has reported outcomes for children with care experience have improved significantly over the last five years, with care experienced children outperforming pupils nationally, reports the Herald. Glasgow has the largest proportion of looked after children, with responsibility for almost a fifth. The council's own report shows that 80 per cent of pupils stayed on at school until S5 in 2020-2021 in Glasgow compared to 67.5% nationally while 35% went into sixth year, compared with 24.6% nationally. Glasgow City Council said the number of care experienced pupils entering positive destinations has also markedly increased, from 79.6% to 91.3%. Research shows fewer than a quarter (22%) of young people across the UK who are care experienced are in education, training, or employment, compared to nearly two thirds (57%) of their peers.

[Education Scotland hosting learner spotlight events](#)

Education Scotland has announced it will host Learner Spotlight sessions which will focus on a range of learner groups, themes, and questions as part of 'Our National Discussion.' The live and interactive sessions will be an opportunity for learners to discuss what matters to them. More information about the number and types of events and how to sign up can be found on the dedicated [e-Sgoil](#) website.

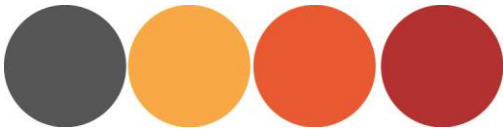
Health

[Framework provides guide to increasing physical activity across Scotland](#)

A new framework to increase physical activity across the country has been published by Public Health Scotland (PHS). The publication provides a pragmatic system-based approach to increasing levels of physical activity among the population in Scotland. Within the plan there is mention of having accessible activities in nurseries, schools, colleges and universities for children and young people to engage in an active place of learning covering health and wellbeing. This could include physical education (PE), active classrooms, outdoor learning, active campuses, extra-curricular activities, active travel to and from as well as incorporating the design of places of learning.

[NCS evidence sessions – Children's Services](#)

The Education, Children and Young People Committee took additional evidence on inclusion of Children's Services within the National Care Service (NCS) on 16 November from Martin Crewe, Director, Barnardo's Scotland and Jude Currie, Chair, Scottish Association of Social Workers (SAWS). Mr Crewe stated he was not opposed to the inclusion of children's services in the NCS, however he did question whether this would lead to better outcomes. Mr Crewe further noted that inclusion could be positive for older children with learning disabilities because the transition to adult social care was extremely difficult. However, he suggested the NCS could make interfaces between different parts of the system more difficult because a lot of



children's services sat outside the realm of health and social care. Ms Currie called for more detail around the framework and assurance a national care service could work.

Care Inspectorate information on Scarlet Fever outbreaks

There are recent reports that scarlet fever outbreaks are on the rise in some localities and within some social care services. Most cases (about 80%) of scarlet fever occur in children under 10 (usually between two and eight years of age). However, people of any age can get the illness. Scarlet fever is very contagious, and it is important that people seek advice from their GP for a proper diagnosis and appropriate treatment. Initial symptoms usually include a sore throat, headache, and a high temperature (38.3C/101F or above), flushed cheeks and a swollen tongue. If anyone using/working in your service has a confirmed case of scarlet fever, they must not attend your service for at least 24 hours after starting treatment with antibiotics. Key risk reduction measures are following the Standard Infection Prevention Control Precautions (SIPCPs) of good respiratory hygiene by covering mouths and noses to cough or sneeze and washing hands with soap and water after using or disposing of tissues. Avoid sharing contaminated utensils, cups and glasses, clothes, baths, bed linen or towels. Further information can be found online at [NHS Inform](#).

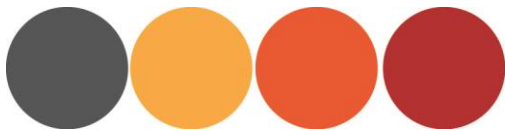
Looked After and Accommodated Children

[John Lewis Christmas advert commended for highlighting children in care](#)

The John Lewis Christmas advert has been commended for highlighting foster care and the number of children in care reports the Fostering Network. John Lewis is committed to supporting young people with care experience through the Building Happier Futures programme, with The Fostering Network being part of the advisory board. This is a long-term commitment by the retailer to help young people with experience of care in a number of ways, including supporting in their employment opportunities.

[459 children subject to DoLs applications from National Deprivation of Liberty court \(England\)](#)

The national deprivation of liberty (DoLs) court, launched in July 2022 as a 12-month pilot and based at the Royal Courts of Justice, deals with all new applications seeking authorisation to deprive children of their liberty under the inherent jurisdiction. Nuffield Family Justice Observatory is collecting and publishing data on these applications, with the latest publication showing that in the first four months 459 applications were made, with 14 being 'repeat applications'. The applications were made by 120 different local authorities and seven hospital or mental health trusts



[Ofsted publish annual fostering in England statistics \(England\)](#)

Ofsted have released their annual fostering in England statistics, highlighting that many vulnerable children are currently missing out on the care and support they need due to a lack of foster carers. Ofsted figures show that applications to become a foster carer are at their lowest level in several years. In 2021 to 2022, 8,280 applications were received which is 21% lower than 2017 to 2018. The report also highlights that the number of vacant mainstream fostering places has decreased by 23% since 2018, meaning less choice for children in care.

[Care records are now to include recordings of children's voices \(England\)](#)

A new system which allows children's social care records to include recordings of young people's voices has been developed after people with care-experience described feeling like "a ghost in their own files" reports Children and Young People Now. The app, designed by charity [Mind Of My Own](#), in partnership with the Access Group software company, will give children in care the ability to insert their own notes into care records through digital voice recordings in a bid to make the records "more authentic to the young people they represent". My Mind My Own says its apps can save an estimated eight days of administration per social worker.

Mental Health

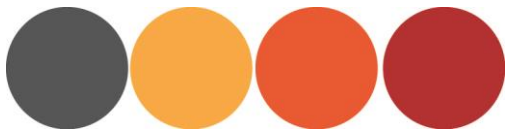
[Vulnerable children offered free riding lessons to support emotional wellbeing \(England\)](#)

Children's charity Barnardo's are offering vulnerable children across the Isle of Wight access to free horse-riding lessons to support their emotional health and wellbeing. Bailey, the pony, was donated to the Island Riding Centre in Newport by Barnardo's therapist Cariad Downer. Once Bailey's training is completed, he will be able to support children who access Barnardo's services including counselling, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation.

Maternity and Baby

[New report highlights rise in maternity mortality rate in UK](#)

The MBRRACE-UK collaboration, led from Oxford Population Health's National Perinatal Epidemiology Unit (NPEU), has published the results of their latest UK Confidential Enquiry into Maternal Deaths and Morbidity. These annual rigorous reports are recognised as a gold standard in identifying key improvements needed for maternity services; this year marks the 70th anniversary of confidential enquiries into maternal deaths in the UK, and the 10th anniversary of the MBRRACE-UK-led enquiries. The reports key findings highlighted that 229 women died during or up to six weeks after the end of their pregnancies in 2018 – 2020 from pregnancy-specific causes or conditions made worse by pregnancy, an increase of 24% compared to 2017-2019. The report further highlights that Black women were 3.7 times more likely to die compared to White women and Asian women were 1.8 times more likely to die compared to White women. The report does note that even excluding deaths



of women from Covid-19 the figure still rose by 19% when compared with 2017-2019. The report recommends that maternal healthcare staff must be alert to factors such as stigma, fear of child removal, or barriers that may influence a lack of willingness to disclose symptoms of mental illness, thoughts of self-harm, or substance misuse.

[Charity launches Lights of Love events for 2022](#)

Sands the UK's leading pregnancy and baby loss charity are hosting multiple Lights of Love events across the UK to welcome people to come together to remember babies gone too soon. The events include readings, music, and candle lighting to provide a sense of peace and comfort for attending families. The Lights of Love theme this year is Robins, which some communities believe is a sign that a loved one is near or visiting you. The following events are being held in Scotland:

- 4 December, Kirkcaldy
- 9 December, Stirling
- 11 December, Aberdeen

Workforce

[Scottish Social Care workforce planning webinar 14 December](#)

The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) are hosting a webinar on Scottish Social Care workforce planning on 14 December between 3-5pm. This will be the last SSSC webinar of 2022, with just two items on the programme. It will cover the National Care Service (NCS) with members of the Scottish Government NCS project team offering a discussion on the NCS and its impact on workforce planning for social services. The other topic that will be covered is HSCP 3-Year Workforce Plans, with representatives from the Scottish Government's Workforce Planning & Policy department are giving an overview of the planning process and outcomes.

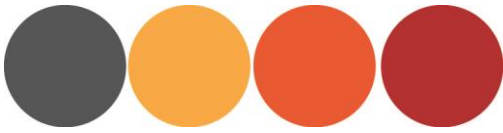
[SSSC future proofing programme survey](#)

The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) is collecting feedback on their future proofing programme through a survey. The programme is a major piece of work covering three interconnected projects: the Register, qualifications and skills, and the SSSC Codes of Practice. The survey has 14 questions and should take no longer than five minutes to complete. More information on the future proofing programme [here](#).

Other Health and Social Care

[Scottish Child Payment increased, and upper age limit extended](#)

The Scottish Government have announced that the Scottish Child Payment has been increased to £25 and been extended to include eligible children up to age 16. The extension means the benefit is now eligible to more than 400,000 children. The website for people to apply for the new extended benefit crashed within hours of



being set up. The government has said “exceptional demand” meant people were unable to complete the application form when it launched.

[IPPR publish report into reducing child poverty this winter](#)

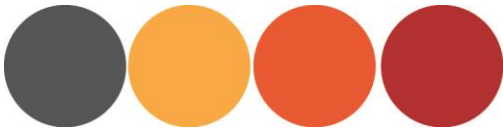
The Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) has published a report called a Lifeline for Families: Investing to Reduce Child Poverty this Winter which explores the fiscal, distributional and poverty impacts of different options for social security considering the ongoing cost of living crisis. The report highlights that almost one in three children in the UK live in poverty and rates are forecast to rise to their highest level by the end of this parliament. It makes the case for additional household support, combined with revenue raising measures to provide better support to families this winter.

[Investment in youth work could save billions in public finance new report finds \(England\)](#)

Investment in youth services could save the government as much as £3.2bn per year on public services spending, according to a new report published by Frontier Economics. The report commissioned by charity UK Youth states that every pound invested in youth work generates between £3.20 and £6.40 in benefits to the taxpayer due to the sector’s impact on improved societal health, increased employment and education, and a reduction in crime.

[Plans to ban profit making children’s social care in Wales \(Wales\)](#)

A proposal put forward by the Welsh government to end profit-making in children’s social care should be adopted by the UK government, reports Children and Young People Now. The plans put forward by the Welsh government’s Labour administration and the Plaid Cymru group in the Welsh Senedd, would require only not-for-profit residential and foster care could be commissioned in Wales. A consultation on the plans closed in November 2022 with several charities, including Article 39, urging the rest of the UK to take notice of this change.

**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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