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Covid-19 - General

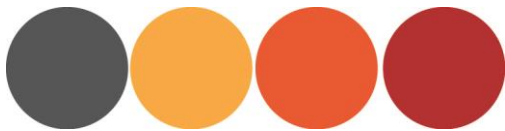
[Listening project launched to gather pandemic experiences](#)

The Scottish Covid-19 Inquiry has launched a listening project for people who were impacted by the pandemic in Scotland to share their experiences and any lessons they believe should be learned. The [Let's Be Heard](#) project is seeking answers to three key questions:

1. What were your experiences of the Covid-19 pandemic?
2. What impact did these experiences have on you or people you know?
3. What lessons do you think should be learned from your experiences?

[People across UK invited to submit Covid-19 stories](#)

Meanwhile the UK Covid-19 Inquiry has published a new online form to make it easier for people to share their experiences. 'Every Story Matters' provides an opportunity for everyone in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales to tell the Inquiry about their experiences of the pandemic. It will support the Inquiry's investigations and help the Chair of the Inquiry make recommendations for the future, by providing evidence about the human impact of the pandemic on the UK population.



Additional Support Needs

[Awards for schools who celebrate ASN success](#)

Applications are now open for the Success Looks Different award, which recognises schools that celebrate the successes and achievements of their pupils with additional support needs. Launched last year, the award asks schools to share how they are supporting the achievements with additional support needs outwith formal exams and assessments.

Child Protection

[Care Inspectorate joint inspection of children and young people services in the Borders](#)

A joint inspection of services in the Scottish Borders partnership has found key strengths that are having a significant and positive impact on the lives of children and young people. The Care Inspectorate report notes that children, young people and families benefited from supportive and trusting relationships with staff across services. The inspection found that the partnership provided a range of supports to help children and young people recover from abuse, neglect and trauma. However, some of these services were not consistently available when children and young people needed them.

[Consultation on legal duty to report child sexual abuse \(England and Wales\)](#)

The Home Office has opened a consultation on how a legal duty to report child sexual abuse would affect children, organisations, workplaces and volunteers. It follows a recommendation from the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse that the UK Government should make it a legal requirement for certain people to report child sexual abuse when they're told about it by a child or perpetrator, they witness it happening or they observe recognised indicators of abuse.

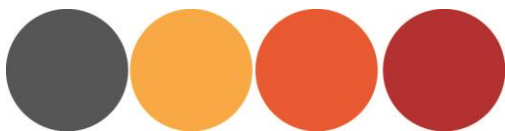
Early Learning and Childcare

[Union highlights impact of childcare costs on working families](#)

UNISON has published the 2023 Working Families Index. The main findings show 60 per cent of respondents reported that making ends meet and raising a family has become more difficult over the last three years. Over half of parents surveyed said availability of childcare impacts their capacity to work, with mothers twice as likely to report availability of childcare having a 'big impact' on their ability to work than fathers.

[Funded childcare expansion could widen poverty gap \(England\)](#)

A report by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and Coram suggests the recently-announced expansion of funded childcare in England will disproportionately help



higher-income families. The changes will be phased in for households in England where the parent or parents each earn at least £152 a week, on average, but less than £100,000 a year. The report states this would give the higher-income families more childcare, with children from lower income families even more likely to miss out. The charities say the plans risk widening the gap between disadvantaged children and their peers.

Education

[National summit on violence in schools](#)

Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, Jenny Gilruth, has announced plans for a summit focused on tackling violence in schools. The event will bring together young people, parents and carers, local authorities and unions to discuss the issue. Education Scotland will also work with every local authority to identify good practice in behaviour and relationships, sharing the findings with schools across the country.

Justice

[The Promise publishes recommendations to improve children's hearings system](#)

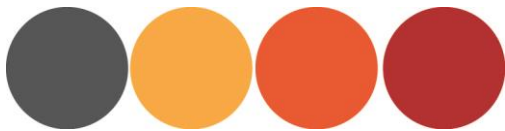
The Hearings for Children redesign report has been published by The Promise Scotland following the work of the Hearings System Working Group, chaired by Sheriff David Mackie. The report involved children and young people with lived experience of the hearings system, as well as experts, and calls for a new vision which "represents transformational change to the Children's Hearings System". The Report makes a number of [recommendations](#) including:

- Changes to the makeup of a Panel
- A less confrontational environment
- Asking for the views of children and families before a Hearing takes place
- Specialist training for decision makers
- Links from Children's Hearings into wider discussions concerning the child
- Ongoing accountability for all organisations responsible for the delivery of the Children's Hearings System

Looked After and Accommodated Children

[Annual Adoption Barometer published](#)

Adoption UK's latest Adoption Barometer report for 2023 has been published. The findings show 46 per cent of families with adopted children aged 13 to 25 are "at crisis point" or facing severe challenges. Over half of adopted young adults accessed or attempted to access mental health services last year and 23 per cent of adopted 16 to 25-year-olds are not in education, employment or training.



[Cost of delay in reforming children's social care \(England\)](#)

New analysis by the NSPCC warns that government delays to reform children's social care in England will cost the public finances £1 billion over the next 10 years. By 2027/28, it is forecast that 10,500 additional children will be in care due to the government delaying implementation for two years. Children's charities are calling on the UK government to deliver its reform programme 'Stable Homes, Built on Love' across England.

Mental Health

[Innovative workshops to explore links between music and wellbeing](#)

Children in Scotland is working with the University of Stirling and the Scottish Ensemble orchestra to help children and young people explore how live music can support mental health and wellbeing. Over the next month, Children in Scotland will work with more than 75 children and young people, musicians, youth workers and mental health professionals to deliver free Innovation Labs around the country, where attendees will enjoy live performances. The sessions will take place in Inverness, Stirling and Glasgow.

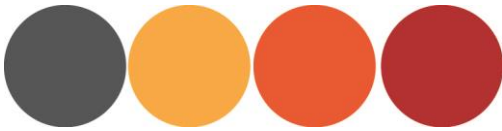
Other

[Practice note on importance of play](#)

Marguerite Hunter Blair, the Chief Executive of Play Scotland, has written a practice information note for the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland (RIAS). The article is titled: 'The importance of play, and how it relates to planning, places and health and wellbeing.' The article is described as an informative contribution to RIAS Practice Information as well as an aid in raising awareness on the importance of play to architects.

[Summer engagement events for NCS announced](#)

The Scottish Government has announced details of its programme of public meetings to help shape the National Care Service. Events will take place all over Scotland in addition to two national online events. Minister for Social Care, Mental Wellbeing and Sport, Maree Todd, said: "Having listened to care providers, unions and the third sector during the Bill scrutiny process, these meetings will allow anyone who uses care services, has a loved one that relies on care or has worked in the sector to have their say. This will help inform future stages of the Bill as it progresses through the Parliamentary process. "



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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