



[Child Protection](#)

[Children's Rights](#)

[Disability](#)

[Early Learning and
Childcare](#)

[Health](#)

[Justice](#)

[Looked After and
Accommodated Children](#)

[Mental Health](#)

[Play](#)

[Social Work](#)

[Other Health and Social
Care](#)

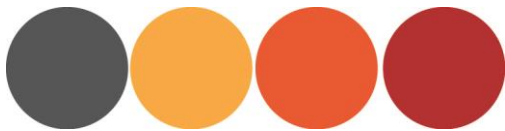
Child Protection

[Barnardo's report highlights school holiday child exploitation risk, with recommendations for Scotland](#)

A report suggesting many children experiencing sexual and criminal exploitation are “invisible” during the school holidays has been published by Barnardo's. The report highlights freedom of information (FOI) data from UK police forces finding dips of around a fifth in monthly average police records of child sexual exploitation during months when schools are closed, with records increasing again once they reopen. Among a number of recommendations, the charity calls for the Scottish Government to publish an updated National Action Plan to tackle child exploitation and abuse in Scotland, and for investment in Scotland-specific research on the scale and nature of child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation.

[Lords vote to reinsert limit on child detention](#)

The House of Lords has voted to again reject the UK Government's attempt to extend the amount of time unaccompanied children can be detained under the Illegal Migration Bill, as reported by the BBC. The Bill would extend the limit on how long children could be detained on the suspicion they are liable for deportation from three days to eight. Peers had previously voted to reinsert protections in this regard, but these were removed by MPs in the House of Commons.



Children's Rights

[Cabinet Secretary writes to committee on UNCRC Bill plans](#)

Social Justice Secretary Shirley-Anne Somerville has provided an update to the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee on plans to amend the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill. As announced previously, the Scottish Government contends that the most effective approach would be for the compatibility duty in the Bill to apply only when public authorities are delivering duties under powers conferred by Act of the Scottish Parliament. The aim is to begin the parliamentary process of amendment as early as possible after summer recess. A number of Scottish organisations have [joined together](#) to raise concerns over the delay amending and commencing the Bill.

Disability

[Consultation on new BSL National Plan](#)

A consultation on the British Sign Language (BSL) National Plan 2023-29 has been launched by the Scottish Government. The consultation, closing on 3 September, sets out achievements over the course of the previous National Plan and seeks views on what actions are required to advance BSL further in Scotland. The findings will inform the final publication, due in autumn 2023.

Early Learning and Childcare

[Report looking at international examples critical of UK Government plans \(England\)](#)

The UK Government's proposals for expanded childcare provision risk making existing issues worse, according to a report by the Sutton Trust. The report, produced by researchers at RAND Europe, looks at international evidence and warns against the expansion of early years provision for 'working families' without a focus on quality. The report suggests there should be equal access to early years provision for all children, particularly at ages two, three and four, "where there is greater existing evidence of educational benefit". It stresses the importance of high-quality staff, an increased number of staff to children, and the removal of barriers for disadvantaged families.

Health

[Paper sets out 'caring, compassionate and human rights informed' drug policy vision](#)

A paper setting out evidence supporting a "caring, compassionate and human rights informed" drug policy has been published by the Scottish Government. The paper, which follows recommendations made by the Drug Deaths Taskforce in 2021, calls for a change to the legal framework to allow Scotland to tailor its drugs policy and for a "progressive" transition towards decriminalisation for personal use.



Justice

[Study finds 80% of young males in Polmont have history of significant head injury](#)

A new study has found that 80% of young males detained at youth offender institutes in Scotland have a medical history of serious brain injury. The study, led by researchers at the University of Glasgow, included 103 (34%) of 305 juvenile males in HM Young Offenders Institution Polmont and found that a history of significant head injury was found in 82 of the young men, while 69 of that group had experienced repeated head injuries over long periods of time. The study also found that a history of serious head injury was significantly associated with mental health problems, including anxiety and distress. The researchers suggest there is a need for juvenile prisoner programmes to take into account the impact of significant head injuries and for more work to be done to reduce future head injury risks in this group.

Looked After and Accommodated Children

[SCRA provides update on Promise activity](#)

The Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA) has published a summary of its recent activity to Keep The Promise. Projects include: Understanding my Hearing (Before, During and After); Customise my Hearing Form; Child Friendly Scheduling project.

[Ofsted launches consultation on inspection of supported accommodation \(England\)](#)

Ofsted is seeking views on proposals for the inspection of supported accommodation for looked after children and care leavers aged 16 to 17. As a newly regulated sector, Ofsted proposes three possible outcomes for inspections of supported accommodation, reflecting the unique context and wide scope of the sector.

Mental Health

[New facilitator resources on mental health and prevention of self-harm and suicide](#)

Four new Skilled Level Facilitator Resources on mental health improvement and the prevention of self-harm and suicide are now available. The resources, developed by Public Health Scotland and NHS Education for Scotland, provide facilitators with materials to deliver educational training sessions to staff who are likely to have direct or substantial contact with people who may be at risk of mental ill health, distress, crisis or suicide and where they may play a role in supporting people's health and wellbeing.

Play

[New international benchmark endorses 'benefit risk' approach to play safety](#)

A global industry standard endorsing a 'benefit risk' approach to play safety has been welcomed by the UK Play Safety Forum. Benefit-risk assessment for sports



and recreational facilities, activities and equipment – Standard 4980:2023 from the International Organisation for Standardisation suggests that says that councils, businesses and others should take a balanced approach to safety in playgrounds and other leisure facilities, rather than focusing solely on risk reduction.

Social Work

[Social Work Scotland announces programme for Annual Conference and Exhibition](#)

Social Work Scotland has published the programme for its Annual Conference and Exhibition. The event takes place on 4 October, with speakers including The Promise Scotland Director Fraser McKinlay.

[Promoting relationship-based practice \(England\)](#)

A new toolkit is being developed by the British Association of Social Workers (BASW) as part of the 80:20 campaign for social workers to be given more time to engage in direct relationship-based work. The toolkit will provide a series of ‘top tips’ explaining to employers and the government what needs to be improved, ideas for what changes should happen and the impact they would have. BASW is seeking views on what support social workers need to make time for relationship-based social work, with a closing date of 14 August 2023.

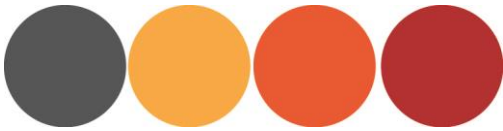
Other Health and Social Care

[Agreement on accountability arrangements for National Care Service](#)

The Scottish Government has announced that an initial agreement has been reached on accountability arrangements for the National Care Service. Under the agreement, overall legal accountability will be shared between Scottish Government, the NHS and local government. Staff will continue to be employed by local authorities, and councils will still be responsible for assets like buildings and the delivery of services.

[2023-24 Voluntary Sector Development Fund open for applications](#)

Applications to the 2023-24 Voluntary Sector Development Fund (VSDF) are now open, the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) has announced. Administered by the SSSC on behalf of the Scottish Government, VSDF supports voluntary sector organisations providing social services in relation to the costs associated with staff meeting the required registration qualification criteria.



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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