



[Covid-19 - General](#)

[Child Protection](#)

[Early Learning and
Childcare](#)

[Looked After and
Accommodated Children](#)

[Other Health and Social
Care](#)

Covid-19 - General

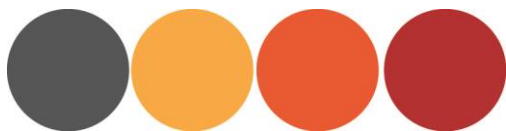
[Scottish Covid Inquiry holds preliminary hearing](#)

The Scottish Covid-19 Inquiry held a preliminary health and social care hearing on 28 August 2023. During the preliminary hearing, the Inquiry screened a short film intended as formal and lasting recognition of the suffering caused by the pandemic to the people of Scotland. The Inquiry's first formal hearings, beginning in October, will focus on the health and social care impacts of the pandemic, followed by impacts on education and young people in 2024.

Child Protection

[National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland updated](#)

The Scottish Government has published an updated version of the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland. The guidance describes the responsibilities and expectations for all involved in protecting children and will support the care and protection of children. There was a commitment upon publication of the guidance in 2021 that it would be reviewed and updated to reflect significant changes in legislation, policy or practice to ensure it remains relevant and up to date. [A table](#) has been published showing the revisions made in the update, while [Practice Insights](#), published alongside the guidance, have also been updated.



[Campaign to recruit Children's Hearings panel members launched](#)

A new campaign to recruit new volunteer panel members has been launched by Children's Hearings Scotland. The campaign, featuring adverts across print, broadcast and social media, highlights qualities that have been identified as needed for the role by young people with experience of hearings. It will run until 3 October.

[First Bairns' Hoose launched](#)

Scotland's first Bairns' Hoose has been launched. The pilot scheme, based at an undisclosed address in the West of Scotland, mirrors the Norwegian Barnahus model, aiming to provide a safe space for children and young people who have been the victims of violent and sexual crimes. It will also allow victims and witnesses to give pre-recorded evidence without needing to go to a police station or court. The Children 1st Bairns Hoose received £1.5 million from the Postcode Dream Fund and was developed in partnership with Victim Support Scotland, the University of Edinburgh, Children England, and local partners from statutory agencies in North Strathclyde. [Bairns' Hoose standards](#) were published earlier this year, developed by the Care Inspectorate and Healthcare Improvement Scotland.

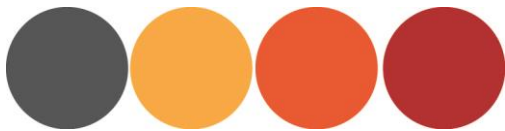
Early Learning and Childcare

[Joint statement on ELC inspections and delivery of a shared inspection framework](#)

The Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland have issued a joint statement on early learning and childcare (ELC) inspections and progress towards the delivery of the shared inspection framework. Over the past year, we have continued working together to plan our inspection programmes, undertake shared inspections and reduce burdens on the sector. Last year, following feedback from the sector we announced that neither organisation would inspect a service within an 18-month period of each other. We have agreed that the 18-month period will remain unless there are exceptional circumstances. Following an extensive online and in-person engagement programme with stakeholders, as well as in-depth analysis of the information gathered, a project team from both organisations is in place and working towards delivering a draft shared framework for further engagement in the Autumn.

[Results from survey of ELC sector on pandemic recovery](#)

Early learning and childcare (ELC) practitioners in Scotland say the way children interact with adults in care settings has changed as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. The Care Inspectorate surveyed almost 850 respondents, including service managers, practitioners, support workers and childminders, on how the ELC sector is recovering from the pandemic. Many practitioners reported that their settings are recovering well, despite challenges, and have adapted approaches to support children, families and staff. Respondents identified negative impacts for children, in particular those identified as needing additional support from adults. Practitioners said more children are now requiring support with their emotional and social developmental needs to support wellbeing and learning, requiring additional



time from adults. Many reported ongoing staffing challenges and the impact this has on the ability to meet children's needs and support play and learning.

[NDNA publishes FOI findings on ELC funding rates](#)

The National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA) has published findings from a freedom of information (FOI) request on local authority early learning and childcare (ELC) funding rates. According to the NDNA, only two councils are increasing ELC entitlement funding in line with the rising costs providers are facing. The NDNA has warned that without a "truly sustainable rate" of funding, there will not be capacity in the sector to deliver an increase in funded places for younger children.

Looked After and Accommodated Children

[CELCIS publishes statistical analysis as part of children's services reform study](#)

A statistical analysis to inform a research study on children's services reform has been published by the Centre for excellence for Children's Care and Protection (CELCIS). In 2022, CELCIS was asked by the Scottish Government to carry out a research study to inform decision-making on how best to deliver children's services in light of the proposed introduction of the National Care Service for Scotland and commitments associated with The Promise. This statistical analysis strand of the study looks at whether the level of structural integration of children's health and social care services is associated with changes in outcomes for children, young people, families, and the workforce.

[New national allowance for foster and kinship carers](#)

A standard national allowance for foster and kinship carers has been introduced for the first time, the Scottish Government has announced. Funding of £16m has been allocated to support the Scottish Recommended Allowance, following agreement with COSLA, to support every eligible foster and kinship carer across Scotland.

Other Health and Social Care

[Improvements to Care Inspectorate Digital Portal](#)

The Care Inspectorate has listened to feedback from users and will soon be launching improvements to our Digital Portal. We will publish guidance documents when the changes are available to support portal users with the changes, which include a designated provider area on the portal where you can manage your provider details., the ability to make applications to register new care services on behalf of your provider, and new portal access permissions.

[First assessment of system change in the child poverty system published](#)

A report assessing system change in addressing child poverty has been published by the Scottish Government. The report, the first of its kind, aims to identify and understand the range of approaches taken to system change and person-centred



support in local child poverty systems following publication of the Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan 2022-26. An initial synthesis analysis will be completed by 2023, followed by annual analysis which will feed into child poverty progress reports.

[Joint inspections to focus on serious youth violence \(England\)](#)

Joint targeted area inspections (JTAs) in England will focus on multi-agency responses to serious youth violence. Ofsted, CQC, HMICFRS and HMIP have published guidance for the thematic focus on serious youth violence as part of a new programme of JTAs. Inspections will focus on how the police, children's social care, education, youth offending services and relevant health services in local areas work together to address and prevent serious youth violence.

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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