



## Child Protection

### [Scottish Government responds to Hearings System Working Group report](#)

The Scottish Government has published its response to the report from the Hearings System Working Group on Children’s Hearings. The Working Group published its report in May 2023, with around [100 recommendations](#) aiming to support implementation of an aspect of the Independent Care Review alongside a modern update on the work of the Kilbrandon Committee. Given the “broad and complex” nature of the report, the Scottish Government divides its response to recommendations into four categories: acceptance, consultation, further work, or declination. Of the recommendations, 63 were accepted, 26 accepted with conditions, 42 require exploration and consultation, and seven declined. The recommendation that the Care Inspectorate (through the inspection process) should consider how CSOs are supported and prioritised with implementing authority planning processes was accepted with conditions.

### [NSPCC highlights child sexual offence figures following FOI request](#)

Child sexual offences recorded by police across the UK and in Scotland remain close to record levels, according to data highlighted by the NSPCC. The figures, sourced from a freedom of information (FOI) request by the charity, show a total of 86,962 child sexual offences recorded across the UK in 2022-23. As reported in [The Herald](#), there were 5,557 child sexual offences recorded by Police Scotland during the year, close to the record levels recorded the previous year (5,640).

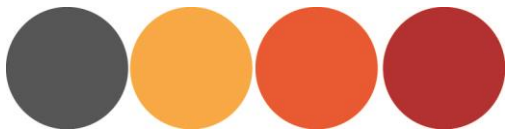
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### [Analysis of police-recorded child sexual abuse and exploitation \(England and Wales\)](#)

An analysis of police-recorded child sexual abuse and exploitation (CSAE) in England and Wales has been published by the Vulnerability Knowledge and Practice Programme. Based on 2022 datasets collected from 42 police forces, the analysis found that crime types for CSAE are changing, with child-on-child abuse now accounting for just over half of offences. Described as a “growing and concerning trend”, 52% of all CSAE cases involved reports of children (aged 10 to 17) offending against other children, with 14 being the most common age. CSAE within the family environment remains a common form of reported abuse, while reported CSAE remains heavily gendered, with males accounting for 82% of all perpetrators.

### **Disabilities**

#### [Consultation on proposed Learning Disabilities, Autism and Neurodivergence Bill](#)

A consultation on a proposed Learning Disabilities, Autism and Neurodivergence Bill has been launched by the Scottish Government. The consultation, which runs until 21 April, is seeking views on proposals to better respect, protect and champion the rights of people with learning disabilities, autism and neurodivergence. The consultation is wide-ranging, covering topics such as definitions, social and complex care, transitions, independent advocacy, and mental health and capacity law.

### **Early Learning and Childcare**

#### [Warning that dangers of button batteries should not be underestimated](#)

The dangers of button batteries have been highlighted by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA), Nursery World reports. RoSPA highlights that while toys are now required to have a secure compartment for button batteries, other items like light up accessories, novelties and car keys are not. RoSPA warns that swallowing a button battery can cause “catastrophic” internal bleeding.

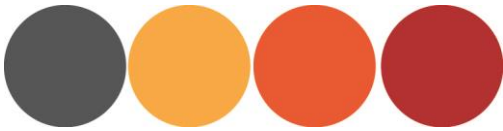
### **Equalities and human rights**

#### [Updated guidance on implementing a children’s human rights approach](#)

Updated guidance to support public authorities and other organisations to implement a children’s human rights approach has been published by the Scottish Government. The guidance provides a brief summary of human rights, children’s rights and the UNCRC, raising awareness of the ambition for children’s human rights in Scotland and clarifying links between the UNCRC, key policies and existing Scottish law.

#### [New NES essential learning module on equality, diversity and human rights](#)

A new essential learning module offering an introduction to equality, diversity and human rights has been launched by NHS Education for Scotland (NES). Health



Boards and health and social care organisations are encouraged to use the module, which was developed with the input and expertise of partners.

## **Other Health and Social Care**

### [Annual returns now live](#)

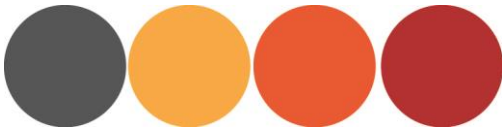
The annual return is now available for services to complete between Monday 8 January and Sunday 17 March 2024. All service types must complete their annual returns electronically, using the Care Inspectorate's eForms system. The annual return gives us important information that helps us plan, inform and carry out our inspections and improvement work. We also share some of the information with other organisations, such as the Scottish Social Services Council and the Scottish Government, and we use it to produce several statistical publications that you can view on our website.

### [Scottish Covid-19 Inquiry hearings postponed](#)

The Scottish Covid-19 Inquiry's has announced that the next tranche of health and social care impact hearings will be rescheduled. This is due to the Chair of the Inquiry requiring surgery. The Inquiry's other work will continue as planned.

### [Focus on mental health awareness as new Chief Inspector begins term \(England\)](#)

Sir Martyn Oliver has launched a package of mental health awareness training for inspectors as he begins his five-year term as Chief Inspector of Education at Ofsted. Sir Martyn, who takes over from Amanda Spielman, will also embark on a 'Big Listen' to hear directly from parents and professionals about the strengths and weaknesses of Ofsted's current approach to inspection and regulation.



## **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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