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Covid-19 - General

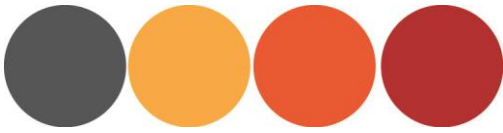
[Scottish Covid Inquiry to return in June](#)

The Scottish Covid-19 Inquiry has confirmed that it will return to its premises in June to hold closing statement for the Health and Social Care Impact Hearings. Hearings will then be suspended until mid-September.

Additional Support Needs

[Committee report raises additional support for learning concerns](#)

The Education, Children and Young People Committee has published its report on the recent additional support for learning inquiry. The inquiry found there was a significant gap between the ambitions and implementation of a policy that aspires for children and young people with additional support needs to be taught in mainstream education. The Committee described the situation as “intolerable” and makes several recommendations including reviewing placing requests, undertaking research on the prevalence and impact of masking, and urgently addressing gaps in specialist provision.



Child Protection

[Minister visits Bairns Hoose](#)

Minister for Children, Young People and Keeping the Promise, Natalie Don, has met with Children 1st at the Bairns Hoose in North Strathclyde to discuss further support for victims and witnesses in Scotland. During the minister's visit, she was taken on a tour of the Bairns Hoose, which the charity opened in 2023. Children 1st has called for more investment and transformational change in this area.

Early Learning and Childcare

[SCMA launches next phase of childminding strategy](#)

The Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) has launched the [next phase](#) of its ten year Changing the Narrative strategy, which was kicked off in 2021. The new delivery phase includes a range of plans for the next three years, including providing support to the ongoing implementation of ELC policy and the increase in childminder numbers to delivery funded ELC hours.

[Space to Grow and Thrive](#)

The Care Inspectorate has launched Space to Grow and Thrive, updated design guidance for early learning and childcare and school age childcare settings. The resource builds on the previous Space to Grow resource and incorporates the lessons learned from the expansion programme along with the pandemic and feedback from the sector. This update includes the guidance and practice notes about indoor/outdoor settings, the practice note: delivering high quality play and learning environments outdoors and relevant sections of the hand hygiene and nappy changing guidance.

Health

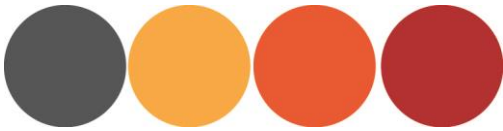
[Expectant mothers encouraged to get whooping cough vaccine](#)

Public Health Scotland is encouraging pregnant women to get their whooping cough immunisation, which offers protection against the infection to babies after birth until they are old enough to have the routine immunisation at 8 weeks old. Notifications of whooping cough have increased in Scotland since the beginning of 2024 and confirmed cases are likely to rise in line with this. There have been no reported deaths from pertussis in Scotland this year, or since 2015.

Looked After and Accommodated Children

[Call for more foster families](#)

Barnardo's Scotland has highlighted research by The Fostering Network which shows the number of foster families required in Scotland stands at 500. The charity



has shared the story of a foster carer in East Kilbride to encourage more people to consider fostering a child or young person.

Other

[Report highlights financial challenges faced by councils](#)

A report by the Accounts Commission suggests local authorities in Scotland faced a collective gap of up to £585 million between the money needed to deliver services and the money available when setting budgets this year, a figure that is expected to rise to £780 million by 2026/27. The report states councils are addressing this most commonly by making ongoing savings, using reserves and raising money through charging citizens for some services.

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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