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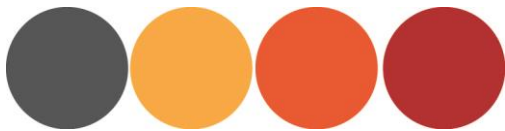
Covid-19 (General)

[Final series of impact hearings announced](#)

The final tranche of impact hearings at the Scottish Covid-19 Inquiry will begin on 18 February 2025 and will run until June 2025. This series of hearings will explore impacts of the pandemic which have not yet been covered in the health and social care, education, business and welfare themes. Impacts on the justice system will be the focus of the first hearings in February.

[10,000th person shares pandemic experience with Let's Be Heard](#)

The Scottish Covid-19 Inquiry has shared that over 10,000 people have participated in the Let's Be Heard public participation project, which has been collecting experiences of the pandemic since May 2023. The Inquiry has highlighted two ongoing surveys for children and young people, and educational staff, which close on 29 November and will mark the close of the project's public engagement activities. Meanwhile the UK Covid-19 Inquiry has [reported](#) that more than 50,000 people have submitted pandemic experiences to its Every Story Matters project.



Additional Support Needs

[National progress report on additional support for learning](#)

COSLA and the Scottish Government have published a [joint progress report](#) and [action plan](#) on additional support for learning. The progress report sets out delivery of actions under the recommendations of the 2020 Morgan Review, including mainstreaming and inclusion, leadership, relationships between schools and parents and understanding rights.

[The Yard announces plans to expand respite and out of school care provision](#)

Children in Scotland has highlighted plans for The Yard, the Dundee-based charity that supports children and young people with disabilities and additional needs, to refurbish its family support centre and provide respite care, after-school and holiday support. The Yard recently took ownership of the building from which it operates from Dundee City Council and has now secured planning consent to create a year-round, accessible community resource for children and young people with any disability, from birth to 25.

Child Protection

[Rise in online grooming cases](#)

The NSPCC has reported more than 7000 sexual communication with a child offences were recorded last year, an increase of 89% since the offence first came into force in 2017. Almost half of offences were on Snapchat (48%), where a means of communication was known. The charity is urging Ofcom to strengthen the rules that social media platforms must follow to tackle child sexual abuse, suggesting the regulatory is too focused on acting after harm has taken place and preventative measures are needed.

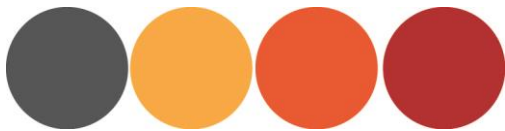
Early Learning and Childcare

[New registration category for childminders without domestic premises \(England\)](#)

Ofsted has announced it has created a new category for registering childminders without domestic premises. The move will allow childminders registered with Ofsted to work solely from somewhere other than a home, such as village halls or other premises. The total number of people who can work together under a childminder's registration has also increased from three to four, allowing providers more flexibility to work with others such as childminding assistants.

[Free CPL access for childminders](#)

The Scottish Childminding Association has confirmed all childminders in Scotland will now be able to access three free Continuing Professional Learning e-Learning courses. The learning is available through the Scottish Government-funded national



childminder retention and recruitment programme. The courses are: Translating Policy into Practice; Reflective Practice; and Evidence in Practice.

Health

[Call for evidence on Right to Addiction Recovery Bill](#)

The Scottish Parliament's Health, Social Care and Sport Committee has opened a call for evidence on the Right to Addiction Recovery (Scotland) Bill, a Members' Bill introduced by Conservative MSP Douglas Ross. The Bill, as introduced, seeks to make provision about the rights of persons addicted to drugs or alcohol to receive treatment for addiction. Written submissions on the Bill are invited until the 20 December 2024.

Justice

[SCRA Annual Report](#)

The Scottish Children's Reporter Administration has published its annual report for 2023/24. The report includes updates on the organisation's progress on its aims of inclusion and diversity, rights, corporate parenting, The Promise, policy and research.

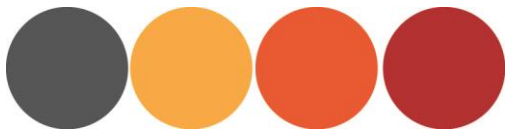
[Impact of criminal exploitation on children and young people revealed](#)

Action for Children has published research highlighting the experiences of children and young people who are victims of criminal exploitation. The charity analysed serious safeguarding incident data involving young people supported by the Criminal Exploitation Intervention Service between 2020-2024. There were 179 serious incidents across the UK, with 60% involving serious assaults on children and one third of incidents involving a weapon.

Looked After and Accommodated Children

[Thematic review of transitions for care experienced young people](#)

The Care Inspectorate has published a thematic review on transitions for care experienced young people. The review found that almost all the young people heard from were experiencing positive relationships with trusted staff and felt supported by them throughout the stages of moving on from care. A culture of rights and relationship-based, trauma-informed practice for care experienced young people was evident at a national level and in the four areas that participated in the review. However, the experience of moving on from care, envisaged by the Scottish Care Leavers Covenant, has yet to be achieved for all young people according to the review. Variable approaches to keeping in touch also means that not all young people have equity of access to all the necessary information during the stages of transition.



[Kinship Care Assessment Framework](#)

The Kinship Care Assessment Framework 2024 has been published by the Scottish Government. The document is designed to assist social work practitioners to undertake a comprehensive assessment of a kinship carer, supporting them to assess individual needs of kinship carers and assist them in planning for the future.

[Recommendations for improving adoption system \(England and Wales\)](#)

A report has been published by the adoption sub-group of the Public Law Working Group for England and Wales, highlighting the need for “wholesale reform” of the adoption process. The sub-group has been focused on five areas since 2020: international adoption, consensual adoption, access to records, processes and procedures in court, and contact. The report makes recommendations for best practice including changing face to face contact between adoption children and birth families and simplifying the complex adoptions system with an international element.

Workforce

[SSSC snapshot report into care workforce](#)

The Scottish Social Services Council has published its second Register snapshot report on the care workforce, highlighting the data SSSC holds about the registered workforce. The report, which examines data from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024, shows there were 176,781 people on the SSSC Register in March this year, an increase of 5.1% on April 2023. All parts of the Register grew from 2023 to 2024 apart from social work students, which fell for the second year in a row.

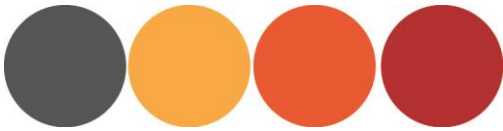
Other

[Committee publishes recommendations on proposed new National Outcomes](#)

The Health, Social Care and Sport Committee has published a report on their scrutiny of the proposed National Outcomes to consider the strategic themes related to the health and social care outcomes in the National Performance Framework (NPF), including how Scotland is currently performing and the health and wellbeing aspects of the NPF. On the proposed new Care National Outcome, the Committee notes stakeholder concerns around implementation and how to measure/define progress. The Committee recommends the Scottish Government clarify the scope of ‘care’ and set out how it will establish a baseline of need to measure progress and take action if progress is not made.

[Annual returns available between January and March 2025](#)

The Care Inspectorate’s annual returns will be available to service providers for completion between 6 January and 3 March 2025. The closing date includes an extension of two weeks on our usual six-week deadline.



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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