



[Early Learning and
Childcare](#)

[Education](#)

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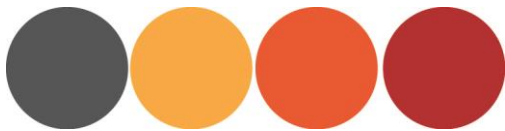
[Looked After and
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Early Learning and Childcare

[Review of Care Inspectorate ELC improvement programme](#)

We have published the yearly review of our Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) Improvement Programme, looking at the work undertaken by the programme team during 2024-2025 and provides recommendations to the Scottish Government to inform future funding decisions about the value and future potential of the programme. Amongst other findings, feedback on the programme is positive with services citing accessibility and the opportunity to engage with other participants across the country as highlights. We recommend continuing to offer targeted support to all eligible ELC settings, extending that offer to all eligible ELC, childminder and school aged childcare settings, grow the capacity of the programme to offer support to services who do not meet the eligibility criteria, provide increased opportunities for face-to-face training and development, and continue to build and develop our universal support resources to ensure the topics and context are relatable and easily accessible.



Education

[Vision for education set out in National Improvement Framework](#)

The Scottish Government has published 'Achieving Excellence and Equity: 2025 National Improvement Framework', setting out their vision, key priorities and educational outcomes for children and young people. The vision is for Scottish education to be ambitious, inclusive and supportive to deliver excellence through raising achievement and improving outcomes: ensuring that every child and young person achieves the highest standards they can, and achieving equity: ensuring every child and young person has the same opportunity to succeed.

[Joint Education Assurance Board to be established](#)

COSLA and the Scottish Government have agreed to establish a joint Education Assurance Board to achieve shared objectives to improve attainment, attendance and improve relationships and behaviour. They have also agreed to work together to restore teacher numbers to 2023 levels next year, freeze learning hours, make meaningful progress towards reducing class contact time for teachers, and local government will also receive additional funding of £28 million from 2025-2026 to develop the Additional Support for Learning (ASL) education workforce along with an enhanced offer in support.

[School statistics for 2024](#)

The Scottish Government has published 'Summary statistics for schools in Scotland 2024', with statistics on teachers, pupils, attendance, and early learning and childcare provision. Amongst other findings, the number of teachers in Scotland decreased to 53,412 full-time equivalents (FTE), a drop of 621 FTE compared to the previous year, the overall average class size in primary schools was 23.3, up from 23.2 in 2023, and child registrations for funded ELC decreased this year to 90,321, down from 92,182 in 2023.

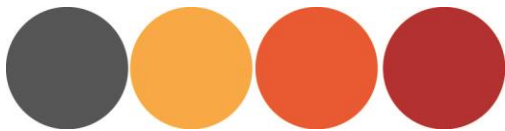
Equalities

[Funding for partnership to support children's rights](#)

The Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights (together) has announced a partnership with Clan Childlaw with funding from the Independent Human Rights Fund for Scotland, managed by the Corra Foundation, which will aim to support action to realise and defend children's rights and tackle immediate rights issues affecting children and young people across Scotland.

[State of the nation report on human rights](#)

The Scottish Human Rights Commission (SHRC) has published its State of the Nation 2024 report on its work on spotlight projects and international treaty monitoring. The report to the Scottish Parliament focuses on a different set of rights



every year and for 2023-24 it focuses on the extent to which 14 civil and political rights are being adequately upheld for all people in Scotland.

Justice

[Programme supporting young people away from anti-social behaviour and crime](#)

The Scottish Government is highlighting the results of a programme supported by CashBack for Communities, funded from the seized assets of criminals, which diverts young people away from anti-social behaviour and crime. A report into the first year of the programme's three-year funding phase, which runs from April 2023 to March 2026, states that 15,368 young people have been supported.

Looked After and Accommodated Children

[Study into experiences of care during the pandemic](#)

The Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA) and Our Hearings, Our Voice (OHOV) has published 'Care and Coronavirus: Perspectives on Childhood, Youth and Family' exploring children and young people's experiences of different forms of care during the Covid-19 pandemic. In the chapter on virtual hearings and their impact on children's participation in decisions about their care and protection, it is highlighted that for some young people, the use of virtual hearings provided an emotionally protective means of participating in decisions about their care and protection. The findings of this study also reportedly emphasises the need to ensure that technological and behavioural management tools used within virtual hearings do not act as a barrier to the voices of children and young people being included in discussions about their care and protection.

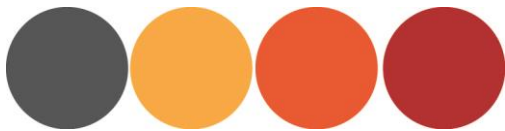
[Rights Strategy published by children's reporter](#)

The Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA) has published its 'Rights, Inclusion and Corporate Parenting Strategy 2024-27'. The strategy reportedly aims to ensure that everything they do is grounded on respecting rights, plus is inclusive and supportive.

[Children's rights strategy published by Hearings Scotland](#)

A Children's Participation and Rights Strategy has been published by Children's Hearings Scotland, reinforcing their commitment to ensuring the views of infants, children and young people remain at the centre of every hearing. Co-designed with young people, the strategy outlines four key principles:

- Respect – we will promote our vision and values by actively listening and valuing the perspectives of those with lived experience
- Inclusion – we will make sure our approach to participation stays fluid and in the best interest of those with lived experience
- Empowerment – we will provide a platform for those with lived experience to create and influence lasting change



- Accountability – we must be bold and ambitious and show how we will fulfil our commitments to those with lived experience

[Research paper on belonging and connections for care experienced people](#)

The Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE) has published a research paper on 'Belonging and Connections', outlining the top issues care experienced people have raised with them through their independent advocacy. Key findings include that 75% of surveyed care experienced adults reported experiencing loneliness, almost half felt their care experiences negatively impacted their lifelong relationships, and respondents were most dissatisfied with relationships with parents, extended family, and professionals. The ALLIANCE paper also recommends action such as services providing spaces for connection, befriending, peer support, talking therapy and pet therapy, should be made available and accessible to care experienced people of all ages, aftercare support to include opportunities to gain independent living skills such as cooking, cleaning and money management, expedite the development of relationships-based trauma training to support adoptive parents, kinship and foster carers, and a statutory right to lifelong advocacy in the Promise Bill.

Other Health and Social Care

[Annual review for Healthcare Improvement Scotland](#)

Healthcare Improvement Scotland (HIS) has published a video on their Annual Review for 2024, updating their work in patient safety, dementia and hospital at home. HIS has also published questions and answers relating to their work.

[Data on diversity analysis](#)

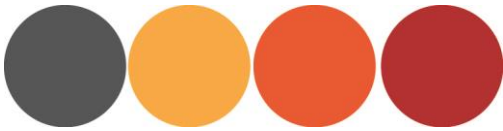
The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) has published an analysis report on data from their register on fitness to practise, registration conditions, protected characteristics, religion and sexual orientation.

[Applying for registration within three months](#)

Following changes to their register, the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) is highlighting the benefits of applying for registration within three months of starting a role. The SSSC note that the new requirement for workers to apply within three months allows them to identify and act on fitness to practise concerns more quickly.

[New partnership to tackle health inequalities in Scotland](#)

Public Health Scotland (PHS), University College London's Institute of Health Equity (IHE) and three Scottish local authority areas have come together to form the Collaboration for Health Equity in Scotland (CHES), a partnership which aims to strengthen and accelerate action to improve health and reduce health inequalities in



Scotland. Learning from the partnership will be used to support work across the country.

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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