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Child Protection

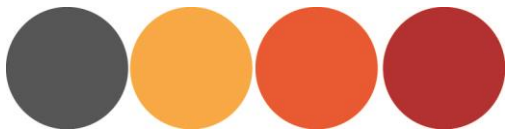
[Public support for safeguards on AI products](#)

The NSPCC has published survey findings which show 78 per cent of the public support child safety checks on new generative artificial intelligence (AI) products. The polling results have been published with the NSPCC's latest research identifying seven key safety risks to children related to AI, including grooming and harassment, financially motivated extortion and the proliferation of harmful content. The charity is calling on government to adopt specific safeguards for children in legislation. Artificial intelligence [safety tips for parents](#) have also been published.

Disability

[Funding for organisations supporting people with learning disabilities](#)

A replacement for the Inspiring Inclusion Learning Disability Fund, the 'Learning Disability Support Fund', will make funding available for third sector organisations supporting people with learning disabilities. The grants available will be used to provide people with education and information on matters such as accessing health services and developing safe relationships.



Justice

[Scottish Covid Inquiry publishes timetable for justice system impact hearings](#)

The Scottish Covid-19 Inquiry has published the timetable for justice system impact hearings (18-21 February 2025), and is now accepting requests to attend for the first week of its justice system impact hearings. Evidence will be heard from amongst other, bodies such as the Scottish Legal Aid Board, Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service, Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service (SCTS), Public and Commercial Services Union and Victim Support Scotland.

Other

[Care Inspectorate contact centres open late during annual returns](#)

The Care Inspectorate will extend its contact centre opening hours to help services with queries about annual returns, which are available to providers for completion until 2 March 2025. The contact centre will be open between 4pm and 6pm on Thursdays between 30 January and 27 February.

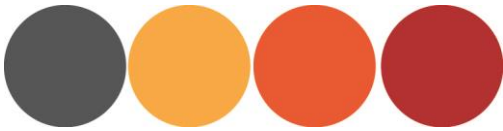
[Update on the National Care Service](#)

The Scottish Government's Minister for Social Care, Maree Todd, has given an update on the National Care Service (NCS) in a statement to the Scottish Parliament. confirming that Part 1 of the Bill will be removed and the Scottish Government will proceed with Part 2 and Part 3 only, the Minister repeatedly gave reassurances to stakeholders that she remained committed to the ambitions behind a National Care Service. The Minister outlined which specific provisions will remain, noting that core elements of Anne's Law were in place through the Health and Social Care Standards and the Government is committed to enshrining the policy in primary legislation. Other elements of the Bill that will be taken forward include an integrated, digital approach to information sharing and the introduction of a right to breaks for unpaid carers.

The Scottish Government has also published a [factsheet](#) detailing how it plans to move forward with the National Care Service (NCS) in 2025 and beyond and plans to review current health and social care standards, and the Scottish Parliament's Information Centre (SPICe) has published [a blog](#) on developments to the NCS from September 2024 to January 2025.

[Financial pressures on councils](#)

Audit Scotland has published a financial bulletin for 2023/24 on local government in Scotland, which reports on funding and budgets, financial performance, and financial position and outlook, which reportedly highlights that councils are facing "severe financial pressures" and recommending consultation with communities, clearly communicating the impact on local services and working together to shape and deliver urgently needed transformation. Amongst other key messages, the bulletin reportedly shows that "despite an increase in overall revenue and capital funding for



councils in 2024/25, and the Scottish Government's budget proposals in December 2024 indicating a further real terms uplift in funding for 2025/26, the financial outlook for Scotland's councils remains challenging.”

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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