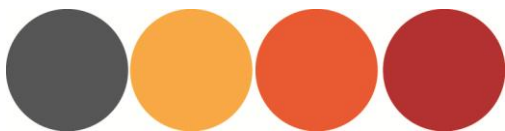


[Additional Support Needs](#)[Care Experience](#)[Child Protection](#)[Disability](#)[Early Learning and Childcare](#)[Education](#)[Health](#)[Justice](#)[Mental Health](#)[Workforce](#)[Other Health and Social Care](#)**Additional Support Needs**[Outcome of SEND services inspections review \(England\)](#)

Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission have published the outcome of a review of the way local area services for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are inspected in England. Following the review, Ofsted and the CQC have confirmed a series of improvements including better communication with children, young people and their families, and exploring how inspection reports can be made more accessible.

Care Experience[Five year strategy published by CELCIS](#)

CELCIS has published a new strategy, Building Brighter Future Together, setting out its priorities and goals for the next five years. The strategy is built around three key strategic priorities: protecting children and supporting families; driving improvements for care experienced people; and strengthening the infrastructure for children, families and the workforce. These are underpinned by two cross-cutting priorities: embedding the voices and experiences of children, young people and families; and supporting the workforce and leaders.



[Permanence study wins national award](#)

A University of Stirling led study on progress to permanence for looked after children has been named Research Project of the Year at the Herald Higher Education Awards. Researchers looked at the lives of more than 1,800 children who became looked after in Scotland aged five or under in 2012-13, tracking their progress from infant to adult. The latest phase of the study, carried out in collaboration with Lancaster University and the Association for Fostering, Kinship & Adoption Scotland, found that it took on average more than two years to find the children a permanent home, with more than one in 10 in temporary placements 10 years after becoming looked after. It was also found that 91% of children had experienced maltreatment before going into care, while the proportion of children with emotional and behavioural problems was five times higher than in the general population.

[Stories of people working to Keep The Promise](#)

The Promise Scotland is marking 2025 as the halfway point to Scotland Keeping The Promise, sharing the stories of people working in this area. Frances Maguire, Service Manager for the Independent Care and Review Team for Children and Families at Glasgow City Health and Social Care Partnership has shared her experience of introducing the My Meeting/My Plan model. This involved the creation of a new team of Independent Reviewing Officers to review care plans for children living in residential care, and those coming into care.

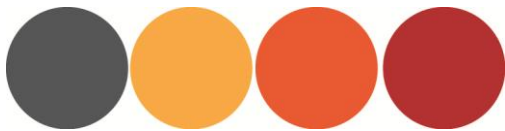
[Recommendations on mental health access for care experienced children \(England\)](#)

A report produced by academics from across England, in partnership with the UK Trauma Council and CoramBAAF, has highlighted “inadequate” mental healthcare for looked after children. The findings show that children experiencing care are often “shut out” out mental health services in England, despite mental health disorders disproportionately affecting this group compared to the general population. A range of recommendations are provided in the report, including the prioritisation of evidence-based solutions and improved training, commissioning and a shift away from “misconceptions” around mental health.

Child Protection

[Child neglect should be treated as national emergency, says NSPCC](#)

The NSPCC has reported receiving almost 18,000 contacts from adults across the UK with concerns about child neglect, making it the number one reason for adults reaching out to the charity’s helpline. Highlighting previous research which found over half of professionals across healthcare, police, children’s social care and education said they’d seen an increase in neglect cases during their career, the NSPCC is now calling for neglect to be considered a national emergency. They are also campaigning for a new amendment to the UK Government’s Children’s Wellbeing and Schools Bill to introduce a new national neglect strategy.



[Evaluation of Scottish Child Interview Model](#)

The Children and Young People's Centre for Justice has published an evaluation of the Scottish Child Interview Model (SCIM), the five-component model of practice for joint investigative interviewing. The evaluation report concludes SCIM is a robust model, focused on taking a trauma-informed and child-centred approach. The report recognises the importance of strong multiagency collaboration in delivering an interview experience tailored to the child.

Disability

[Accessible sex education for people with learning disabilities](#)

Learning Disability Today has highlighted the development of a sex education toolkit for people with learning disabilities, which can help them understand relationships, consent and bodily autonomy. The accessible resource uses a traffic light system to help people with learning disabilities better understand themselves and their relationships with others. Participants place coloured lights on a body mat to demonstrate how feelings and boundaries can quickly change.

Early Learning and Childcare

[Report highlights early years workforce challenges \(England\)](#)

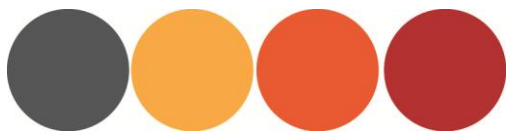
The National Day Nurseries Association has published research revealing the scale of the workforce challenges facing early education and childcare in England. A survey of 714 providers shows 69.8 per cent did not have sufficient staff to operate at maximum capacity, with nurseries carrying 4.2 FTE vacancies per setting on average. Specific concerns are raised in the report regarding the roll-out of increased funded hours from September 2025.

[Mothballing decision put on hold in Aberdeenshire](#)

Aberdeenshire Council has agreed to pause plans to close four rural nurseries following concerns from parents and campaigners. Parents had been told in April that the nurseries would close at the end of term but councillors have now agreed to put the decision on hold while it reviews guidance around how the local authority should consult with families.

[Parents urged not to rely on shop-bought baby food pouches](#)

The BBC reports that the NHS Start for Life website, which is run by the UK Department of Health and Social Care, is advising parents not to rely on shop-bought baby food pouches as every day meals. It is the first time the NHS website has published advice on commercial baby food. A recent BBC investigation found baby food pouches from six leading brands failed to meet babies' key nutritional needs.



Education

[Education inspection changes from autumn \(England\)](#)

Ofsted has confirmed it will publish a response to its recent consultation on changes to education inspections and the introduction of a new report card in September. This will be accompanied by a revised inspection framework and methodology. New-look inspections for education are expected to begin in November.

Health

[Annual report on vaccination and immunisation](#)

The second Annual Vaccination and Immunisation Report has been published by Public Health Scotland, reviewing the activities of the vaccination and immunisation programme in 2024. The report covers the launch of the new RSV vaccination programme and the first reporting of childhood immunisation data by ethnicity and urban-rural classification, as part of efforts to improve understanding around inequalities in vaccine uptake.

Justice

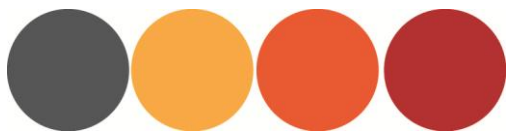
[CYCJ annual practice guide 2025](#)

The Children and Young People's Centre for Justice has drawn attention to its annual practice guide, titled Children and young people in conflict with the law: policy, practice and legislation, available for practitioners, researchers and educators. Seventeen sections cover a wide variety of themes including: Children's Rights; Risk Management; Mental Health; Diversity; Restorative Justice; Adversity and Trauma; and Diversion from Prosecution.

Mental Health

[Progress update on mental health and wellbeing strategy delivery and action plans](#)

The Scottish Government has published 'Mental health and wellbeing strategy - delivery plan and workforce action plan: progress update and next steps', laying out the successes and challenges, and plans for a refresh of the delivery and action plans. A Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy Leadership Board, co-chaired by the Minister for Social Care, Mental Wellbeing and Sport and the COSLA Health and Social Care Spokesperson has been established, bringing together key stakeholders across the public and voluntary sector, together with lived experience. Whilst the publication lists examples of tangible changes, measuring the impact of specific actions on the mental health and wellbeing of the people of Scotland is challenging, particularly in the short term and the Scottish Government are working with Public Health Scotland to support better understanding of the cumulative impact of the Strategy and its actions.



Workforce

[New campaign to improve social workers' working conditions](#)

The British Association of Social Workers and Social Workers Union have launched a campaign to tackle poor working conditions in the sector. As part of the campaign they have launched a new, evidence-based wellbeing toolkit for social workers which provides resources and ideas to use in workplaces to improve wellbeing.

[Funded places on Scottish Improvement Leader Programme](#)

The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) is offering funded places to social service workers on the Scottish Improvement Leader Programme, run by NHS Education for Scotland (NES). The Programme offers learning for workers in roles with a significant focus on quality improvement and dedicated time is allocated to lead improvement projects.

[Recruitment challenges in children's homes appear to ease \(England\)](#)

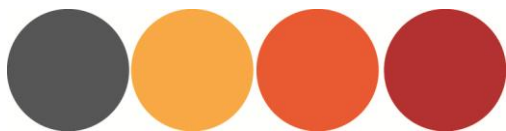
The Department of Education has published findings from the children's homes workforce census. Children and Young People Now reports that the research shows just under half of children's residential care settings in England had no vacancies in 2024, suggesting recruitment has improved. However around two in three children's homes still reported challenges in hiring staff, with 60 per cent reporting problems finding managers.

[Digital health care leadership skills programme opens](#)

The NES Digital Health and Care Leadership Programme is now open for applications, as highlighted by the SSSC. It is the 27th cohort of the Programme which is open to all health and social care settings in Scotland including health, social care, social work, housing, charities and the third sector. The Programme is for anyone with a professional interest in digital health and care who is looking to develop their leadership skills.

[Guide for social workers using OpenAI](#)

Social Work Scotland has published a guide to working with OpenAI in partnership with the University of Strathclyde. The guide for social workers introduces the responsible use of OpenAI in the profession and provides insight into what the technology can and can't do, including guidance on ethical and responsible use



Other Health and Social Care

[Evidence to Health Committee from Care Inspectorate](#)

The Care Inspectorate's Jackie Irvine, Chief Executive, Edith Macintosh, Executive Director of Assurance and Improvement (Adults, Registration, Complaints and Quality Improvement), and Kevin Mitchell, Executive Director of Assurance and Improvement (Children's Regulated Care and Strategic Scrutiny) gave evidence to the Scottish Parliament's Health, Social Care and Sport Committee. This was part of the Committee's routine scrutiny of bodies that sit within the remit of the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care, and as such, the meeting covered a broad array of topics on our role and activity.

[Progress update on IRISR recommendations](#)

The Scottish Government has published a 2025 Progress Update on the Independent Review of Inspection, Scrutiny and Regulation of Social Care in Scotland (IRISR). The report outlines Recommendation 15 and 33 have progressed and are being led by a cross-sector Steering Group, co-chaired by the government, the Care Inspectorate and the Scottish Social Services Council. It highlights key workstreams relevant to the IRISR recommendations, including the 'Team Around the Person' toolkit; the Joint Inspection of Children's Services, led by Healthcare Improvement Scotland and the Care Inspectorate; review of the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland Regulations; and the setting up of a National Information Governance Programme to support the effective and proper use of information.

[First Minister confirms minor cabinet reshuffle](#)

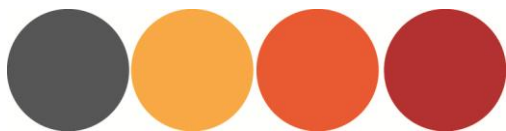
First Minister John Swinney has announced a minor reshuffle of his cabinet team following the return of Màiri McAllan from maternity leave. Tom Arthur is the new Minister for Social Care and Wellbeing, with former incumbent Maree Todd given responsibility for Drugs and Alcohol Policy. Mr Arthur has been the MSP for Renfrewshire South since 2016 and previously held the post of Minister for Employment and Investment.

[Care Reform \(Scotland\) Bill passed](#)

The Scottish Parliament this week passed the Care Reform (Scotland) Bill after Stage 3 proceedings. The Bill – formally titled the National Care Service (Scotland) Bill – includes provisions to enshrine Anne's Law in legislation, establish a National Social Work Agency and National Chief Social Work Adviser, ensure breaks for unpaid carers and improve access to independent advocacy services.

[Parents unsure where to turn for support, survey finds](#)

Children First has published a study showing 85 per cent of parents in Scotland feel they don't know where to seek support when they face challenges in bringing up their children. The charity has urged parents to use its free support line and webchat



service, but also described the results “extremely troubling”. Children First recently declared a “childhood emergency” in Scotland.

[Review report highlights benefits of creative programmes on disadvantaged children](#)

An evidence review by Coram has explored the benefits of using creative interventions with children and young people experiencing disadvantage. The review focused on evidence of the impact of creative programmes delivered outside the national curriculum such as arts, music, theatre and multimedia on care-experienced children and young people and those facing broader disadvantage. Most commonly, children and young people were observed to have grown in confidence, self-esteem, social skills and communications skills and to have forged strong relationships with peers and programme facilitators.

[New Chair confirmed for Ofsted](#)

Dame Christine Gilbert has been announced as the next Chair of Ofsted. Dame Christine is a former Chief Inspector and the author of the Independent Learning Review for Ofsted. She will take up her new role at Ofsted from 1 September 2025.

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.

It should also be noted that the Care Inspectorate has no liability in respect of the content of external websites which may be signposted on this site.