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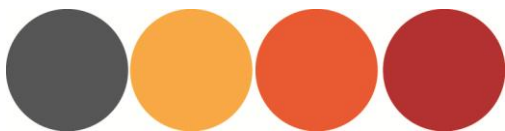
Care Experience

[Analysis of consultation responses on the future of foster care](#)

The Scottish Government has published a report analysing the results of its consultation on the future of fostering care in Scotland. The analysis covers 100 consultation responses, from 55 individuals and 45 organisations, as well as notes from 21 consultation events and findings from Who Cares? Scotland conversations with children and young people. Respondents were generally positive about the proposed vision for foster care but some felt it would be difficult to achieve because of funding or foster carer experience. The establishment of a National Register of Foster Carers was supported, while over four fifths felt independent fostering agencies should have the status of a charity, policies now reflected in the [Children \(Care, Care Experience and Services Planning\) \(Scotland\) Bill](#).

[Review of the work of The Promise Scotland 2023-2025](#)

A report has been published reviewing the work of The Promise Scotland from August 2023 to March 2025. The review reflects on activity and progress across the organisation's strategic work programme and four focus areas: Early help and support: Keeping families together; A good childhood: Siblings community of practice; Moving On; Increasing opportunities: Education.



[Promise Design School courses to support delivery](#)

A number of courses have been made available to support individuals and teams working to Keep The Promise. Led by the Promise Design School, the courses include a Co-Design Café on 25 July, the Promise Design School Sprint on 10 and 24 September, and the Co-Design Essentials Series on 19 August, 2 September and 23 September.

[CELCIS article reflects on social work stats to examine Continuing Care and Aftercare implementation](#)

The Centre for excellence for Children's Care and Protection (CELCIS) has published an article reflecting on recent Children's Social Work Statistics for Scotland to examine whether Continuing Care and Aftercare is working for children and young people. The article, written by Kirsty Doull, highlights that nearly 80% of young people who are eligible for Continuing Care are not accessing it, while 48% of those eligible are receiving Aftercare. Ms Doull suggests there are opportunities to make progress through the Children (Care, Care Experience and Services Planning) (Scotland) Bill but stresses the need to better understand how Continuing Care and Aftercare are being implemented and provision is inconsistent across Scotland.

[Review of implementation of Scottish Recommended Allowance](#)

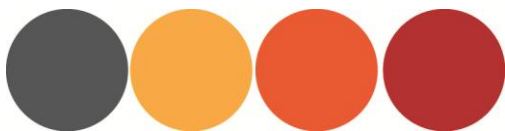
A review of the implementation of the Scottish Recommended Allowance (SRA) for foster and kinship carers has been published by the Scottish Government. The SRA was introduced in August 2023 and established a set rate which all local authorities in Scotland must pay to foster and kinship carers. The independent research found that the SRA had been welcomed as a positive step forward, as had the recent increase in payment amounts, there was still a perception that it was insufficient to meet families' needs.

[Latest AFKA newsletter issued](#)

The Association for Fostering, Kinship & Adoption Scotland (AFKA) has published its latest newsletter. The July edition includes an update on development of three permanence good practice guides, to be piloted in three local authorities between August and October. The newsletter also includes upcoming events and courses.

[Westminster committee reports on children's social care system \(England\)](#)

A report on the children's social care system in England has been published by the Education Committee at Westminster. The Committee makes recommendations in a range of areas, including the need for better support for care leavers, funding and early intervention, recruitment of foster carers and out of area placements. One recommendation calls for Ofsted and the UK Government to "ensure that the inspection system that replaces single-word judgements does not penalise providers who take on children with complex needs". The report also calls for universal standards of care that apply to all homes, including supported accommodation.



- The Joint Committee on Human Rights at Westminster has launched [an inquiry](#) on how well the human rights of children in England are protected in social care.

Child Protection

[Revised age assessment practice guidance published](#)

The Scottish Government has published revised guidance to support social workers, their managers and others involved in undertaking and contributing to age assessments in Scotland. The guidance has been updated to reflect the ways in which unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and young people present in Scotland, with an increase of spontaneous arrivals resulting in the increased use of brief enquiries to determine whether someone could be a child.

[UK Government to trial AI to estimate age of asylum seeking young people](#)

The UK Government is to test using artificial intelligence (AI) to estimate the age of unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people where it is disputed. In a Ministerial Statement, Border Security and Asylum Minister Angela Eagle said the Home Office would issue a tender next month for a project to trial the use of facial age estimation in age assessments, and following testing, it could be fully integrated into the assessment system during 2026.

[Charity seeking applications for Safeguarder roles](#)

The children's charity Children First has opened applications for part-time Safeguarder roles across Scotland. A Safeguarder is appointed to make sure a child or young person's best interests and human rights are represented in the court process. Applications close on 11 August..

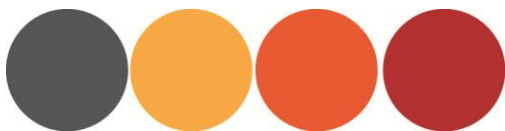
[Expected rise in concerns regarding children left home alone this summer](#)

The NSPCC is expecting a rise in calls to its helpline regarding children being left home alone this summer. The charity said July and August last year were among the months with the highest number of contacts in which concerns about a child being left home alone or unsupervised were mentioned. The NSPCC notes that the summer can be a particularly challenging time for parents and offers advice for those considering leaving children home alone.

Early Learning and Childcare

[Coram publishes Holiday Childcare Survey 2025](#)

Coram Family and Childcare has published its 20th Holiday Childcare Survey, based on responses from 174 local authorities across England, Scotland and Wales. According to the report, the average price of a holiday childcare club is £179 per week, an increase of 4% compared with 2024, though Scotland had the cheapest



cost (£167.87) and the smallest annual increase (3%) of the nations surveyed. The report suggests no local authorities in Scotland have enough holiday childcare for parents who work atypical hours or children who live in rural areas, while only 9% of childcare clubs and 22% of childminders are open during the Christmas holiday, the lowest level in Britain.

[Societal view of male roles restricts representation in early years, headteacher says](#)

A “deep-seated societal problem” is contributing to the low representation of men in early years settings, according to the headteacher of Robert Gordon’s College in Aberdeen. Robin Macpherson said the lack of promotion of men in certain careers reinforces gender stereotypes and suggests that promoting careers in health, education, administration and literacy will help shift perceptions in relation to men’s mental health and masculinity, Nursery World reports.

[Findings from early years programme evaluations \(England\)](#)

The findings from seven early years programme evaluations have been published by the Education Endowment Foundation. Over 500 early years settings took part in the evaluations, with four focused on communication and language, and three on early maths. It was found that one of the programmes - Concept Cat – was associated with an average of two months’ additional progress in understanding conceptual vocabulary than a similar group of children in settings who didn’t use the programme.

Equalities

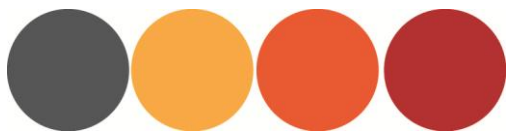
[Report takes lessons from access to justice for young children in other jurisdictions](#)

Together (the Scottish Alliance for Children’s Rights) has published a report on access to justice for babies and young children in other jurisdictions and lessons Scotland can learn. The report, produced in partnership with the University of Edinburgh’s LLM in Human Rights Law, examines how a number of jurisdictions around the world are working to operationalise the rights of babies and young children, particularly in legal and justice systems. A number of lessons are identified for Scotland, including the development of specific legal and policy frameworks that explicitly recognise and respond to the unique needs of babies and young children.

Health

[Call for public to take up MMR vaccine as measles cases increase](#)

Public Health Scotland continues to encourage the public to take up the offer of the Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) vaccine as cases continue to increase across the world. There have been 27 cases of laboratory confirmed measles in Scotland this year, as at 9 July. PHS notes the “modest decline” in vaccination rates in recent years and provides a range of information and resources on the condition.



Workforce

[SSSC Interim Convener appointment extended](#)

Children's Minister Natalie Don-Innes has confirmed an extension to the appointment of Peter Murray as Interim Convener of the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). This extension is for 5 months, running from 1 July to 30 November 2025.

[Six-monthly social worker report published](#)

The latest six-monthly report on Scotland's filled and vacant social worker and senior social worker posts has been published by the SSSC. The report, presenting data from December 2024, shows the number of whole time equivalent social workers in post in December 2024 was 2.4% less than in June 2024. The number of social work vacancies fell from 9.3% in June 2024 to 8.2% in December 2024, although there was a drop in the number of local authorities providing vacancy data. Vacancy rates reported by local authorities varied from 0% to 26.2%.

[Applications open for 2025-26 Voluntary Sector Development Fund](#)

Applications to the 2025-26 Voluntary Sector Development Fund are now open, the SSSC has confirmed. The fund, administered by the SSSC on behalf of the Scottish Government, supports voluntary sector organisations providing social services that are a registered charity and are registered with the Care Inspectorate. Around £780,000 is available during 2025-26 to contribute to costs associated with staff meeting required registration qualification criteria.

Other Health and Social Care

[Article reflects on European Social Services Conference](#)

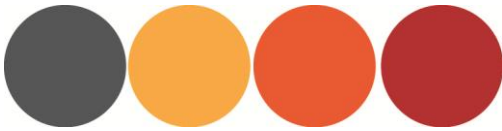
Social Work Scotland has published an article reflecting on the recent European Social Services Conference in Denmark. The event, run by the European Social Network, took place over three days, with key themes around relational welfare and welfare technology. Social Work Scotland showcased the Near Me in Prisons project at the event.

[Children in Scotland publishes annual achievement report](#)

Children in Scotland has published a report setting out its achievements over the course of 2024-25. According to the report, the charity worked directly with over 2,600 children and young people, delivered training to more than 12,000 delegates, hosted 60 events and welcomed 57 new organisations and individuals into membership. A central theme for the year remained empowerment of young voices.

[Joint statement calls for UK-wide action to end child poverty](#)

A joint statement calling for a UK-wide strategy to eradicate child poverty has been endorsed by Public Health Scotland (PHS) among a number of health bodies. The



statement, from PHS, the Faculty of Public Health, the Royal Society for Public Health and the Scottish Directors of Public Health, outlines a number of actions that could be taken to address child poverty and prevent associated harms to health.

[16 and 17 year olds to be given right to vote in UK elections](#)

16 and 17 year olds will be given the right to vote in future UK elections, the UK Government has confirmed. The reforms, originally in the Labour manifesto last year, are part of a new strategy to modernise democratic engagement.

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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