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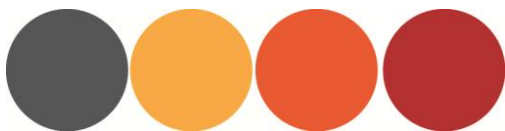
## Early Learning and Childcare

### [ELC providers forum Terms of Reference published](#)

The Terms of Reference for the National Childcare Providers Forum has been published by the Scottish Government. The new group brings together members from across the sector with Scottish Government ELC policy representatives and COSLA. The aim is to create a dedicated discussion space where providers from the private, third and childminding sectors can directly feed in their unique views on a range of national policy issues. A [full membership list](#) is available.

### [Cost of a Child report 2025](#)

The Children Poverty Action Group has published the annual Cost of a Child report, which looks at how much it costs families to provide a minimum socially acceptable standard of living for their children. The report covers a number of areas, including the costs facing many in-work families such as childcare, as well flexibility and accessibility of childcare.



### [Warning over end of school aged childcare funding \(England\)](#)

The School Aged Childcare Association has raised concerns about the end of funding for out of school care places in England, when the National Wraparound Childcare Programme ends in 2026. Launching a new white paper in the UK Parliament, the Association warned that the end of funding could threaten disruption for families and providers across the country, due to rising costs and no clear school-aged childcare strategy.

## **Mental Health**

### [Evidence review of perspectives on self-harm as a barrier to accessing support](#)

The Scottish Government has published 'People who self-harm: rapid evidence review and survey of practitioner perspectives', a rapid evidence review and survey of practitioner perspectives investigated if self-harm can be a barrier to accessing support and services, and what measures can be taken to overcome these barriers. Both the evidence review and practitioner survey reportedly indicate a range of barriers, including stigma, fear of judgment, restrictive service eligibility criteria, and long waits for support, and a number of facilitators that can improve access and engagement, such as person-centred, trauma-informed approaches, compassionate practitioner responses, and more flexible and inclusive service criteria.

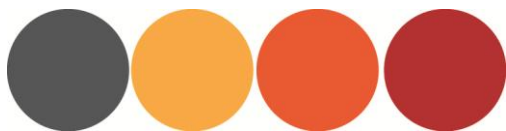
### [Concerns regarding restraint at children's mental health ward](#)

The BBC reports on an inspection by the Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland and Healthcare Improvement Scotland which raises concerns about the use of physical restraint and forced tube feeding at the Melville Unit mental health ward for children and young people in Edinburgh. The Scottish Government requested the inspection after allegations of cruelty were highlighted in a BBC documentary on Skye House in Glasgow.

## **Workforce**

### [Free online resource for people working with children](#)

The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) has released a new online resource outlining core knowledge, values, key policy and legislation and practical advice for anyone working with babies, children, young people and families. The SSSC intends it for use by anyone whose role could have an impact on children, young people, and their families, including those working with care-experienced adults or young people transitioning to adult services, and recommends its use as a guide to ensure appropriate training is conducted and high-quality support is provided.



## Other Health and Social Care

### [Announcement of National Social Work Agency head](#)

The Head of the National Social Work Agency (NSWA) has been announced as Joanna Macdonald, Community Care reports. The NSWA will start in spring 2026, and Ms Macdonald will combine this role with that of National Chief Social Work Adviser. The NSWA will form part of a new Scottish Social Work Partnership, comprising local government employer body COSLA and professional leadership organisation Social Work Scotland, and the NSWA's functions will include contributing to national policy that impacts social work practice, raising the profile of social work and championing the profession, taking a national approach to monitoring workforce numbers, and supporting and driving improvement across the social work sector.

### [Scottish Social Work Partnership seeking views](#)

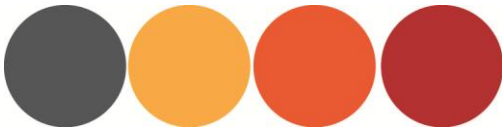
Social Work Scotland has highlighted an engagement pack, published by the Scottish Social Work Partnership which is made up of the Office of the Chief Social Work Adviser, COSLA and Social Work Scotland. The Partnership is leading a national conversation to shape the future of social work and is seeking views from social work students, practitioners and leaders on their experiences, challenges and aspirations of working in the sector. The [engagement pack](#) includes a survey and the Partnership will use this and other engagement to inform its strategic plan. The final strategic plan will be published in May 2026.

### [Consultation on temporary accommodation standards](#)

The Scottish Government has launched a consultation on proposed new legally-enforceable temporary accommodation standards. It follows the introduction of the temporary accommodation standards framework published in 2023, which local authorities and social landlords are expected to work towards meeting. The Scottish Government hopes to make the framework legally enforceable and include it in the Scottish Social Housing Charter.

### [Children's Commissioner report on children's social care \(England\)](#)

The Children's Commissioner for England has published a report summarising her work on children's social care since taking office in 2021. The report focuses on a range of themes, including standards across the children's social care system, looked after children and care leavers. In her recommendations, the Commissioner calls for an improved model of inspection and accountability, suggesting Ofsted should undertake a similar level of reform of children's social care inspection frameworks to that of school inspections.

**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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