

## **Key Points**

- Barnardo's Scotland welcomes the motion by Bill Kidd MSP and views this debate as an important opportunity to highlight the treatment of refugees in Scotland.
- We welcome the acknowledgement that refugees are particularly vulnerable to exploitation and encourage the Scottish Government to continue working with all partners to raise awareness and help refugees to safely rebuild their lives.
- We use our expertise in supporting children and families to advise Scottish Government and are concerned about the safeguarding risks posed to refugees entering Scotland, especially for children and young people.
- This briefing is intended to provide a summary of Barnardo's offer of support for refugees and our wider work to combat trafficking and exploitation.

## **1. Overview of services and action to tackle exploitation**

- Barnardo's Scotland has a long history of tackling child sexual exploitation, abuse and trafficking in Scotland by supporting victims, raising awareness in communities, and calling for national leadership.
- Barnardo's Scotland is a member of the Scottish Government's [Child Trafficking Strategy Group](#) and has been taking part in the Trafficking and Exploitation Strategy subgroup on Ukraine.
- We operate a [service to support unaccompanied children and young people in Paisley](#) which is funded by the New Scots Integration Fund.
- We are in the process of recruiting a Ukrainian Welcome team which will include project workers across Scotland to support families with practical and emotional help.
- We also operate a number of services across Scotland to tackle child exploitation more widely, including Barnardo's Early Intervention Service, Safer Choices Service and Reducing the Impact of Sexual Exploitation (RISE) service. A full summary of our work on tackling exploitation in Scotland can be accessed [here](#).
- Our Glasgow based service is also an integral partner in the Home Office Devolving Child Decision Making Pilot, pioneering a child protection approach to the National Referral Mechanism and child victims of trafficking.

## 2. **Advice for Host Families**

- Barnardo's has co-produced a practical guide and advice for host families who are welcoming refugees into their homes alongside the NSPCC, Save the Children and the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH).
- As well as practical advice, the guide includes recommendations on setting safe boundaries, understanding trauma and safeguarding as well as sources of further specialist advice if there are concerns.
- You can find out more by [downloading the document](#).

## 3. **Ukrainian Support Helpline**

- Following discussions with the Association of Ukrainians in Great Britain, Barnardo's has also set up the [Ukrainian Support Helpline](#) to provide a holistic support service.
- The Helpline is available to support anyone fleeing to the UK as a result of the war in Ukraine. It is open Monday to Friday 10am-8pm and Saturday 10am-3pm, and the helpline's services include access to interpreters in Ukrainian and Russian.
- The helpline can be contacted by [0800 148 8586](tel:08001488586) or by email at [ukrainiansupport@barnardos.org.uk](mailto:ukrainiansupport@barnardos.org.uk)

## 4. **Barnardo's concern over unequal treatment of refugees**

- Barnardo's has, along with other organisations supporting children and families across the UK, recently written to Priti Patel and Michael Gove to share our concerns about recent policy developments regarding refugees arriving in the UK, including safeguarding risks through the sponsorship schemes as well as our serious concerns about disparity in treatment of Ukrainians fleeing the war and the measures put in place to welcome refugees from Syria, Afghanistan and other nationalities seeking safety in the UK.
- You can read full details of the letter [here](#).

### **About Barnardo's**

Barnardo's is the UK's largest national children's charity operating in Scotland since 1892. Barnardo's Scotland works with thousands of children, young people and families each year across over 100 services. We deliver a wide range of services which includes providing family support and early intervention, supporting care-experienced young people, fostering and adoption services, helping children affected by sexual abuse and exploitation, supporting young people who come into conflict with the law, helping young people entering employment, education and training, and supporting young people and families affected by drug and alcohol use.

We use information and experience from our services across Scotland, to seek positive change in policy and practice based on what matters to the people who use our services and what we see working in communities. We work collaboratively across all sectors and political parties to achieve the best outcomes for children and young people.

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