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29 July 2015

## CONSIDERATION OF PETITION [PE1548](#) (National Guidance on Restraint and Seclusion in Schools)

Dear Mr Pentland MSP

Thank you for the opportunity to respond again to the above petition following the Public Petition Committee's discussion on 26 May 2015 and the responses submitted from the petitioner and other individuals and organisations. The Scottish Government and Education Scotland have since considered these responses and had the opportunity to consult on this issue with the Rights, Support and Wellbeing network of senior officers from local authorities who lead on the policy area of relationships and behaviour; the Association of Directors of Education (ADES); and the Care Inspectorate.

Upon consultation with the above stakeholders, they were clear that the use of restraint and seclusion within all schools should be seen within the context of relationships and behaviour policy and do not see merit in developing a separate national policy or guidance.

However, the Scottish Government is committed to incorporating further guidance on physical restraint and seclusion within the refreshed 'Included, Engaged and Involved Part 2: A Positive Approach to Managing School Exclusions' (IEI2), which is in line with the petition responses stating that restraint and seclusion should be seen within the context of positive relationships and behaviour. The purpose of the document is currently to support local authorities, all schools (mainstream and special schools) and other learning establishments and their partners keep all children and young people fully included, engaged and involved in their education

wherever this takes place; and to improve outcomes for those most at risk of exclusion. The guidance focuses on prevention, early intervention and response to individual need, incorporating staged interventions to prevent problems escalating.

IEI2 is currently being refreshed and a working group, comprising of teaching unions, local councils, ADES, COSLA, Education Scotland and Scottish Government, are exploring the management of exclusion and employment of readmission strategies; identifying issues relating to the recording of exclusion and readmission plans; supporting partnership working with parents; and collating and sharing examples of best practice within local authorities. In line with those individuals and organisations that support the petition, the refreshed IEI2 will have renewed focus on the importance of inclusion and will outline a continuum of support required in schools to promote positive relationships and behaviour.

The guidance will be clear about the range of strategies and programmes which schools can and do use to improve relationships and behaviour and prevent the need for the use of restraint and seclusion. These include:

- restorative practices and solution orientated approaches as part of a whole school approach;
- nurturing principles including nurture groups in early years, primary and secondary schools and special schools;
- anti-bullying policies and practice which contribute to social and emotional wellbeing and help manage more challenging behaviour;
- social and emotional wellbeing programmes for staff and parents in order to support the implementation of those programmes for children and young people;
- the use of inclusion support teams; and
- effective learning and teaching which contributes to developing good relationships and positive behaviour in the classroom, playground and wider school community.

IEI2 will also take cognisance of the new policy landscape that schools operate in, with a focus on the Children and Young People's Act, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the Equalities Act – ensuring all can be done to support those children and young people with protected characteristics such as a disability as well as those children and young people with an additional support need. Indeed, the Behaviour in Scottish Schools Research 2012 (BiSSR) demonstrates that investing time and resources into improving relationships and behaviour in establishments leads to positive outcomes around inclusion, engagement and achievement in the short term, community safety and cohesion in the longer term.

The Scottish Government and Education Scotland will be running consultation events on IEI2 in January and February 2016 where the issue of restraint and seclusion will be highlighted. We also commit to work with Education Scotland to identify innovative practice in this area and make this information available on the GLOW network. In addition, Education Scotland have also committed to discuss the issue at conversations with special schools; and restraint and seclusion will be placed on the agenda at the Social, Emotional and Behavioural Needs (SEBN) network later this year.

Schools have flexibility to take varied approaches to staff training in behaviour management and we are aware that many local authorities have their own policies on restraint and seclusion in the context of de-escalation; using models from different accredited programmes such as the Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI), the Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) system and Crisis, Aggression, Limitation and Management (CALM) training (which is a voluntary accreditation scheme by the British Institute of Learning Disabilities). These programmes are widely used within the special school sector where the majority of children and young people with complex additional support needs learn.

I hope that the petitioner finds this information helpful.

Yours sincerely

Laura Farquhar  
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