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Clare Adamson MSP
Convener
Education and Skills Committee
The Scottish Parliament
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By email: es.committee@parliament.scot

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Dear Clare,

Thank you for your letter of 7 January 2021 requesting an update from the Scottish Government on petitions PE01692: Inquiry into the human rights impact of GIRFEC policy and data processing and PE1548: National Guidance on Restraint and Seclusion in Schools. I have enclosed updates for the Committee's consideration on both of these matters.

PE01692: Inquiry into the human rights impact of GIRFEC policy and data processing

Development of refreshed GIRFEC guidance and products to support information sharing was paused due to COVID-19 pressures in early 2020. The Scottish Government remains fully committed to the delivery and continued development of GIRFEC and the national practice model, which lie at the heart of our response to the pandemic. We will engage with the sector in early 2021 to agree realistic timetables, taking account of the capacity of our partners, and also within the Scottish Government, to ensure continued close partnership working in the development of further advice and guidance.

PE1548: National Guidance on Restraint and Seclusion in Schools.

As I confirmed to Parliament in February 2020, a physical intervention working group was established in January 2020. The working group agreed to focus on three specific areas:

- The development of key definitions;
- Drafting new national guidance; and
- The development of a common dataset for recording and monitoring of incidents of physical intervention and seclusion.

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The group's work on the development of definitions was begun in February 2020; however progress was affected by group members' focus on the Covid-19 response. Work resumed in June and working definitions were agreed in July. Work on the draft guidance commenced in August and positive progress, which demonstrates fully members' shared commitment to delivering this programme of work, is being made towards its completion.

The guidance sub group has arranged online engagement sessions in January 2021 with children, young people, parents, carers and young adults from Enable Scotland's ACE Connect groups in order to seek the direct input of those with lived experience of the use of restraint and seclusion in schools. The guidance sub group has also been considering the impact of COVID-19 measures on the advice offered.

It is anticipated that the draft guidance will be ready for public consultation during 2021. Work on the development of a common dataset for recording and monitoring incidents is shortly to commence.

Details of the membership and notes of the meetings of the physical intervention working group are available on the Scottish Government's website ([Physical Intervention Working Group - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/Physical-Intervention-Working-Group)).

I would be happy to keep the Committee updated on progress with these important pieces of work.

JOHN SWINNEY

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