

PE1548/HH

Deputy First Minister submission of 21 June 2017

Thank you for your letter on the Committee's consideration of the Scottish Government's draft guidance on de-escalation and physical intervention.

On the points noted in your letter I can confirm that the guidance will not refer to a safe space and instead will state that "where seclusion or isolation is used it should be used under supervision in a place that is safe and it should be time limited and take into account the additional support needs of the child or young person." The guidance deliberately does not make reference to an isolation room or define a safe space because the Scottish Government does not wish to advocate their use or creation.

On the recommendation that the guidance should state that the rights of all children and young people must be a key consideration where physical intervention is being considered, I agree that it would be helpful to make this change and officials will arrange to do that.

You will wish to be aware the Scottish Government has been in contact with the petitioner, Beth Morrison, to advise her of these proposed changes and to offer to share the revised text.

To help raise awareness of the new guidance and to support its implementation, it may be helpful for the Committee to note that Education Scotland are proposing to run three national events across Scotland in the autumn for local authorities and schools.

To help ensure that we review the effectiveness of this guidance, Education Scotland and Scottish Government officials are proposing to run an event in the autumn of 2019 for education practitioners and local authorities to share good practice on implementation of the guidance and identify if there areas where the guidance could be improved.

You may also wish to be aware that Ms Morrison and Ms Sanger have been invited to attend a meeting of the Scottish Government's Advisory Group on Additional Support Needs in August to offer the group a presentation on the communication passport concept.

The Scottish Government is planning to issue its new guidance on managing exclusions as quickly as it can and I will ensure that officials share a copy of this guidance with the Committee and Ms Morrison.