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[PE1548: National Guidance on Restraint and Seclusion in Schools](#)

Thank you for your letter of 4 November 2022 regarding the closure of the above petition. I note the concerns expressed by the petitioner and have set out our next steps with this work in response to the additional questions the Committee has asked.

As Committee members will be aware, the public consultation on draft non-statutory guidance on physical intervention in schools closed on 25 October. We are now carefully considering all consultation responses received and will publish our consultation analysis in due course. The Physical Intervention Working Group will then consider any further amendments to the draft guidance, in line with the feedback received, ahead of the publication of the final guidance in 2023.

The Scottish Government is committed to working with partners through the Working Group to support the implementation of the guidance. This includes raising awareness of the new guidance among staff, children and young people and their families; providing advice on any subsequent changes that may be required to existing local authority or school level guidance; and supporting the monitoring of the use of restraint at a local level. Informed by consultation feedback, the Working Group will also consider whether further resources may be required to support implementation.

The Scottish Government is also committed to evaluating the effectiveness of the new guidance one year after publication. The evaluation criteria will be developed by the Working Group, building on the agreed national dataset for recording the use of restraint and seclusion in schools contained within the guidance. This approach reflects our 2019

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agreement with the Equality and Human Rights Commission and the Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland to improve practice in this area.

I do recognise that there are calls for further legislation. Alongside the publication of the new guidance, and in line with our original commitments, we are exploring options to strengthen the legal framework in this area, including placing the guidance on a statutory basis.

I am very grateful to the Committee for its consideration of this issue and would be happy to keep the Committee informed of progress with this work to inform its future consideration and reporting.



SHIRLEY-ANNE SOMERVILLE

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