

Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills submission of 25 March 2024

PE2051/B: Improve the processes for protecting children and young people from traumatic incidents

Thank you for your letter of 23 February 2023 and the opportunity to provide further information in relation to Petition PE2051 to improve the processes for protecting children and young people from traumatic incidents.

The Committee is seeking information on the timeline for the development and publication of the joint action plan on relationships and behaviour in schools. The action plan is a joint plan with COSLA and is being developed in collaboration with the Scottish Advisory Group on Relationships and Behaviour in Schools (SAGRABIS). Following my announcement of the intention to develop this plan on 29 November 2023, SAGRABIS met on 12 December 2023, 31 January and 20 March to discuss this. The joint nature of this plan means it requires to be agreed both by SAGRABIS and by COSLA. Subject to this agreement, we expect that the plan will be published in the Spring.

The Committee also sought further information on how I expect my call for accurate recording of incidents in schools during the statement in November to be achieved. The Committee will be interested to know that we are currently reviewing the national anti-bullying guidance '[Respect for All](#)', supported by a working group of key stakeholders. A subgroup has recently been established to identify and consider changes required to the [supplementary guidance on recording and monitoring](#).

This will be informed by the [thematic inspection](#) undertaken by HMIE looking at approaches to recording and monitoring bullying incidents in schools.

The report published in February 2023 highlighted challenges, including difficulties in navigating the SEEMiS system, the length of time required to complete the recording and updating of incidents, the potential for duplication, a lack of flexibility to detail incidents and actions taken to support those involved, and the ability to monitor specific issues, trends and other patterns, restricting proactive responses. Education Scotland will imminently be publishing a toolkit of good practice on recording and responding to bullying incidents, and we would expect this to inform the development of our guidance and also local practice.

Finally, you may also be aware of the significant action I have been taking over recent months in response to concerns about relationships and behaviour in schools. This includes holding three summits on different aspects of

relationships and behaviour. The first summit discussed [recording and monitoring incidents in schools](#); the findings of which will inform the guidance update, as well as whether any additional actions on recording and monitoring incidents are required within the action plan.

I hope the Committee finds the information in this letter helpful, and the Committee is reassured that relationships and behaviour in schools is an absolute priority for the Scottish Government.

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