

## **Briefing for the Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee on petition [PE1937](#): To give children the respect they deserve by providing options for privacy when changing for P.E., lodged by Gillian Lamarra**

### **Brief overview of issues raised by the petition**

- This petition is calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to implement a national policy allowing primary school children the right to wear their P.E. kit to school on the days they have P.E.
- The petitioner states that, in primary schools, it is common for children to be required to change in front of the rest of their mixed-gender class and teacher. The petitioner goes on to state that there is a need for protections to be put in place to ensure pupils' privacy such as giving the children the option to attend school wearing their P.E. kit. The petitioner highlighted concerns following their family members' experience and noted many other parents shared this concern on social media.
- The petitioner states they have contacted Humza Yousaf MSP and the City of Glasgow Council.
- There is no current national legislation around safe P.E. changing practices in primary schools; it is up to individual local authorities and schools to write their own guidelines. School uniform policy is also set at a local level, with each school having autonomy over their policy to allow schools to accommodate the needs of individual children and schools.
- In 2019, the Scottish Government published its [Learning Estate Strategy](#) which sets out the strategic approach for managing Scotland's learning estate. It states that learning environments should support the well-being of all learners and meet varying needs to support inclusion for all learners. It also states that good consultation about learning environments, direct engagement with learners and communities about their needs and experiences, and an involvement in decision-making processes should lead to better outcomes for all.
- The Scottish Government is currently [consulting on new Statutory School Uniform Guidance](#), and this includes [questions on uniform in P.E.](#) It is not intended that this will create a national school uniform policy that is applied

in all schools, rather it is intended that new national guidance will help better inform local authorities and schools' policies. This provides an opportunity for pupils and parents to feed into national guidance and share best practices from their own experiences.

- The Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, Shirley-Anne Somerville MSP, also stated in her guidance that parents and pupils should write directly to the school's head teacher or the Director of Education in their local authority if they have concerns about their school's local policy.
- In August 2020, the Scottish Government published COVID-19 guidance for Physical Education which stated that, where changing rooms were not in use, young people should be encouraged to arrive at school in their sports kit on days when physical education lessons would take place and, where possible, wait until they got home to shower and change. [The guidance has since been updated; the list of updates can be viewed on the Scottish Government website.](#) As there are no longer COVID-19 restrictions in schools, this guidance does not currently apply.

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[08/07/2022]

The purpose of this briefing is to provide a brief overview of issues raised by the petition. SPICe research specialists are not able to discuss the content of petition briefings with petitioners or other members of the public. However, if you have any comments on any petition briefing you can email us at [spice@parliament.scot](mailto:spice@parliament.scot)

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Published by the Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe), an office of the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body, The Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, EH99 1SP