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Convener, Education, Children and Young People  
Committee  
The Scottish Parliament  
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17 June 2025

Dear Convener,

I am writing to inform the Committee that today we have published three new pieces of national guidance:

- ["Fostering a Positive, Inclusive and Safe School Environment"](#)
- ["Guidance on risk assessments for violent, aggressive and dangerous behaviour"](#)
- ["Addressing Racism and Racist Incidents in Schools interim guidance"](#)

The publication of this guidance delivers key commitments within the Joint National Action Plan on Relationships and Behaviour in Schools, developed in response to the Behaviour in Scottish Schools Research (BISSR) 2023 and wider engagement with school staff and stakeholders.

The ["Fostering a Positive, Inclusive and Safe School Environment"](#) guidance provides greater clarity on how schools can promote positive relationships and behaviour through a school culture rooted in shared values, clear expectations, and consistent practice responding to behaviour. In particular, it provides clarity to all members of a school community – staff, parents and children and young people – on how consequences should be embedded within whole-school approaches that support positive relationships and behaviour. This guidance was developed in collaboration with stakeholders through the Scottish Advisory Group on Relationships and Behaviour in Schools (SAGRABIS) and the Headteachers Taskforce, meaning it has been developed with those with expertise in what staff on the ground need to support them.

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The "[Guidance on risk assessments for violent, aggressive and dangerous behaviour](#)" provides guidance to local authorities and educational settings on appropriately using risk assessment processes to mitigate or minimise violent, aggressive, and dangerous behaviours exhibited by children and young people at school. This guidance was developed by Education Scotland's Social, Emotional and Behavioural Needs Network and a sub-group of SAGRABIS and focuses on supporting schools in responding to the most violent, aggressive and dangerous behaviour.

The "[Addressing Racism and Racist Incidents in Schools interim guidance](#)" has been developed in partnership with the Racism and Racist Incidents workstream of the Anti-Racism in Education Programme and supports schools in responding to racist incidents experienced by or displayed by pupils, including guidance on recording and monitoring. The interim guidance is the first stage in the development of a wider Whole School Approach to preventing and responding to racism and racist incidents in schools, which will be published in early 2026.

All three pieces of guidance sit alongside other key pieces of guidance on relationships and behaviour in schools, including national guidance on exclusion and on restraint and seclusion. Underpinning all these approaches is our commitment to Getting it Right For Every Child and to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The Committee may also wish to note that last week we published a [new factsheet](#) that provides [a quick reference guide for school staff on national attendance policy](#). This reflects the current national guidance in [Included, Engaged and Involved Part 1](#) and provides signposting to further information. The national guidance is currently being refreshed and updated guidance will be published by March 2026.

In addition, we will also shortly publish updated information on Parent Club about school attendance and include further signposting to additional resources and sources of support for parents and carers. As part of Programme for Government 2025/26 we have also committed to launching a national campaign on attendance in autumn of 2025, to support improved attendance at school. I will share more information on this campaign in due course.

I hope the Committee finds this update helpful.

Yours sincerely

**JENNY GILRUTH**

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