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Karen Adam MSP
Convener, Equalities, Human Rights and Civil
Justice Committee
The Scottish Parliament
By email: ehrcj.committee@parliament.scot

18 March 2026

Dear Convener,

I am writing to inform the Committee that today we have published a new piece of national guidance, the Whole School Approach to Racism and Racist Incidents.

The guidance was developed in collaboration with the Racism and Racist Incidents workstream of the Anti Racism in Education Programme (AREP), and reflects the reflects the knowledge, experience, and understanding of the working group.

The development of the Whole School Approach is to address concerns raised through the AREP by children and young people from ethnic minority backgrounds, their families, and those who work with them, about the way that racist behaviour is recognised, addressed and recorded in schools, including the lack of feedback and/or resolution, resulting in them having low confidence in reporting incidents. Members emphasised that school staff also experience racism while at work, and that often this is unreported or is not dealt with appropriately.

The Whole School Approach to Racism and Racist Incidents incorporates the previously-published [Addressing Racism and Racist Incidents](#) interim guidance, published in June 2025. The interim guidance focused only on addressing racist behaviour experienced by or displayed between children and young people in schools. The Whole School Approach now incorporates this previous guidance, and additionally provides guidance on:

- creating a whole school anti-racist environment and ethos, including: school culture and ethos; curriculum, teaching and learning; professional learning and development; and policies and systems
- racist incidents experienced by school staff
- racist incidents experienced by parents, carers, and families in a school setting

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The publication of this guidance delivers a commitment 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 guidance sit alongside other key pieces of guidance on relationships and behaviour in schools, including recent national guidance on [Fostering a positive, inclusive and safe environment](#) and [Respect for All: the national approach to anti-bullying for Scotland's children and young people](#). 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.

To accompany the publication of the guidance, Education Scotland have arranged an online seminar to support teachers to apply the guidance, which is scheduled to take place on 23 March. Supporting information, resources and case studies are planned for publication on the Education Scotland website later in the year. New information has also been published on [Parent Club](#) for parents on how to support their child if they experience racism at school.

I hope the Committee finds this update useful.

Yours sincerely,

JENNY GILRUTH
Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills

Cc Presiding Officer
Minister for Parliamentary Business and Veterans
Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party Business Manager
Scottish Green Party Business Manager
Scottish Labour Party Business Manager
Scottish Liberal Democrats Party Business Manager

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