

Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee
Wednesday 4 June 2025
10th Meeting, 2025 (Session 6)

PE1934: Develop an educational resource on gender-based violence for all year groups in High School

Introduction

- Petitioner** Craig Scoular on behalf of Greenfaulds High School Rights and Equalities Committee
- Petition summary** Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to work with Education Scotland to develop an educational resource on gender-based violence for all year groups in High School. This resource should –
- Educate on the causes of gender-based violence and
 - Ensure that young people leave school with the tools to help create a safer society for women

Webpage <https://petitions.parliament.scot/petitions/PE1934>

1. [The Committee last considered this petition at its meeting on 9 October 2024](#). At that meeting, the Committee agreed to write to the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills.
2. The petition summary is included in **Annexe A** and the Official Report of the Committee's last consideration of this petition is at **Annexe B**.
3. The Committee has received a new written submission from the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills which is set out in **Annexe C**.
4. [Written submissions received prior to the Committee's last consideration can be found on the petition's webpage](#).
5. [Further background information about this petition can be found in the SPICe briefing](#) for this petition.
6. [The Scottish Government gave its initial response to the petition on 6 June 2022](#).
7. Every petition collects signatures while it remains under consideration. At the time of writing, 170 signatures have been received on this petition.

Action

8. The Committee is invited to consider what action it wishes to take.

Clerks to the Committee

CPPP/S6/25/10/4

May 2025

Annexe A: Summary of petition

PE1934: Develop an educational resource on gender-based violence for all year groups in High School

Petitioner

Craig Scoular on behalf of Greenfaulds High School Rights and Equalities Committee

Date Lodged

3 May 2022

Petition summary

Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to work with Education Scotland to develop an educational resource on gender-based violence for all year groups in High School. This resource should –

- Educate on the causes of gender-based violence and
- Ensure that young people leave school with the tools to help create a safer society for women

Previous action

We have written to our local MSP Jamie Hepburn, who in turn contacted the Education Secretary who wrote to our group. In the response Shirley-Ann Sommerville outlined what the government already do. We asked the Education Secretary about mandatory lessons, however she informed us that the government does not "prescribe" what is to be taught in schools. We have also conducted a survey to find out if young people felt enough was taught about this issue in school. 85% of respondents said no, there was not enough teaching.

Background information

During the period between March and September 2021, 81 women were killed at the hands of men in the UK. Violence against women is an issue felt disproportionately by women of colour and trans-women. Among the 375 transgender people killed in 2021 globally, the vast majority were black transgender women (Forbes, 2021). Gender based violence increased during the COVID-19 pandemic, where reported cases increased dramatically due to national lockdowns. It was predicted there would be an additional 31million gender-based violence cases if lockdown only lasted 6 months, the final figure will be devastatingly larger due to prolonged lockdowns. In Scotland alone, there were 65,000 cases of domestic abuse reported last year, the fifth time in a year it has risen.

It is our goal to help tackle violence against women, which destroys too many lives every year. We believe that educating our children will end any existing cycles of gender-based violence and prevent any new ones from starting.

Annexe B: Extract from Official Report of last consideration of PE1934 on 9 October 2024

The Convener: Petition, PE1934, from Craig Scoular, on behalf of Greenfaulds high school rights and equalities committee, calls on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to work with Education Scotland to develop an educational resource on gender-based violence for all year groups in high school. The resource should educate on the causes of gender-based violence and ensure that young people leave school with the tools to help them to create a safer society for women.

We last considered the petition at our meeting on 8 November 2023, when we agreed to write to the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills and the University of Glasgow. At that time, the cabinet secretary indicated that the gender-based violence in schools working group was expected to publish its national framework to help schools to tackle sexual harassment and gender-based violence.

The framework has been published, and the cabinet secretary has stated that the Scottish Government has committed to commissioning an independent review to establish positive practice and further areas for improvement during this parliamentary session. The submission also highlights the revised statutory teaching guidance, which includes a section to support learning and teaching on consent and healthy relationships. The Scottish Government consulted on the guidance last year and is analysing the responses.

Meanwhile, the University of Glasgow's written submission provides details of its evaluation of the equally safe at school intervention. The aim of the evaluation is to determine whether the intervention is effective, including cost effective. Its work will take place with six schools over two years, with the full results expected in December 2026.

Colleagues, do you have any suggestions?

Foyso Choudhury (Lothian) (Lab): We should write to the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills to ask what the next steps will be following the publication of the gender-based violence in schools framework, when the Scottish Government intends to commission an independent review of the framework and when it expects that review to conclude.

The Convener: As there are no other suggestions, are colleagues content with that approach?

Members *indicated agreement.*

The Convener: We will keep the petition open and act on Mr Choudhury's suggestions.

Annexe C: Written submission

Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills written submission, 3 December 2024

PE1934/I: Develop an educational resource on gender-based violence for all year groups in High School

Thank you for your letter of 18 October 2024 on behalf of the Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee regarding Petition PE1934 to develop an educational resource on gender--based violence for all year groups in high school.

The Committee has requested information on when the Scottish Government intends to commission an independent review of the Gender-Based Violence in Schools Framework and when it is expected to conclude.

I have committed to commissioning an independent review of the framework to establish positive practice and further areas for improvement, before the end of this parliamentary session. However, I also require sufficient time for schools to implement this framework ahead of the independent review. It is my intention to commission the review ahead of March 2026. The timetable for the review will be set as part of the process of commissioning.

The Committee may wish to note that our relationships and behaviour in schools action plan, published in August 2024, includes an action to empower staff to support relationships and behaviour approaches and practice and to respond to emerging trends in behaviour. This includes scoping development of learning on emerging areas of concern, including gender-based violence and far-right extremism. As a first step in the delivery of this action, Education Scotland ran an information session on the framework for school staff in September 2024. Education Scotland will use the feedback from that session to determine if there are any areas where more bespoke training may be helpful.

I hope the Committee finds the information in this letter helpful.

JENNY GILRUTH MSP