



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

## EDUCATION AND SKILLS COMMITTEE

John Swinney MSP  
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary  
for Education and Skills

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31 January 2020

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

The Public Petitions Committee has referred [PE1548: National Guidance on Seclusion and Restraint in Schools](#) to the Education and Skills Committee. As you will be aware, the issues raised within the petition have come before our Committee throughout our work on additional support needs this session, which has informed our consideration of the petition. Previous work undertaken by the Committee in this area is detailed in our [letter](#) to you of 9 April 2019.

Our Committee considered the petition at our meeting on 22 January 2020, and agreed to keep the petition open in order to keep a watching brief on the issue, as well as to consider the petition as part of any upcoming work on initial teacher education and additional support for learning. The Committee also agreed to write to you on a number of items relating to the petition.

As you will see in the [Official Report](#) of the meeting, the Committee was made aware of the anticipated publication of new, national guidance on seclusion and restraint by January 2021. The Committee was also made aware of the previous discussions around putting the guidance on a statutory footing, which you will be aware is sought by the petitioner.

The Committee therefore agreed to seek from you a timescale for the production of the new guidance, as well as an assurance that the guidance will be sent to the Committee once it is produced. The Committee is aware that you agreed to explore whether the guidance could be made statutory, and an update on this would therefore also be welcome.

More generally, the Committee would welcome confirmation of whether the Scottish Government intends to consult on the details of the guidance; if so, the Committee would welcome the opportunity to take part in this consultation, and would anticipate the same opportunity being afforded to the petitioner, the National Autistic Society, the

Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland, and others who have had reason to comment on the petition.

Yours sincerely

**CLARE ADAMSON MSP**  
**CONVENER**