

EDUCATION IN THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT

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PREAMBLE

This paper follows on from the previous bulletin (Redford 2019), which covered the education remit of the Parliament's Education and Skills Committee between February 2019 to July 2019. The following bulletin covers the Education remit of the Education and Skills Committee from August 2019 to January 2020.

AUGUST 2019 TO JANUARY 2020

The Education and Skills Committee had the following members during this period: Clare Adamson (Convener), Johann Lamont (Deputy Convener to 4 September 2019), Daniel Johnson (Deputy Convener, from 11 September 2019), Alastair Allan, Jenny Gilruth, Iain Gray, Ross Greer, Alison Harris (from 11 September 2019), Rona Mackay, Gail Ross (from 4 September 2019), Iain Gray (to 4 September 2019), Oliver Mundell (to 4 September 2019), Liz Smith and Beatrice Wishart (from 11 September 2019). Full records of the Committee meetings, including minutes, official papers and transcripts of proceedings can be found on the Scottish Parliament website at:

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/99746.aspx> [accessed 24.03.20]

The majority of committee work in this period was focused on evidence taking for Stage 1 of the Disclosure (Scotland) Bill. The committee met twice with the Scottish Qualifications Authority and reviewed the implications of Brexit for Higher Education. They took final evidence and completed their inquiry into STEM in early years education and spent some time considering the exam diet and subject choices. They reviewed three petitions, PE1668, PE1692 and PEO1548, agreeing to keep all open. They heard evidence and approved a subordinate and negative orders during the period. They reviewed their work programme, in private, at their meetings on the 4, 11 and 18 September 2019. They reviewed it again on 30 October and 13 November 2019, and 15 January 2020.

DISCLOSURE (SCOTLAND) BILL

The committee took evidence at stage 1 of the bill at their meeting on 4 September 2019. This meeting was supported by a submissions pack (ES/S5/19/23/1) that collated all submissions made in relation to the bill, a SPICe briefing paper (ES/S5/19/23/2) and a letter from the Minister (ES/S5/19/23/3). The committee

took further evidence at their meeting on 9 October 2019. This meeting was supported by a paper from the clerk (ES/S5/19/27/1), a SPICe briefing (ES/S5/19/27/2) and a submissions pack (ES/S5/19/27/3). The committee took evidence from two panels at their meeting on 6 November 2019. A SPICe briefing paper (ES/S5/19/29/1) and a submissions pack (Es/S5/19/29/2) supported the meeting. They heard from a further panel of witnesses at their meeting on 13 November 2019. This meeting was supported by a SPICe briefing pack (ES/S5/19/30/1) and a submissions pack (ES/S5/19.30/2). The committee took evidence from Maree Todd, Minister for Children and Young People and Disclosure Scotland at their meeting on 20 November 2019. This meeting was supported by a SPICe briefing paper (ES/S5/19/31/1) and submissions pack (ES/S5/19/31/2). The committee considered their draft report, in private, at their meeting on 4 December 2019.

Date of Committee	Witnesses
4 September 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kevin Lee and Gerard Hart, <i>Disclosure Scotland</i> • Ailsa Hine, <i>Scottish Government</i>
9 October 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alison Reid, <i>Clan Childlaw</i> • Nicola Dickie, <i>COSLA</i> • Andrew Alexander, <i>Law Society of Scotland</i> • Sheena Brennan, <i>Police Scotland</i> • Cheryl Campbell, <i>Scottish Social Services Council</i>
6 November 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ben Hall, <i>Shared Lives Plus</i> • Oisín Murphy-Lawless, <i>Coalition of Care and Support Providers in Scotland (CCPS)</i> • Adam Dillon, <i>Church of Scotland</i> • Florence Witherow, <i>Scottish Youth Football Association</i> • Sarah Latto, <i>Shelter</i>
6 November 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dughall Laing, <i>Recruit With Conviction</i> • Rose McConnachie, <i>Community Justice Scotland</i> • Dr Cynthia Marks, <i>Business in the Community (BITC)</i> • Dr Beth Weaver, <i>Howard League Scotland</i>
13 November 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alistair Hogg, <i>Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA)</i> • Lindsay Law, <i>Connect</i> • Debbie Nolan, <i>Centre for Youth and Criminal Justice (CYCJ)</i> • Amy Woodhouse, <i>Children in Scotland</i> • Brian Houston and Robert Dorrian, <i>Who Cares? Scotland</i>

20 November 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maree Todd MSP, Minister for Children and Young People, <i>Scottish Government</i> • Kevin Lee and Gerard Hart, <i>Disclosure Scotland</i> • Gemma Grant, Lawyer, <i>Scottish Government</i>
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The Convener welcomed witnesses to the meeting on the 4 September 2020 and invited the panel to make opening remarks. In his remarks Kevin Lee explained that the purpose of the bill was to strengthen the barring service following the approval of the Age of Criminal Responsibility (Scotland) Act 2019 and the Management of Offenders (Scotland) Act 2019 by the Scottish Parliament. He described the consultation with stakeholders that underpinned the proposals in the bill that was designed to streamline the disclosure process and give applicants greater control over the sharing of information. Iain Gray first asked about the move from lifetime PVG membership to a five-year membership. In reply Kevin Lee said that they estimated that up to 20% of the current PVG members were no longer working in an area that required membership and added that time limited membership would reduce the monitoring requirement for Disclosure Scotland. The meeting then discussed the costs of the current and proposed systems. Gerard Hart added that research had shown:

That many people do not understand that they are in a membership scheme. They think they have a disclosure, which is the bit of paper that they have. Some of them do not understand that we are then monitoring them every single day, (Hart, 04.09.19, Col 6).

He emphasised that the move from a disclosure product to a membership product should help individuals to understand what they gained from membership and give them more control over their own information. Ross Greer asked about the proposal to lower the age limit to 16 years and the number of young people currently accepted into the scheme at 15 years. In reply Kevin Lee said, "Since 2015, around 300 under-16s a year have entered the scheme" (Lee, 04.09.20, Col 10). He then explained that young people would still be able to join the scheme but that there would not be on-going monitoring of their behaviour as that was covered under the processes of getting it right for every child.

The evidence session on the 9 October 2019 began with a question from Alasdair Allan about the non-inclusion of children under 16 years in the PVG scheme. Nicola Dickie replied that those under 16 who had behavioural issues were already well known to supporting professions through getting it right for every child. Sheena Brennan added that in the case of volunteers who were under the age of 16 the organisation they were volunteering with would identify issues through their safeguarding procedures. She added:

It would be unusual for an individual under the age of 16 who had behaved in such a manner to be in that situation. If they have committed an automatic barring offence, Disclosure Scotland will have to automatically disclose the offence as a duty of care (Brennan, 09.10.19, Col 6).

Alison Reid said that Clan Childlaw had concerns about how childhood convictions were addressed in the bill in contrast with the welfare focus of the children's hearings system. Andrew Alexander said that the approach taken in the bill, "Is reasonably robust and there is a degree of flexibility," (Alexander, 09.10.19, Col 7). Daniel Johnson asked about the reduction in categories of disclosure from four to two. In reply Nicola Dickie said that there was a need to publicise and explain the changes. Iain Gray asked Sheena Brennan about how the police worked with the current system. In reply Sheena Brennan replied, "We have approximately 72 people, and 60 per cent of them are working on PVG" (Brennan, 09.10.19, Col 13). Liz Smith asked a series of questions about the work of the police and if they would require more staff. Sheena Brennan replied that they hoped, "That the balance of applications against on-going monitoring will improve over time" (Brennan, 09.10.19, Col 16). Ross Greer returned to the issue of a minimum age of 16 years for the scheme and the responsibility of anyone under 16 to disclose any offences. He said he was concerned about the transition from the current scheme where those under 16 could join the scheme to the new scheme where they could not.

In a world in which we acknowledge that transitions are not perfect, I am concerned that we are creating vulnerability rather than resolving an issue that is already resolved under the current scheme (Greer, 09.10.19, Col 22).

Sheena Brennan said that it was about organisations taking responsibility through their safeguarding and protection roles. The convener concluded the session with a question about the introduction of an appeal process and independent reviewer.

The meeting with the first panel of witnesses on the 6 November 2019 began with a detailed discussion about the submission to the committee from Shared Lives, where vulnerable adults live with carers. Ben Hall proposed on behalf of Shared Lives that those type of situations should be managed in the same way as fostering for children, where all adults in the household undergo PVG checks. Ross Greer asked about the removal of PVG checks for anyone under 16 years of age. Sarah Latto said that it would reduce the numbers volunteering, but Adam Dillon and Florence Witherow felt it would not. Daniel Johnson asked if the new process would still provide enough information for each organisation. In reply Oisín Murphy-Lawless agreed with evidence at the earlier session that there was a need for a commitment to explain the new system. Liz Smith asked about the cost of joining the PVG scheme, and Adam Dillon replied, "We are concerned that it is significant for low-paid workers" (Dillon, 06.11.19 Col 12). Sarah Latto added:

At present PVG membership is free for people who are volunteering for a qualifying voluntary organisation. We feel it is unfair to expect people to pay if, as a result of their volunteering they move into employment, (Latto, 06.11.19, Col 12).

The second panel of witnesses on the 6 November 2019 focused on the PVG process for individuals who held convictions. Liz Smith asked the panel about the cost of implementing the new system. In reply Dughall Laing supported the issues highlighted by Sarah Latto during the first panel on the cost to individuals of moving

from volunteering to paid employment. The meeting then discussed the type and level of information disclosed. Beth Weaver replied for the Howard League Scotland and said they would prefer, “A more individualised approach not just to the use of other relevant information, but to the disclosure of convictions” (Weaver, 06.11.19, Col 22). In response to a question from the convener all witnesses agreed that a set of principles should be included in the bill. The panel ended with a discussion about the implications of the level of information required, of care-experienced young people.

Daniel Johnson opened the questions to the panel on the 13 November 2019 with a question about the proposed two tests of information. In reply Alistair Hogg said that there was a need for guidance about the interpretation of the tests. Debbie Nolan supported that and said that her organisation, “Would like to see that in the bill or in statutory guidance,” (Nolan, 13.11.19, Col 7). Iain Gray asked the panel about the contradictions the committee had noted:

between the Management of Offenders (Scotland) Act 2019 and the Disclosure (Scotland) Bill. First, one uses the date of conviction for under-18s, while the other uses the date of the offence. Secondly, the requirement for state disclosure and the requirement for self-disclosure are different (Gray, 13.11.19 Col 10).

Alistair Hogg said that SCRA supported the approach taken in the Disclosure (Scotland) Bill. Debbie Nolan that CYCJ agreed and were concerned that the loophole needed to be closed, particularly for those under 18 years old. The meeting then discussed the use of “other relevant information” (Hogg, 13.11. 19, Col 11). Ross Greer asked about the removal of PVG for those under 16 years old. Lindsay Law replied that those under 16 would not necessarily, “Perform the full suite of functions in a particular role, so they might not do things for which disclosure is required” (Law, 13.11.19, Col 15). Amy Woodhouse suggested that there was a need for the volunteer sector to consider roles rather than activity. Alasdair Allan asked about the two lists of offences in the bill and Alistair Hogg said that SCRA had concerns about some of the offences in the list and the mixture of adult and childhood convictions. Debbie Nolan said that her organisation would prefer if a smaller number of offences for children were considered. The meeting closed with a discussion about the age of criminal responsibility.

The panel took their final session of evidence at their meeting on the 20 November 2019. At the start of the meeting the Minister acknowledged the work of the committee:

The committee has focused on fees, the decision-making frameworks underpinning disclosable information and a minimum age for accessing disclosure. I acknowledge that stakeholders would like more information on those areas (Todd, 20.11.19, Col 2).

She then stated the Government’s commitment to retaining the fee waiver for voluntary organisations and introducing guidance for the changes. The meeting considered in detail the legal basis for the use of a two-part test for information disclosed and the interpretation of that information. Rona Mackay and Gail Ross asked about childhood convictions and Iain Gray about the lack of consistency

between this bill and existing legislation. In reply Maree Todd said that the Government was still considering the way to address the inconsistencies. Ross Greer asked about those under the age of 16 years. The Minister replied, “I am confident that we will still be able to provide plenty of opportunities for children to volunteer” (Todd, 20.11.19, Col 19). The convener closed the meeting with a question about the fees charged to people who moved from voluntary work to paid work requiring a PVG.

SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY – PERFORMANCE AND ROLE

The committee took evidence from officials of the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) at their meeting on 11 September 2019. The papers for the meeting include a SPICe briefing paper (ES/S5/19/24/1) and a written submission from the SQA. The committee met again with officials from the SQA on the 22 January 2020. This meeting was supported by a SPICe briefing (Es/S5/20/2/1) and a submissions pack (ES/S5/20/2/2).

Date of Committee	Witnesses
11 September 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fiona Robertson, John McMorris, and Robert Quinn, SQA
22 January 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fiona Robertson, John McMorris, and Robert Quinn, SQA

The Convener welcomed the SQA representatives to the meeting and congratulated Fiona Robertson on her appointment as Chief Executive. In her opening remarks Fiona Robertson began with an outline of the role and responsibilities of the SQA before noting the outcomes of the 2019 exam diet, where there was, “An increase in attainment at national 5 and a decrease in the attainment rate at higher and advanced higher” (Robertson, 11.09.19, Col 4). She then described the introduction of course reports on the SQA website and changes to their engagement with teachers, parents and learners. Iain Gray and Ross Greer asked a series of questions about the costs of international travel undertaken by SQA staff and an article about that published in the Sunday Mail newspaper. Ross Greer followed this with questions about the work of the SQA in Saudi Arabia. In reply John McMorris said:

For all the work that we do internationally we always seek the latest advice from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office as part of our assessment. We are committed to improving outcomes for learners. As I said, the aim of the project with the private organisation TeTec is to help female participation in the labour market (McMorris, 11.09.19, Col 12).

Fiona Robertson acknowledged the committee’s concerns about human rights and said that through their work the SQA was focused on, “Promoting the excellence of Scottish education overseas” (Robertson, 11.09.19, Col 13). Liz

Smith asked about the difference between markers and marker appointments, in reply to which Fiona Robertson explained that any one marker would hold a marker appointment for each qualification they marked on. Liz Smith followed this with a question about the number of markers required and the way the SQA managed the withdrawal of markers. Jenny Gilruth asked about the number of years of teaching experience required before a teacher could mark. Robert Quinn answered that markers required two years of experience teaching a qualification before they could mark that qualification. Alasdair Allan then asked about the ways in which the SQA worked with Education Scotland and the regional improvement collaboratives. Fiona Robertson responded:

As the national qualifications body, we work right across the system, but we play into other structures and conversations that are taking place in the best way possible, and conversations about the possibilities to do that are on-going (Robertson, 11.09.19, Col 22).

The meeting went on to explore national 4 accreditation, the teaching of national 4 and national 5 courses together and the grading appeals process.

In her opening remarks to the committee on the 22 January 2020 Fiona Robertson outlined the ways in which international expenses, the management of individual travel costs and the focus of their international work had been reviewed since September. She then outlined a planned review of national 3 and national 4 courses and the recruitment of markers for 2020. The meeting discussed the cost of the post-results service and a reduction in the use of it by local authority schools in comparison with the appeals process it replaced. Daniel Johnson asked about candidate access to exam scripts, which Fiona Robertson said had been explored before and would be reconsidered as more exams were digitised. Liz Smith asked about the reduction in marker appointments and for reassurance that there was nobody marking exams who was not qualified to teach the subject the exam was in. In reply Robert Quinn provided details of the training processes for markers. Ross Greer then asked a series of questions about the work of the SQA in Saudi Arabia. Daniel Johnson asked about the decline in attainment at higher level in the 2019 results. In response Fiona Robertson said that she had provided her commentary on the 2019 results to the September meeting of the committee. Robert Quinn added:

From a SCQF perspective, rather than looking simply at examinations, we can see positive trends. In particular, there is a growth, in what we might call the mixed economy of qualifications, which will be critical to ensuring that people are well prepared for the transitions that they make (Quinn, 22.01.20, Col 35).

BREXIT AND HIGHER EDUCATION

The committee took evidence on Brexit and Higher Education at their meeting on 18 September 2019. The papers for this meeting were a SPICe briefing (ES/S5/19/25/3) and pack of submissions to the committee (ES/S5/19/25/4).

Date of Committee	Witnesses
18 September 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liam McCabe, <i>NUS Scotland</i> • Mary Senior, <i>UCU Scotland</i> • Alastair Sim, <i>Universities Scotland</i>

The evidence session on the 18 September began with opening statements from the witnesses. In those remarks Liam McCabe told the committee that the NUS was calling for the UK to remain a member of the Erasmus+ scheme in the future and that the union was particularly concerned about the impact of a no-deal Brexit on students. Mary Senior talked about the uncertainty for European nationals who were working and studying in Scottish Universities and Alastair Sim the concerns of the Universities about the impact of a no-deal Brexit. The committee began by asking about the impact of Brexit on research funding and the loss of EU research funding. In reply Alastair Sim said that Universities were worried about a reduction in international research opportunities and the uncertainty around the UK Government intention to join Horizon Europe, the replacement research scheme for Horizon 2020. This led to a discussion about the reduction in leadership roles for Scottish institutions in Horizon 2020 funded research projects. The meeting considered the requirement for European nationals to apply for settled status and the long-term implications of the loss to the sector of the money that the Scottish Government currently provided to fund fees for European students. The Convener asked about intellectual property rights in existing research projects if there was no Brexit deal. In reply Alastair Sim said:

There are problems regarding intellectual property and accreditation and a related set of issues that absolutely need managed solutions, rather than our bursting out of the European Union without managed arrangements (Sim, 18.09.19, Col 36).

STEM IN EARLY YEARS EDUCATION

The committee concluded their evidence in the STEM in early years inquiry at their meeting on 2 October 2019. This meeting was supported by a SPICe briefing paper (ES/S5/19/26/1), a submission pack (ES/S5/19/26/2) and notes from a committee event hosted at the Scottish Learning Festival (ES/S5/19/26/3). The committee considered its draft report, in private, at their meetings on the 9 and 30 October, and agreed the report, in private, at their meeting on 6 November 2019.

Date of Committee	Witnesses
2 October 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ken Muir and Charlene Simpson, <i>General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS)</i>
2 October 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Richard Lochhead MSP, Minister for Further Education, Higher Education and Science, Scottish Government • Barbara Morton, Niamh O'Connor and Stuart Robb, <i>Scottish Government</i>

The convener began the final session of evidence by thanking everyone who had taken part in the STEM seminar hosted by the committee at the Scottish Learning Festival in September 2019. She then asked Ken Muir to make some opening remarks for the GTCS. In those remarks Ken Muir noted the work of the council in accrediting initial teacher education programmes (ITE) and the wider engagement of the council with STEM groups and programmes. Iain Gray asked if the council had considered raising the entry requirements for science subjects for primary education qualifications. In reply Ken Muir said that in the consultation carried out prior to the entry memorandum being refreshed a request to introduce a requirement for science was made by the Royal Society, that “Was not supported by other stakeholders’ (Muir, 02.10.19, Col 2). Iain Gray asked, ‘About the potential for more time being spent on STEM in initial teacher education to build confidence?’ (Gray, 02.10.19, Col 3). In reply Ken Muir talked about the range of representations made to the GTCS about subject knowledge for ITE and noted the difficulty of adding content to the postgraduate programmes which lasted 36 weeks, with 18 of those weeks in school. Jenny Gilruth asked about the teaching of modern studies in the primary curriculum. In reply Ken Muir reminded the committee of the number of claims made for time in the ITE curriculum. Alison Harris asked about the possibilities of including the arts with STEM. In reply Charlene Simpson said that there were a lot of connections between the arts and sciences, but it was not an area that the GTCS had researched. Ross Greer then asked what the GTCS was doing to address gender inequalities in STEM. In her reply Charlene Simpson outlined the role of professional values within ITE programmes.

The second panel of witnesses on the 2 October 2019 began with an opening statement from Richard Lochhead. In this statement the Minister spoke about the importance of ensuring, “Equality of access and opportunity in STEM” (Lochhead, 02.10.19, Col 19). He talked about the role of STEM ambassadors and professional learning grants for teachers. Iain Gray opened the questions by asking about how the Government was monitoring the uptake of STEM CPD for teachers. In reply Richard Lochhead explained that there was an intention to introduce performance indicators to monitor the uptake. Liz Smith asked about the recruitment of teachers for STEM subjects. In reply Stuart Robb described the introduction of alternative routes into teaching that had brought, “Around 770 additional students” (Robb, 02.10.19, Col 21) into teaching. The meeting then explored the provision of STEM courses for early years practitioners and career long professional learning for

primary teachers. Rona Mackay and Ross Greer asked about gender bias and challenging unconscious bias in primary ITE. In reply Barbara Morton said that there was a key performance indicator on gender balance in STEM that was calculated from SQA data. Gail Ross asked about access to science centres for rural schools. In reply Richard Lochhead said that there was funding for schools to travel to the science centres and there was a STEM officer based in each region.

EXAM DIET 2019, SCOTTISH NATIONAL STANDARDISED ASSESSMENTS AND SUBJECT CHOICES

The committee took evidence from John Swinney, Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills at their committee meeting on 27 November 2019. The papers for this meeting included a SPICe briefing paper (ES/S5/19/32/1) and two submissions packs; Scottish National Standardised Assessment submissions (ES/S5/19/32/2) and Subject choices submissions (ES/S5/19/32/3).

Date of Committee	Witnesses
27 November 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="660 871 1326 931">• John Swinney, Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, Scottish Government

In his opening remarks to the committee the Cabinet Secretary said he would provide an update on progress towards committee recommendations, the review of P1 assessments and 2019 exam results. Liz Smith asked who held responsibility for curricular structure and subject availability in schools. In his reply John Swinney said that he was, “Ultimately responsible for the education policy in Scotland and for the design of the curriculum as agreed by a variety of partners within education” (Swinney, 27.11.19, Col 5). He then reminded the committee about Curriculum for Excellence and that it was designed to be variable at local level. Liz Smith followed this with a question about exam outcomes and the lower rate of passes at Higher level. John Swinney replied:

The pass rate was broadly about 77 per cent for three years. It has gone down to 75 per cent. I recognise that is a decline; I have acknowledged that. However, we have to look at that figure in the context of it still being a very strong performance by young people in our education system (Swinney, 27.11.19, Col 8).

Daniel Johnson asked about the purpose of the national standardised assessments and concerns expressed by the Educational Institute of Scotland about the national value of the system. In response John Swinney explained that the introduction of the assessments was to support the moderation of assessment across Scotland. The convener noted the concerns heard by the committee about teacher workload and asked the Cabinet Secretary, “Are you content that the balance is right and that you have the information that you need to monitor the education system in Scotland?” (Adamson, 27.11.19, Col 15). In his reply John Swinney said that the Government now had the type of data the OECD recommended in their 2015 report of Scottish Education. Alasdair Allan asked about the actions of the Cabinet Secretary in relation to the committee

recommendation that there should be a review of the senior phase of the curriculum. John Swinney confirmed that he had commissioned a review of the senior phase by the OECD to follow their 2015 review of the broad general education phase. The meeting then considered the choices made by young people as they moved into the senior phase of the curriculum and the variability of options available to them.

PUBLIC PETITION PE1668

The committee returned to Petition 1668, by Anne Glennie at their meeting on 30 October 2019. This petition asked the parliament to take action to improve literacy in schools through the use of research informed reading instruction and was first considered by the committee on the 9 November 2017. The committee were provided with a paper by the clerk that summarised the actions and responses to the petition between 2017 and 2019 (ES/S5/19/28/1). It was agreed to keep the petition open and that they would consider further action when they discussed their work programme in private.

PUBLIC PETITION PE1692

The committee returned to Petition 1692, by Lesley Scott and Alison Preuss at their meeting on 27 November 2019. This petition was raised on behalf of the Tymes Trust and the Scottish Home Education Forum. It asked for an inquiry into the human rights implications of the policy getting it right for every child and data processing. The committee agreed to keep the petition open until the publication of relevant guidance by the Scottish Government.

PUBLIC PETITION PEO 1548

The committee considered Petition PEO 1548 by Beth Morrison on National Guidance on Restraint and Seclusion in Schools at their committee meeting on 22 January 2020. They agreed to write to the Cabinet Secretary about the issues raised and to keep the petition open.

EUROPEAN UNION (WITHDRAWAL) ACT 2018

The committee considered the proposal by the Scottish Government to consent to the UK Government legislating under the European (Withdrawal) Act 2018 at their meeting on the 4 September 2019. The committee supported the Scottish Government proposal in relation to the following UK statutory instrument proposal:

- The European University Institute (EU Exit) Regulations 2019

The committee considered and supported, a Scottish Government proposal to consent to the UK Government legislating under the Act through the following statutory instrument:

- The EU Research and Development Programmes (Revocation) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019

SUBORDINATE LEGISLATION

The Committee took evidence at their meeting on 18 September 2019, the Provision of Early Learning and Childcare (Specified Children) (Scotland) Amendment Order 2019 (SSI 2019/draft) from Maree Todd MSP, Minister for Childcare and Early Years, Scottish Government, following which the committee agreed the draft order:

- S5M-18219—Provision of Early Learning and Childcare (Specified Children) (Scotland) Amendment Order 2019 (SSI 2019/draft)

The committee considered and made no recommendations in relation to the following instruments during this period:

1. University of the West of Scotland Order of Council 2019 (SSI 2019/212)
2. Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh (Scotland) Amendment Order of Council 2019 (SSI 2019/213)
3. Robert Gordon University (Scotland) Order of Council 2019 (SSI 2019/375)

REFERENCES

OCED (2015) Improving Schools in Scotland: An OECD Perspective, Available online at: <https://www.oecd.org/education/school/Improving-Schools-in-Scotland-An-OECD-Perspective.pdf> [Accessed 30.03.19]

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