



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

**PUBLIC PETITION NO.**

**PE01717**

### **Name of petitioner**

Maryanne Pugsley

### **Petition title**

Inquiry into the abuse of children in Scottish state schools.

### **Petition summary**

Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to endorse a public inquiry into the abuse of children within Scottish state schools, faith or otherwise, including a review of the law of corroboration.

### **Action taken to resolve issues of concern before submitting the petition**

I have contacted my regional MSP Brian Whittle.

### **Petition background information**

I have concerns over Scotland's independent inquiry into the abuse of children in care, which currently excludes the victims of historical abuse in state schools in Scotland, and the implications surrounding this exclusion. I believe this disservice repudiates a fundamental right of the victims of child sexual abuse and of the subsequent repercussions in relation to the safeguarding of our children within state schools at the present time bringing into question their rights granted to them under United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989).

1. The discrimination against the victims of historical childhood abuse within state schools being excluded from the current in care inquiry into child abuse is unfair. In turn the impact on the victims, children currently within the state school system and our duty towards the rehabilitation of offenders is not being addressed.
2. Denying victims of historical child sexual abuse in state schools the support of an independent public inquiry is in effect keeping them victims. This in turn most likely impedes the exposing of predators within our state schools, thereby questioning the Government's claims to GIRFEC- Getting it right for every child.
3. In denying the victims of historical child abuse within state schools the right to an independent public inquiry the Government are prolonging the victimisation rather than enabling those without a voice to come forward and begin the arduous journey of a survivor. (Human Rights in the Administration of Justice by United Nations- chap 15.)

4. Given the lack of inquiry into state school abuse it has become apparent that securing corroboration into reported historical cases of child abuse within state schools is greatly diminished as the law currently stands. The current law of corroboration appears only to serve as another barrier that victims of historical child sexual abuse have to endure. As it currently stands, the law of corroboration could be seen to be protecting child molesters and paedophiles, rather than victims. Given the very nature of some of the grooming tactics employed by a child molester or paedophile, those of isolation and the fear instilled upon the victim if they "tell", leaves very little chance of corroboration. The likelihood of corroboration, given that generally the abuse is not acknowledged until adulthood is greatly reduced. It therefore appears that this law as it stands is in effect enabling the predators and silencing the victims - [Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power](#). Adopted by General Assembly resolution 40/34 of 29 November 1985.

5. Looking therefore at the rights of the child the following articles may be open for debate: article 3, 4, 6, 19, 28, 29, 34, 39 (retrospectively) and 42. As outlined in a [summary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#).

#### Unique web address

<https://www.parliament.scot/GettingInvolved/Petitions/PE01717>

#### Related information for petition

#### Do you wish your petition to be hosted on the Parliament's website to collect signatures online?

YES

#### How many signatures have you collected so far?

0

#### Closing date for collecting signatures online

04 / 04 / 2019

#### Comments to stimulate online discussion

Do you agree that there should be an inquiry into the abuse of children in Scottish state schools? Please explain why.

What are your views on the law of corroboration as it currently stands?