

## **PE1709/F**

COSLA submission of 18 December 2019

Local authorities are committed to ensuring that all children and young people get the right support at the right time to get the best from their education and providing a safe environment for all of our learners.

### CCTV cameras, fixed or body mounted

We have a number of initial concerns about the proposal, which:

- would invade the privacy of both children and young people and school staff and is not in line with the broader direction of policy which is focused on recognising and protecting the rights of children and young people,
- could upset the established classroom environments and could impact negatively on the learning and teaching within our schools,
- questions the professional integrity and judgment of our teachers and potentially deter good people from working in schools if they are going to be constantly monitored by fixed cameras or required to wear body cameras,
- would require significant additional resources for the purchase, installation, training and ongoing monitoring of the cameras.

We have read with interest the submissions from unions who represent both support and teaching staff, and note they are generally not supportive of this proposal. The committee may also wish to consider seeking the views of parents and carers of children and young people with additional support needs, national parent and carers organisations, and third sector organisations with an interest in additional support needs, to understand their views on the proposal.

We understand that all behavior is communication and that school staff need to have the knowledge and skills to interpret and respond in the right manner. Regrettably in some cases there will be situations where, as a last resort a child or young person may be restrained or secluded to prevent harm to themselves and others. It is important that school staff have the skills, adequate support and clear guidance to do this appropriately.

The Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland Report: "No Safe Place" calls for separate guidance on restraint and seclusion and the recording of all incidents of restraint and seclusion. It has recently been agreed that refreshed guidance and consistent recording processes will be developed. COSLA are working with Scottish Government, Education Scotland, parents, children and young people, unions, teachers and Directors of Education to develop this. The Children's Commissioner has been invited to participate in this process. Once work on the refreshed guidance and recording is complete it will be introduced nationally, and Education Scotland will report on this.

### Full time social work support in all additional support needs schools

COSLA and all our member local authorities are fully committed to the provision of Additional Support for Learning and to Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) by

providing the right kind of support to enable all children and young people to be fully included and to achieve the best they can. Local authorities decide the best way to provide the wide range of services for our communities; many of these services are outwith schools and support children and young people with Additional Support Needs.

Where an assessment determines that support is necessary from other agencies, in addition to education, a Coordinated Support Plan would be in place. In such cases support from social work or other services, such as speech and language therapy may be provided.

GIRFEC means support should be person centered and tailored to every child and young person's individual needs. Social workers are deployed appropriately to meet demand and needs, in some cases this may be in schools.

Schools come in different shapes and sizes and the number of pupils with Additional Support Needs will vary, as will their support needs. We would not be supportive of locating social workers in all ASN Schools regardless of demand. This would appear to be too prescriptive and would be likely to reduce the provision of this important resource outwith schools. Our view is that local authorities are best placed to work out how best to deploy staff, including social workers, based on demand and available resources.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to this Petition and we hope our views are helpful to the Committee in their deliberations on this issue.