

Proposed Amendments to the Restraint and Seclusion in Schools (Scotland) Bill from Restraint Reduction Network

(in consultation with Bild, Kate Sanger and Beth Morrison)

1. Recording and reporting

Reporting must be same day, the same as an accident at school, but recording could be by end of next day to allow time for post incident debriefing to capture learning. Note this should be the next day, regardless of the point in the week or year, not the next school day.

The Education, Children and Young People Committee January 2026 report echoes this in committed point 142.

2. Use of seclusion

The Education, Children and Young People Committee January 2026 report notes that the Children's Commissioner gave evidence that *that any use of seclusion where a child is unable to choose to leave that space would be a deprivation of liberty* (point 106).

The 2024 Scottish Government guidance states: *Seclusion is not recommended for general use in schools, either as part of routine practice or as a "default" response to distressed behaviour (Clause 73)*. There is a danger that the proposed bill, as it stands, could increase risk of misuse of this practice if it does not take a firmer stance on the use of seclusion.

In 2023 the Scottish Government incorporated the UNCRC into law. In the UN Committee's 2023 Concluding Observations (No. 30 a(iii)), they urged UK governments to: *"Take legislative measures to explicitly prohibit, without exception, the use of solitary confinement, isolation, seclusion and restraint as disciplinary measures in schools and alternative care and health settings."*

The RRN supports prohibiting the use of seclusion in schools in Scotland, in line with UNCRC recommendations and as is the case in New Zealand, recommending an amendment be made to the Bill to ban, rather than regulate, the use of seclusion.

3. Training (section 5)

We propose two important amendments to section 5: quality assurance and proportionate approach.

(a) Quality assurance of training

Training people to restrain a child is one of the most dangerous things we train people to do. Yet there is no quality assurance of training in place in education.

The 2024 Scottish Government guidance states: *'Where restraint is a foreseeable possibility, schools should use restraint training that is certified as complying with Restraint Reduction Network (RRN) Training Standards. This will ensure:*

- *training is human rights-focused;*
- *that staff also receive training in preventative approaches;*
- *that trainers have the appropriate expertise to train in schools;*

- *that training in techniques is safe and proportional to school requirements and is appropriate for use on children and young people;*
- *that training includes hearing from people who have been restrained; and*
- *that training is accredited by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service as meeting the ISO standards for certification.*

There is a method of quality assurance – the RRN Training Standards – already in statutory guidance elsewhere, that has been independently evaluated as having a positive impact on training, practice and culture, and is itself quality assured by UKAS. The second edition of the RRN Training Standards includes a schools-specific version. Why, having adopted this in non-statutory guidance – would the new Bill move away from this?

We believe it is essential that an amendment is made to ensure quality assurance of training and strongly recommend that this aspect of the current non-statutory guidance is adopted in the private Member's Bill, or at the very least, requiring Scottish Government state in the code of practice how training will be quality assured.

The Education, Children and Young People Committee January 2026 report echoes this need for RRN Training Standards certified training, stating the committee *“welcomes the current guidance approach that, where the use of restraint training is required, schools should use training that is certified as complying with the Restraint Reduction Network Training Standards”*.

(b) Proportionate approach to training (through TNA)

We believe a further amendment should be made to the Bill to make clear that only teachers who, based on a training needs analysis (TNA) looking at their specific school setting, pupil population and support needs, are identified as requiring to receive such training, should receive training in restrictive practices. Where such training is required, that training must be quality assured (certified as complying with RRN Training Standards).

Most teachers do not need to be trained in restrictive practices such as physical restraint. To do so would be disproportionate and risk increasing use of these practices. However, where there is a likelihood of restraint being used, in setting such as special schools, quality assured training that includes a restrictive element may be required.

All teachers in all schools should receive some training in learning disability and autism and in prevention, de-escalation and rights, but this would not include training in any elements of restraint. This could be achieved through initial teacher training.