

Children (Equal Protection from Assault) (Scotland) Bill

Page 2: About you

Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

an individual

Which of the following best describes you? (If you are a professional or academic, but not in a subject relevant to the consultation, please choose "Member of the public".)

Professional with experience in a relevant subject

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

No Response

Please choose one of the following; if you choose the first option, please provide your name or the name of your organisation as you wish it to be published.

I am content for this response to be attributed to me or my organisation

Please insert your name or the name of your organisation. If you choose the first option above, this should be the name as you wish it to be published. If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Anne Thomas, Speech and Language Therapist,

Please provide details of a way in which we can contact you if there are queries regarding your response. Email is preferred but you can also provide a postal address or phone number. We will not publish these details.

Page 7: Your views on the proposal

Q1. Which of the following best expresses your view of the proposal of giving children equal protection from assault by prohibiting all physical punishment of children?

Fully Supportive

Q1. Which of the following best expresses your view of the proposal of giving children equal protection from assault by prohibiting all physical punishment of children?

Please explain the reasons for your response

I think it would be much clearer to parents to know that physical punishment is never OK rather than to think that smacking is sometimes OK. I've seen the shift away from using the cane at my Junior School and this being acceptable to a situation now where it is inconceivable that it would be allowed in schools and I think the same will happen for smacking by parents

Q2. Could the aims of the proposal be better delivered in another way (without a Bill in the Scottish Parliament)?

No

Please explain the reasons for your response

It's the only way to reach the whole of society in a reasonable time frame. Education is not enough.

Q3. What do you think would be the main advantages, if any, of giving children equal protection from assault by prohibiting all physical punishment of children?

Parents will seek other ways of maintaining discipline and children will not have to suffer.

Q4. What do you think would be the main disadvantages, if any, of giving children equal protection from assault by prohibiting all physical punishment of children?

Parents may just shout at children more rather than finding effective ways of managing behaviour. It is important that sufficient support is in place particularly with children with very challenging behaviour particularly as a result of special needs such as autism. Services are currently very stretched and special needs are rising. More focus needs to be made on health promotion, particularly in pregnancy to reduce the number of developmental difficulties. Folate, iron, Omega 3 and vitamin D are particularly important in pregnancy and early childhood yet information is poor and many mothers and small children do not have good diets and are deficient in these and other micro-nutrients increasing the risk of difficulties.

Page 11: Financial implications

Q5. Taking account of both costs and potential savings, what financial impact would you expect the proposed Bill to have?

Broadly cost-neutral

Please explain the reasons for your response

There should be less damage to children resulting in a need for support but initially there may be more concerns raised and a need to support parents to find alternative ways of disciplining children

Page 12: Equalities

Q6. What overall impact is the proposed Bill likely to have on the following protected groups (under the Equality Act 2010): race, disability, sex, gender re-assignment, age, religion and belief, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity?

Positive

Please explain the reasons for your response

It will make it clear to all that physical punishment is not acceptable under any circumstances

Q7. Could any negative impact of the proposed Bill on any of these protected groups be minimised or avoided?

There needs to be publicity and education around it and maybe a period before it is enforced to inform people about it.

Page 14: Sustainability of the proposal

Q8. Do you consider that the proposed Bill can be delivered sustainably i.e. without having a disproportionate economic, social and/or environmental impact?

Yes

Page 15: General

Q9. Do you have any other comments or suggestions on the proposal?

I think this is definitely needed.