



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

## EDUCATION AND CULTURE COMMITTEE

### AGENDA

7th Meeting, 2014 (Session 4)

Tuesday 11 March 2014

The Committee will meet at 10.00 am in Committee Room 2.

1. **Broadcasting:** The Committee will take evidence from—

Professor John Robertson;

and then from—

Ken MacQuarrie, Director, John Boothman, Head of News and Current Affairs, Bruce Malcolm, Head of Commonwealth Games 2014, and John Mullin, Editor, Referendum Unit, BBC Scotland.

2. **Cyber Bullying:** The Committee will take evidence from—

Laura Tomson, Senior Development Officer, Zero Tolerance;

Brian Donnelly, Director, Respect Me;

Caroline Harris, Project Co-ordinator, Anti-Bullying East Lothian;

Tony Rafferty, Member, National Parent Forum of Scotland.

Terry Shevlin  
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The papers for this meeting are as follows—

**Agenda item 1**

Written evidence

EC/S4/14/7/1

**Agenda item 2**

Spice briefing

EC/S4/14/7/2

Written evidence

EC/S4/14/7/3

**Education and Culture Committee**

**7th Meeting, 2014 (Session 4), Tuesday, 11 March 2014**

**Broadcasting**

**BBC Scotland**

1. This evidence session follows-up the Committee's [Report on Broadcasting](#), which was published in 2013. In the report, the Committee undertook to monitor the BBC's preparation for coverage of the Referendum and the Commonwealth Games in 2014.

**Professor John Robertson**

2. In February 2014, Professor Robertson published his research into BBC and ITV coverage of the Scottish referendum campaign from September 2012 to September 2013.

3. The Committee has received written evidence from the witnesses—

- Professor John Robertson (**page 2**)
- BBC Scotland
  - Coverage of the Referendum (**page 8**)
  - Coverage of the Commonwealth Games (**page 11**)

Clerk to the Committee  
6 March 2014

**Fairness in the First Year?** *BBC and ITV Coverage of the Scottish Referendum Campaign from September 2012 to September 2013: Draft 2: 4/2/14*

*Dr John Robertson, Independent Researcher*

The Scottish electorate will vote in an independence referendum on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2014. They will be asked 'Should Scotland be an independent country? Yes or No.' The Referendum Bill was introduced to the Scottish Parliament on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2013.

The 'Phase 1' survey of TV coverage of the referendum campaigns reported here covers the period from 17<sup>th</sup> September 2012 to 18<sup>th</sup> September 2013 including every weekday evening (6-7pm) broadcast by *BBC 1, Reporting Scotland, ITV* and *STV*, and shorter weekend broadcasts in that period. A total, therefore, of approximately 640 hours, minus advertising breaks in ITV and STV broadcasts, was watched, transcribed and coded. The evening TV broadcasts were chosen as the news media communications with the largest audiences in Scotland and in the UK. The distribution and quantity of messages of different types is presented in a tabular format with selected text examples to illustrate types of message.

The researchers, at the University of the West of Scotland, sought to disengage themselves as much as possible from the surrounding debate, in extended newspaper articles or TV debates, with a view to as objective an assessment as is possible given the inevitably ideological, contested and subjective nature of the topic. Consequently, we do not indulge, here, in an extended discussion of the history and politics of Scottish independence, the early analysis by journalists, nor do we debate the advantages or disadvantages proposed by the Yes and No campaigns.

Our purpose, rather, is to answer these questions which emerged as prevalent issues from first and second readings of the transcripts:

1. How prevalent were referendum topics in the first year of the campaigns?
2. What was the relative balance of statements given to the views of Yes and No, representatives, arguments and evidence?
3. What was the relative balance of independent, scientific or academic evidence presented in support on the Yes and No campaigns?
4. To what extent did No arguments precede the Yes and vice versa?
5. What was the ratio of arguments finishing broadcasts unchallenged in favour of the Yes and No campaigns?
6. To what extent were arguments equated with the apparently personal wishes of political personalities rather than as collective positions?
7. What was the relative balance of offensive statements made to Yes and No campaigners and broadcast?
8. What forms of evidence dominated the discourse – economic, political, social?
9. Overall and to what extent, did reporting favour the Yes or No campaign.

The team is recording comparable coverage in the second year of the campaigns, up to 18/09/14 and will retain there the research methods and principles used in the first phase. Other researchers may be interested in the extent to which publication of the first phase results influences broadcasters in the second year but we will not pursue this.

**Methods:**

A content analysis of the relative presence of types of political message contained within broadcasts in the first year of the Scottish Independence Referendum campaigns applied the following coding categories which emerged from pilot coding exercises:

***About/ Descriptive***

Statements about independence which could not be otherwise coded as pro- or anti-

***Pro-independence***

Statements which could clearly be associated with the pro-independence or Yes position

***Anti-independence***

Statements which could clearly be associated with the anti-independence or No position

***Pro-Ind/Sci/Acad Evidence***

Statements which made use of academic, scientific or 'independent' evidence to support the pro-independence or Yes campaign

***Anti-Ind/Sci/Acad Evidence***

Statements which made use of academic, scientific or 'independent' evidence to support the anti-independence or No campaign

***Anti-Pro Order***

An opening sequence of statements in which an anti-independence or No statement preceded a pro-independence or Yes response

***Pro-Anti Order***

An opening sequence of statements in which a pro-independence or Yes statement preceded an anti-independence or No response

***Personalisation of ideas as AS's wishes***

Labelling pro-independence statements as representing the wishes or desires of Alex Salmond rather than as those of the 'Scottish Government' or the 'SNP' or the 'Yes campaign' or any other collective

***Personalisation of ideas as BT individuals' wishes***

Labelling anti-independence statements as representing the wishes or desires of Johann Lamont or Alistair Darling or any other individual rather than as those of the 'British Government' or 'critics' or the No campaign or any other collective

***Abusive of Pro***

Broadcasting the use of insulting language aimed at pro-independence campaigners

***Abusive of Anti***

Broadcasting the use of insulting language aimed at anti-independence campaigners

***Economic evidence***

Presenting evidence relating to the economic consequences (trade, taxes, cost of living, employment) of independence for either side

***Social evidence***

Presenting evidence relating to the social consequences ( health, education, welfare, arts) of independence for either side

***Political Evidence***

Presenting evidence relating to the political consequences ( NATO, EU, defence, constituion) of independence for either side

***Finishing with Pro evidence unchallenged***

Finishing a broadcast item with a clearly pro-independence or Yes piece of evidence left unchallenged

***Finishing with Anti evidence unchallenged***

Finishing a broadcast item with a clearly anti-independence or No piece of evidence left unchallenged

The term 'statement' referring to the unit of measurement in this research means a sentence or cluster of sentences from one source demarcated by clear space between it and a prior sentence/cluster from a different source and by a clear space between it and a subsequent sentence/cluster. No attempt was made in this approach to discriminate between statements of different word lengths or between one and two or more sentence clusters. The nature of these broadcasts was such that statements were rarely more than one sentence in length with the

presenter, interviewer and multiple political figures generally constrained to enable inclusion of all parties.

The coding which led to the evidence of bias emerged from a grounded theory/ phenomenological approach which allows the data to speak. The final coding is the product of two phases, through all the data, of coding by the lead researcher and subsequent moderation by three others (recently retired staff and PhD students). The first phase resulted in evidence of bias more damaging to the BBC and STV. In the second phase, the lead researcher allocated statements with more subtle or nuanced undermining of the Yes campaign to the general or descriptive category. Coding of human language cannot be utterly objective but the team has done more than most in an effort to be as objective as can be.

**Results:**

Code	RepSc	STV	BBC1	ITV	RepSc+BBC1	STV+ITV
<i>Reports</i>	141	141	51	11	192	152
<i>About/ Descriptive</i>	85	79	24	3	109	82
<i>Pro-independence/ SNP</i>	171	172	40	7	211	179
<i>Anti-independence/ SNP</i>	262	255	55	10	317	265
<i>Pro-Ind/Sci/Acad Evidence</i>	4	7	0	0	4	7
<i>Anti-Ind/Sci/Acad Evidence</i>	22	20	1	0	23	20
<i>Anti-Pro Order</i>	66	61	13	1	79	62
<i>Pro-Anti Order</i>	24	53	19	3	43	56
<i>Personalisation of ideas as AS</i>	28	32	7	2	35	34
<i>Personalisation of ideas as BT individuals</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Abusive of Pro-independence figures</i>	18	18	1	0	19	18
<i>Abusive of Anti-independence figures</i>	3	3	0	0	3	3
<i>Economic evidence</i>	38	23	9	3	47	26
<i>Social evidence</i>	18	10	7	0	25	10
<i>Political evidence</i>	14	9	15	2	29	11
<i>Finishing with Pro evidence unchallenged</i>	8	17	2	0	10	17
<i>Finishing with Anti evidence unchallenged</i>	28	34	12	0	40	34
<b>Coded items</b>	789	793	205	31	994	824

**Figure1: Total and average figures for each coded category**

The above table presents data which can be used to reveal the distribution, over 12 months, of different types of message within broadcasts, allows comparison of the relative presence of each category and enables comparison between channels for the same categories.

News reports relating to the referendum were fairly regular occurrences on the two Scottish channels over the twelve months. In sharp contrast the UK-wide broadcasts rarely reported on this topic. The *BBC1* figures are inflated by the *Reporting Scotland* headline alerts which followed the ‘national’ headlines and which were only seen in Scotland. This apparent disinterest in a major constitutional challenge to the very existence of the UK, by its two dominant news programmes, is the first observation to be taken from the above data.

The simple numerical preponderance of anti-independence statements over pro-independence statements by a ratio of c3:2 on *Reporting Scotland* and on *STV*, is also clear. One obvious explanation lies in the editorial decision to allow all three anti-independence parties to respond to each SNP statement creating an unavoidable predominance of statements from the former even when these were kept short. Anti-independence statements were heavily concentrated on

economic affairs such as alleged increased unemployment or closures after independence, such as:

- On 20/5/13 in *STV at 6*, the presenter announced ‘Scots’ savers and financial institutions might be at risk if country votes for independence
- On 29/10/12 in *Reporting Scotland*, an extensive piece on Trident and on Scotland’s defence forces after independence offers some space for SNP response but is driven by a weight of one-sided and unchallenged evidence and commentary – unnamed economic advisers are allowed to suggest 6500 jobs lost if Trident goes and an overall cost of £20bn while the report finishes ominously with ‘Whitehall could play hardball’.
- On 11/12/12, in *Reporting Scotland*, the programme opens with ‘Row over independence could lead to higher electricity bills’ then runs through a series of negative sound bites interspersed with SNP protest – ‘questions mount over independence’, ‘UK government claims cost could rise’, ‘Could Scots customers have to pay more?’, ‘Labour spokesman – danger’ before allowing the evidence of Scottish over-production, renewables and a captive market in England to cast serious doubt on the motivation for the initial headline ‘scare’.

Health-related matters were the other dominant theme. For example, on 27/9/12 the case of a Scottish patient seeking free care only available in England was highlighted and linked to the relative lack of GP control in Scotland. This began a mini-series of reports that day on alleged failings in the Scottish NHS by *Reporting Scotland* reporters and by Labour spokespersons. No balancing cases were reported of a flow in the other direction although such did appear in the popular press (‘Now English asthma patients are denied life-changing drug offered to Scots’, *Daily Mail*, 9/11/12). The use of single cases to suggest wider concerns is of course problematic.

Less typical but of interest in this evaluation of editorial decision making was:

- On 24/6/13 in *STV at 6*, the presenter, referring to a report from the ‘Scottish Institute’ offers unchallenged the notion that the Scottish armed forces ‘might have trouble recruiting due to lack of adventure’! The possibility of the reverse trend is not considered.

The use of evidence from sources other than the parties themselves and which might be presented as ‘independent’, ‘academic’ or ‘scientific’ is a measure of quality in political debate. Notably, there was very little use of such evidence in the reporting overall and, where there was, there was clear tendency to use anti-independence over pro-independence evidence. Though a rare phenomenon overall, reporting tended to link pro-independence evidence from Scottish Government sponsored committees to their sponsorship while UK advisory groups such as the *Office for Budget Responsibility*, *The Institute for Fiscal Studies* and several Parliamentary, Treasury, or House of Lords committees were typically treated as independent despite linkages to UK government and other government departments or units with a vested interest in the union. Indeed the IFS was referred to as a ‘well-respected think tank’ (*Reporting Scotland*, 19/11/12) whereas a Glasgow University academic was ‘outed’ as having been ‘bought’ by the Yes campaign to support the independence case (*Reporting Scotland*, 22/8/13).

The sequence of statements whereby anti-independence arguments preceded pro-independence responses as opposed to the reverse order is of interest. There was a clear majority (66:24) of the former, on *Reporting Scotland* where ‘bad news’ about independence came first and obliged a defensive response from a pro-independence spokesperson but a much narrower majority

(61:53) on *STV News*. The *Reporting Scotland* imbalance tends to normalise the No/anti-independence position and put the onus of the Yes/pro-independence position to justify itself.

Personalisation of political issues is long-established strategy to weaken arguments, shifting focus from collective reasoning or shared values to supposed personal desires and personality traits. Historically, this tendency or strategy has been used to demonise and to undermine numerous political figures in the UK including Michael Foot and Neil Kinnock. In the above data, the repeated association of the Yes/pro-independence campaign with the personal desires of Alex Salmond was regular and frequent. No such equation between No/anti-independence figures' personal drives and the No campaign was made. Likewise the broadcasting of personally insulting comments by anti-independence representatives (especially Johann Lamont) aimed at Alex Salmond, almost entirely, was predominant though a few counter-jibes by Salmond against Lamont and the Labour Party did also occur. Notably the use of insults aimed at Salmond declined and had become less common in the second six months of the survey. The tendency by opposition politicians to attempt to undermine the Yes campaign by labelling its ambitions as Alex Salmond's desires is, in part, beyond the editorial role, however, it was common for reporters and presenters to adopt the same style:

- On 23/10/12, in *Reporting Scotland*, 'Alex Salmond under pressure!'
- On 23/10/12, in *Reporting Scotland*, Willie Rennie (Lib Dem) 'challenged Alex Salmond's policy'.
- On 12/9/12, in *STV at 6*, 'Alex Salmond would say that the Westminster...'
- On 3/9/13, in *STV at 6*, 'Alex's agenda!'
- On 25/10/12, in *Reporting Scotland*, Salmond is described by Johann Lamont (Labour) as 'straight as a corkscrew' and then compared by Ruth Davidson (Con) to bent salesman 'Delboy'.

The distillation of the debate over independence into a largely economic debate was also clear. Particularly notable is the role, here, of political editors in framing the debate in this way, telling the viewer that the debate over living standards, employment and taxation was the only debate anyone cared about. No evidence for this view was given.

The closing statements in reports might be felt to leave a lingering impression and thus carry more weight than some others. In many cases, reporters would round-off with a compromise assessment so as to leave the two campaigns in a kind of balance. Quite often, however, a statement strongly supportive of one side would be left hanging as the final thought. This was more likely, especially on *Reporting Scotland*, to be an anti-independence statement such as:

- On 27/9/12, in *Reporting Scotland*, a piece on the changes to the NHS in England was used to suggest that the Scottish system's reluctance to change 'is bad news for Scotland' and finishes with the unsubstantiated suggestion that GPs and patients might be 'planning to move to England'.
- On 5/10/12, in *Reporting Scotland*, the Scottish Government's commitment to universal benefits was immediately followed by a reference to 'spending watchdog chief Robert Black who has questioned whether such benefits are affordable' and reinforced by reference to Black's cv – 'few people are better placed to understand the challenges'.
- On 26/4/13, in *Reporting Scotland*, a generally negative assessment of the future of insurance companies after independence finished with the

Labour spokesperson's assertion of 'billions in costs' and 'potential closures'.

- On 9/1/13, in *STV News*, after an extended and mostly negative report on the SNP's 'antinuclear stance' the presenter finishes by suggesting that the latter 'will lead to economic disaster'.

Comparing *Reporting Scotland* with *STV News*, the former seems less balanced and fair to the Yes campaign if only in the tendency to give pro-independence statements a greater frequency of opening and closing debates. Overall, however, both feature a preponderance of anti-independence statements, a majority of anti-independence evidence and a heavy personalisation of the debate around the character of Alex Salmond with the latter often portrayed as selfish and undemocratic. However, If we characterise viewers as likely to watch both *BBC 1* and *Reporting Scotland* or both *STV* and *ITV News*, in succession, the two experiences diverge further than is apparent in comparing one programme with another. The *BBC1*, *Reporting Scotland* alerts are commonly short and punchy with an attack, typically a Westminster scare story, on the Yes campaign, mostly left unanswered and unchallenged.

So, on the objective evidence presented here, the mainstream TV coverage of the first year of the independence referendum campaigns has not been fair or balanced. Taken together, we have evidence of coverage which seems likely to have damaged the Yes campaign.

Professor John Robertson  
4 February 2014

**BBC Scotland Referendum Coverage Update: November 2013 - March 2014**

There has been extensive general news coverage, across all of our broadcast platforms, of all of the key events in the debate so far this year, including the statements made by the Governor of the Bank of England, Mark Carney, on the Scottish Government's proposed currency union; Chancellor George Osborne – backed by Labour and the Lib Dems – ruling out a formal sterling union in the event of a Yes vote; the First Minister's speech to business leaders in Aberdeen and the meetings of both the UK and Scottish Governments, within five miles of each other, in the North-East, on Monday, 24 February

All of these have proved to be major events across all output, both on BBC Scotland and on network. There has been rolling coverage and a number of co-presentations, most recently with the *Today* programme on Monday, 24 February, with James Naughtie presenting from Aberdeen and Sarah Montague in London.

Online has performed particularly strongly. The main story on Mr Salmond's speech attracted a record near two million unique users. All four stories were most read in Scotland and in the top three most read across the UK.

The turn of the year saw a marked increase in referendum-specific programming from BBC Scotland.

The first of nine scheduled referendum debates from across Scotland was broadcast on BBC Two Scotland at 9PM on Tuesday, 21 January.

The aim of these programmes is to give the people of Scotland a chance to put their questions to politicians and personalities. In the chair for these debates is James Cook, our Scotland Correspondent.

The first programme came from Greenock and the panel comprised Fiona Hyslop MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Culture and External Affairs; Anas Sarwar MP, deputy leader of Scottish Labour; Sanjeev Kohli, writer and comedian; and Alex Massie, columnist.

The second came from Kelso. The panel comprised Stuart Hosie MP, SNP Treasury spokesman at Westminster; Ruth Davidson MSP, leader of the Scottish Conservatives; Jenny Marra MSP, Scottish Labour's deputy finance spokesperson; and Patrick Harvie MSP, co-convenor of the Scottish Greens. It was broadcast at 9pm on BBC2 Scotland on 18 February.

One aspect of these debates is the effort we are putting in to interactivity and linked online content. BBC Scotland has been running a live page during the programme, with extensive use of Twitter feeds. The first debate trended number one in the UK and there are follow-up pieces online.

BBC Scotland is also broadcasting 12 referendum-related documentaries in the run up to 18 September. The first of these was broadcast on Tuesday, 28 January at 9pm on BBC2 Scotland.

*Scotland's Smoking Gun* – narrated by Clare Grogan – was a fast-moving recap of Scotland's post-war political, social and cultural history and the events which have brought us to the point of the most historic vote in Scotland's history.

*Five Million Ways to Be Scottish* followed in the same slot the following Tuesday, 4 February. Written and presented by Stuart Cosgrove, it examined different identities in Scotland and what impact these might have when Scots go to the polls in September.

The third documentary, *Scotland's Top Ten Battlegrounds*, narrated by John Gordon Sinclair (Tuesday 11 February, 9pm, BBC2 Scotland) looked at the key issues facing voters when they go to the polls and sought expert help to try and shed light on the claims and competing claims of the respective campaigns.

Each documentary was repeated the following Wednesday evening on BBC Two Scotland, at 11.20PM. They were re-cut to 30 minutes length and were screened three times each on the News Channel the following weekend. By special arrangements, they are also available to view on iPlayer for a year, rather than for the usual seven days.

The next TV debate comes from Kirkcaldy on 18 March, six months from the date of the referendum and the next documentaries will be broadcast in April.

We have also begun to broadcast regular *Newsnight Scotland* debates. The most recent of these was on Monday, 24 February, with the BBC's panel, Gary Robertson, Isabel Fraser and Douglas Fraser cross-examining Fiona Hyslop, Culture Secretary, and Annabel Goldie, former leader of the Scottish Conservatives and a member of the House of Lords.

On BBC ALBA, a weekly Referendum-focused programme will be presented live, from Inverness, every Sunday, from 2 February 2014 through to Sunday 19 October 2014. This will be re-versioned for transmission on Radio nan Gaidheal.

*Rathad an referendum* is a series of debate programmes on BBC ALBA, the first of which was in September 2013; further debates were televised in January and February 2014.

Referendum issues have also featured on seven occasions in *Morning Call* (BBC Radio Scotland: weekdays, 8.50AM) since the beginning of January.

On 5 February we announced that Sarah Smith, business correspondent and presenter for Channel 4 News, would join BBC Scotland to front a new studio-based weeknight programme, *Scotland 2014*, which aims to both reflect and set the referendum agenda. Transmitting on BBC Two Scotland from 10.30pm on Mondays to Thursdays from May-October, the new 30-minute current affairs programme will demonstrate how Scotland impacts on national and global events and how national and global events impact on Scotland. The programme will replace *Newsnight Scotland* and will lead into *Newsnight* coming on air in Scotland in its entirety from 11pm.

Joining her in the BBC's referendum unit are a number of other experienced reporters and correspondents including Lucy Adams, formerly chief reporter of the Herald newspaper, as a

**Agenda item 1****EC/S4/14/7/1**

political correspondent; Laura Bicker, who was a BBC network news correspondent based in Scotland, and will become a referendum correspondent, and Colleta Smith from BBC Northern Ireland's Business Unit, who has been appointed economics correspondent of the unit.

**ENDS**

**BBC Scotland Commonwealth Games Update: November 2013 - March 2014**

In terms of events coverage, we continue to work collaboratively with the Organising Committee on both the Opening and Closing ceremonies. Our detailed planning continues on a whole range of issues. These include staffing, talent, studio locations, infrastructure and partnership with the host broadcaster. We are confident our plans are progressing well and are on time.

A range of BBC Games-related television programmes, scheduled for transmission, was noted in the last submission to the committee. Since then, also confirmed have been:

- *12 Days of the Games*, a BBC One commission for BBC Scotland where our cameras capture two of the most remarkable weeks in Glasgow;
- *Commonwealth City*, a 3-part BBC One Scotland commission, filmed over four years, following the lives of residents in Glasgow's East End as it is redeveloped for the Commonwealth Games;
- *I Love Glasgow*, a four-part series in which celebrities look at what makes 2014's host city special;
- *Secret History of our Streets* – this well-known BBC Two network brand will focus a three-part series on Glasgow and other Scottish locations;
- *Commonwealth on Film* is a four-part BBC4 commission, showcasing unique BBC archive on Commonwealth themes;
- BBC4 will produce *The Big City Paint*, on the history of murals in the UK. As part of this we will commission two pieces of mural art in the centre of Glasgow from two of Scotland's most exciting emerging artists. This will give a unique insight into how artists work;
- *Chris Hoy – How to Win Gold* is a BBC One commission for BBC Scotland;
- *From Scotland with Love* is a documentary and live music performance based on film archive of the Queen's Baton Relay route in Scotland, with music by King Creosote;
- and *Snapshot Scotland 2014* is a new weekly magazine show, which will be on air in the six week lead-up to the Games. It will showcase events, festivals, theatre, art and comedy that are taking place the length and breadth of Scotland in this unique year.

On Burns Night, on BBC Two Scotland, *The Commonwealth of Burns* was broadcast, followed by *A Celtic Connections Special: Burns and the Commonwealth Concert*, recorded at the Glasgow Hydro.

Coverage of the Queen's Baton Relay continues and presenter Mark Beaumont has followed the baton on its journey so far, across 45 of the 70 nations and territories of the Commonwealth. Across BBC Television, Radio, Online, Mobile and Social Media the BBC Scotland team has sought to raise awareness of the Games in Glasgow, the Commonwealth and its people. Much of this content has reached both domestic and international audiences. Throughout the coverage, themes explored have included culture, youth, diversity, opportunity and development.

BBC Scotland is responsible for all of this output and has a production team based in Glasgow, along with a three person location team in the field. To date, we have broadcast more than 30 hours of content in addition to providing a rich online offering.

Each week the team produces reports for BBC Scotland, BBC News Channel and, for international viewers, for BBC World News. We also produce monthly half-hour documentaries for the same outlets. BBC Scotland and Network brands and stations such as *BBC Breakfast*, *The One Show*, *Newsround*, *Radio 2*, *Radio 5Live* & *BBC World Service* bring new and diverse audiences to our coverage of the build-up to the Games.

Radio Scotland will provide coverage of every Scottish medal winner, with the station responding to all the action as it happens, including live coverage of the opening and closing ceremonies.

On 30 January BBC's Radio 1 *Breakfast Show* came live from Glasgow and the Radio 1 Big Weekend announced that it will be in Glasgow on 23, 24 & 25 May, featuring Paulo Nutini. Details of ticket availability and line-up will be announced soon. BBC Three will also cover the Big Weekend output.

The Radio 1 Academy, which involves key people from the industry meeting and running workshops with young people, will also be in Glasgow the week before the Big Weekend.

All the BBC networks (including Radio Scotland) will produce content in the run-up to, and during, the Games. Programmes already confirmed – and coming from BBC@thequay in front of an audience – will include Radio 2's *The Ken Bruce Show* and *Good Morning Sunday*, Radio Scotland's *Iain Anderson* and *Sport Nation*.

There will be a series exploring Scotland's contribution to the Commonwealth, for BBC Radio 2 and *World on 3* has already started broadcasting a 26-part series made by BBC Scotland with recordings of roots music from Commonwealth countries. The BBC Asian Network will broadcast its afternoon programme from Glasgow during the Games and deliver live a Bollywood-style musical evening from BBC@thequay.

BBC Radio 2's *Friday Night is Music Night* will come live from Glasgow on 25 July and BBC Radio 4Extra's *The Four o'clock Show* will record special programmes from the BBC@thequay site. Radio 4's *Women's Hour* will broadcast two live programmes from BBC@thequay and the World Service Book Club will also be there with guest authors.

Comedy nights have been added to the schedule and further announcements about programme content are planned for early April. Live music will feature every night at the BBC@thequay site, including a special *Commonwealth Connections* programme, live sessions and a special *Take the Floor* on Radio Scotland.

We have invested in a Scottish team to lead our Get Inspired project. This is an initiative to inspire Scots people to try new sports and activities through films, features and guides. We will work in close partnership with Sports bodies across Scotland. We will tell inspirational stories across TV, radio and online and provide guides to sports and a postcode-based

search tool to help people find out about events happening near where they live. *Sportsound* has recently been visiting schools across Scotland, with pundits and players running coaching sessions for school kids. More of these events are planned over the coming year.

BBC@thequay will be the BBC's 16 day Festival site, offering the public opportunities to attend live programming (such as *The One Show*) and off-air events. The site will be live, 0900 to midnight, from 19 July until 3 August and will feature an outdoor performance area, a covered venue, a big screen to view the various sporting and cultural events and interactive exhibitions. Live music will feature every night. BBC ALBA/BBC Radio nan Gaidheal will deliver a musical evening celebration. There will be special non-broadcast events from many programmes including *A Question of Sport*, *Who Do You Think You Are?*, *River City* and *Waterloo Road*.

In terms of training and partnerships, BBC Scotland currently has 10 apprentices (the third annual intake) who are working alongside the Commonwealth Games production teams in delivering BBC Scotland's cultural and sporting programme. The scheme is in collaboration with Glasgow Kelvin College, Skillset Scotland and Skills Development Scotland. The next intake is on 10 March, 2014.

Commonwealth Class, a collaboration between the BBC, the British Council and the Commonwealth Secretariat, has delivered powerful films that deal with issues relevant to children across the Commonwealth, enabling them to debate these issues through regular online forums and connecting schools across the Commonwealth. This project culminates on 25 July with a live debate at BBC@thequay, which will bring young people from all over the Commonwealth together.

Commonwealth Voices is our training and outreach programme based in the East End of Glasgow which will deliver a pop-up radio station in collaboration between BBC Radio Scotland and the Commonwealth Broadcasters Association.

**ENDS**

**Education and Culture Committee****7th Meeting, 2014 (Session 4), Tuesday, 11 March 2014****Cyberbullying: Spice briefing****Definitions**

Scottish Government guidance on tackling bullying (2010) regards cyberbullying as one form of the behaviour rather than a separate phenomenon:

Bullying also occurs in the virtual world also known as cyberspace which children and young people access through the internet, via social networking (for example Facebook or Myspace), computers and mobile phones. As communication can happen anywhere and at any time, often unsupervised, cyber bullying can be very pervasive and difficult to handle. However, in essence, the behaviour is the same and requires similar prevention methods.

It provides the following definition of bullying:

Research and practice experience over time have led to an emerging understanding of bullying as a complex behaviour. Bullying can be understood as behaviour which leaves people feeling helpless, frightened, anxious, depressed or humiliated. Bullying behaviours may include:

- name calling, teasing, putting down or threatening
- ignoring, leaving out or spreading rumours
- hitting, tripping, kicking
- stealing and damaging belongings
- sending abusive text, email or instant messages
- making people feel like they are being bullied or fearful of being bullied
- targeting someone because of who they are or are perceived to be.

Bullying can sometimes reach the level of criminal behaviour. The guidance states: "Sometimes bullying behaviour becomes criminal, such as physical and sexual assault, damage to property, theft and extortion. Anyone who feels that a criminal act has been committed can report this to the police who have a duty to investigate all allegations of crime wherever they occur."

It notes the importance of developing a shared understanding of what bullying is, but that:

The impact an incident has had on a child or young person is more important than whether it is classified as bullying.

**Differences from traditional bullying**

A literature review (Cassidy, 2013) of research on cyberbullying highlighted that there is a significant overlap between 'traditional' and cyberbullying suggesting that it is necessary to focus on the underlying behaviour rather than the technology used. However, the following differences were highlighted. In cyberbullying:

- bullies don't see the victim's immediate reaction leading them to be cut off from the emotional impact of their behaviour
- anonymity is possibly, although most are bullied by people they know
- repetition doesn't have to involve the perpetrator due to the nature of online activity (e.g. re-tweeting)
- while the victim of cyberbullying has the power to end the interaction, victims report feeling helpless due to an inability to escape from online postings that may seem more permanent than words shouted in the schoolyard.
- there are greater challenges of supervision and policing online behaviour
- there is a wider variety of ways in which a person becomes a bystander to bullying (for example, by 'liking' on facebook)

**Prevalence**

There are very varied estimates of the prevalence of cyberbullying.

The submission from RespectMe refers to research they did in 2011 which found that 16% of Scottish 8-19 year olds had been cyberbullied.

[Behaviour in Scottish Schools](#) (2012) included a survey of how often support staff witnessed certain behaviours in the previous week. They found that 1% of primary school support staff and 13% of secondary school support staff had witnessed abusive use of mobile phones in the past week.

**Table 1: Proportion of school support staff witnessing negative behaviour aimed at other pupils**

	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Secondary</b>
General verbal abuse	47%	64%
Physical aggression	53%	47%
Physical violence	35%	24%
Sexist abuse	4%	18%
Using mobile phones abusively	1%	13%
Homophobic abuse	3%	12%
Racist abuse	5%	10%

[Beatbullying](#) (2012) found that 28% of 11 to 16 year olds in the UK have been deliberately targeted, threatened or humiliated by an individual or group through the use of mobile phones or the internet. For over a quarter of these the experience was ongoing.

[Livingstone et al \(2012\)](#) looked at internet use amongst 25,142 young people aged 9 to 16 in 25 EU member states. It reported that being bullied online by receiving nasty or hurtful messages is relatively uncommon, experienced by around 6% of children.

6% of 9-16 year olds have been sent nasty or hurtful messages online, and 3% have sent such messages to others. Over half of those who received bullying messages were fairly or very upset. Since 19% have been bullied either online or offline (compared with 6% online), and 12% have bullied someone else either online or offline (compared with 3% online), it seems more bullying occurs offline than online. Most children who had received nasty or hurtful messages online called on social support: a quarter had not told anyone. Six in ten also used online strategies – deleting hurtful messages or blocking the bully; this last strategy was seen by children as effective.

**Table 2: Ways in which young people have been bullied in the last 12 months, by age and gender,**

%	9 to 12 years		13 to 16 years		All
	boys	girls	boys	girls	
In person	13	12	13	14	13
Internet	4	4	6	9	6
Mobile phone	2	2	4	6	3
<b>Any form of bullying</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>19</b>

Livingstone et al (2012) table 19.

These findings contrast with those of an online survey of 10,000 teenagers, which found cyberbullying to be far more common. [Ditch the label's 2013 survey](#) of 10,008 young people, aged 13 to 22 found that 70% of young people had been victims of cyberbullying. Over a third (37%) of young people had experienced cyberbullying on a highly frequent basis. Of these, 20% of young people experienced cyberbullying on a daily basis. (67% of respondents were from the UK, 17% from the USA, 12% from Australia and 4% from elsewhere).

### **Gender and cyberbullying**

There appears to be different opinions on whether cyberbullying is more common amongst girls or not. Cross et al (2009) found that girls are twice as likely to experience persistent cyberbullying than boys. More recent findings (Beatbullying 2012) found continuing gender differences with 32% of females having experienced some form of cyberbullying compared with 23% of males.

However, the 'Ditch the label' survey found that young women are only slightly more likely to experience bullying than young men (67% of males compared with 72% of females). Although finding much lower levels of cyberbullying than the 'ditch the label' survey, Livingstone et al also found little gender difference in the incidence of bullying, stating; "Previous research findings are mixed on whether there are gender differences in patterns of bullying. (This study) reveals few differences in ways that children are bullied by gender." The study looked at online risks generally, of which consideration of cyberbullying was a part. The conclusions on gender were:

Overall, girls and boys differ little in their reporting of overall experiences online that have bothered them personally in some way. However, girls are generally more likely to be upset by the risks they do experience. [...] However, boys, especially teenagers, are more exposed to pornography

online, while teenage girls are slightly more likely to be bullied online. In relation to other conduct and contact risks – exchanging sexual messages, making new contacts online and meeting them offline – there are few gender differences. Girls are, however, more likely to see pro-anorexic or bulimic content and more likely to have their personal data misused, while boys are slightly more exposed to hate sites

**Parents' knowledge of cyberbullying**

Livingstone found that a large minority of parents don't know that their child has been bullied on line:

Among children who say "yes, I have been sent nasty or hurtful messages on the internet", one third (29%) of their parents also say that their child has been bullied online. But in over half of these cases (56%), parents say that their child has not been bullied, and in a further 15% of cases, the parent doesn't know

**Effects of cyberbullying**

Beatbullying (2012) reported that: "feelings of isolation, low confidence and poor academic attainment are common effects on children who experience cyberbullying. In its most extreme manifestation children report self harm and even attempting suicide." Their survey reported the following effects:

- 20% said fear of the bullies made them reluctant to go to school
- 19% experienced reduced confidence and self esteem
- 14% did not feel safe
- 11% felt depressed
- 5% self harmed
- 3% attempted suicide

**Tackling cyberbullying**

Cassidy (2013) draws together different policy recommendations from a range of studies into cyberbullying. These include:

- assess the level of cyberbullying amongst pupils at the school
- incorporating it into the curriculum, covering cyberbullying and its effects, digital literacy, e-safety, how young people can assess their own online risk, measures to protect themselves, their reputation and their privacy
- create a holistic school policy, including cyberbullying in the anti-bullying policy – recognising that while cyberbullying may not originate or take place in school time, it can have a big impact on school
- pupils need to feel safe to report cyberbullying to teachers
- establish a cyberbullying task force in the school
- have links with the police
- everyone has responsibility to model appropriate on-line behaviour

- on-going discussion with parents

An evaluation ([Thompson et al](#)) of four anti-bullying strategies found peer mentoring was highly thought of by pupils:

“The study evaluated four strategies: two e-safety films to prevent cyberbullying; a peer support scheme to support cyberbullied young people and an intervention by the police to support schools in responding to cyberbullying incidents.

The two e-safety films were both well rated by students, in all respects. They are clearly effective in the sense of being appreciated and informative. However they appear to have had modest impact on young peoples’ coping strategies for cyberbullying, at best.

The Beatbullying CyberMentor scheme has been shown to be highly thought of by their mentors and most importantly by cybermentees - the young people it is there to support

The Safer Schools Officers have been reported by schools to have a positive role in tackling cyberbullying. Police officers have a positive role in not only helping define the boundaries of the legality and illegality of cyberbullying but also building bridges between the schools and the communities that surround them.”

Respectme suggest the following things a person can do if they are being bullied on line.

- Telling an adult you trust
- Telling a good friend
- Calling the ChildLine Bullying Line on 0800 44 1111 for confidential advice and support
- Asking them to stop! – the person cyberbullying you might not know that they are hurting you
- Being a good friend – if this is happening to someone you know being a good friend can make all the difference!
- Take screen shots of nasty online messages
- Unfriend and block people from accessing your page
- Block numbers
- Check privacy settings
- Turn off... but this isn't really a long term solution!

### **Scottish Government Action**

The Scottish Government funds Respectme (the national anti-bullying organisation) and childline. It has produced guidance on tackling bullying (in which it includes cyberbullying) (2010) and use of mobile technology in Schools (2013). In December 2013 the Scottish Government organised a ‘cyber summit’ and has funded the

development of a new version of a self-evaluation tool that schools can use to review their provision. Further details on each of these is given below:

### ***Respectme***

The Government established *respectme*, a national anti-bullying service, to build confidence and capacity to tackle bullying effectively, aligned to the national approach to anti-bullying in Scotland. *Respectme* provide direct support to local authorities, schools, youth groups and all those working with children and young people. This includes reviewing, formulating, implementing and evaluating locally relevant anti-bullying policies on which stakeholders have been consulted and providing training, information and support with guidelines, procedures and monitoring. ([www.respectme.org.uk](http://www.respectme.org.uk)).

### ***National Approach to Anti-bullying (2010)***

This was developed by the Scottish Government in partnership with the Scottish Anti-bullying Steering Group. This considers cyberbullying as a one form of bullying, rather than something distinct and recommends that every organisation working with children should have an anti-bullying policy. Policies should include:

- a statement which lays out the organisational stance on bullying behaviour
- a definition of bullying, developed through consultation creating a shared understanding between all parties involved
- expectations or codes of behaviour and responsibilities for staff and children and young people preventative and reactive strategies showing what an organisation commits itself to, what strategies it will employ when faced with bullying incidents or allegations and to prevent bullying from happening
- clarity on how and how often the organisation will communicate its anti-bullying policy and to whom; and how parents and carers will be informed of incidents
- the recording and monitoring strategies that will be used for management purposes
- how and how often the policy will be evaluated to understand how successful and effective the policy is

Labelling children as victims or bullies should be avoided:

We have [...] aimed to avoid labelling children and young people as bullies or victims because these labels can constrain thinking of the problem as solely a characteristic of the individual, rather than as a problem that emerges from complex social dynamics

### ***Guidance on Developing Policies to Promote the Safe and Responsible Use of Mobile Technology in Schools' (2013)***

In 2013, the Scottish Government issued guidance on mobile technology use in schools. It notes that: "it is unreasonable and impractical to attempt to impose a ban on mobile devices in schools." The guidance advises schools to treat online bullying behaviour as they would other bullying behaviours:

Expectations for responsible conduct remain consistent, regardless of the context, and any breach of expectations in relation to mobile technology should be treated in accordance with the school's behaviour policies. It is expected that staff will respond consistently to any irresponsible use of mobile technology and will explain to children why certain behaviours are unacceptable, and what the potential impact of such behaviours might be.

It suggests that policies cover:

Guidance regarding any restrictions on personal mobile device use within school grounds within the school day, at social events and on school outings.

### ***Cyber summit***

A summit was jointly hosted by the Minister for Learning, Science and Scotland's Languages and the Minister for Children and Young People in December 2013. This Summit identified a number of recommendations including better information sharing between professionals, parents and young people as being key to improving online safety. Aileen Campbell said:

We need to educate parents and children about the importance of knowing what to do and where to go if something goes wrong online to stop abuse and prevent tragic consequences.

"We've already given all schools advice on responsible use of phones, tablets and other mobile devices and a new web resource is helping schools review and develop how they teach online safety. This summit will build on this work by pooling the experience of a broad range of professionals and young people themselves to develop the next steps."

### ***E-safety review tool (Nov 2013)***

The 360 degree safe online tool [www.360safeScotland.org.uk](http://www.360safeScotland.org.uk) enables schools to review their e-safety provision and to develop an action plan for improvement. Training days will be organised for teachers in 2014. It has been developed in partnership with the South West Grid for Learning.

### ***Internet safety***

Related to cyberbullying is the broader issue of internet safety. Internet safety is largely a reserved matter. Following the Byron Review on child internet safety, the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) was established in September 2008.

Online safety in Scotland is monitored by the Scottish Government led [Stakeholder Group on Child Internet Safety](#). The Group includes wide representation, including Police Scotland, Young Scot, Respectme, Local Authority E-Safety Partnerships, Internet Watch Foundation, CEOP and Scottish Government policy leads. The group will take forward the recommendations from the 'Cybersummit' and will report progress to Ministers later this year.

Safer Internet Day is organised in the UK by the UK [Safer Internet Centre](#) to promote the safe and responsible use of online technology and mobile phones for children

and young people. This year Safer Internet Day 2014 took place on Tuesday 11 February 2014, with the theme 'let's create a better internet together' Advice for parents and young people and schools is available from respectme and CEOP's 'thinkuknow' website [www.thinkuknow.co.uk/](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/).

### **Curriculum for Excellence and cyberbullying**

The provision of Health and Wellbeing within curriculum for excellence is an opportunity to educate and support pupils about cyberbullying in their personal lives as well as at school. It is the responsibility of all practitioners to:

- establish open, positive, supporting relationships across the whole school community, where children and young people will feel that they're listened to, and where they feel secure in their ability to discuss sensitive aspects of their lives;
- promote a climate in which children and young people feel safe and secure;
- model behaviour which promotes health and wellbeing and encouraging it in others;
- use learning and teaching methodologies which promote effective learning;
- be sensitive and responsive to the wellbeing of each child and young person

Education Scotland [Health and wellbeing the responsibility of all](#) (2013) summarises inspection findings on how schools are implementing 'health and wellbeing' aspects of Curriculum for Excellence. It notes that there is a need to increase understanding amongst parents of the breadth of 'health and wellbeing'.

The responsibility for improving health and wellbeing does not lie solely with the schools and centres, but they are in a position of considerable influence to engage positively with families. In most schools visited parents viewed their child's progress in health and wellbeing in relation to 'healthy eating and physical education'. This needs to be addressed so that parents understand the importance of mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing in relation to their child's learning and essential skills for life.

The report highlighted barriers to staff training on health and wellbeing generally – including lack of supply teachers and lack of central support staff. It did not mention cyberbullying specifically in this regard but did state that:

Many secondary school staff felt anxious about tackling sensitive aspects with learners, such as bereavement, suicide prevention, inappropriate sexualised behaviours and the abuse of technology and social media.

### **Named Person and cyberbullying**

Where cyberbullying is affecting a pupil's wellbeing, then it might be an issue to be discussed with their Named Person. In order to promote, support or safeguard the

wellbeing of a child or young person, their Named Person can advise, inform or support them, help them access other support or discuss or raise the matter with others (s. 19 Children and Young People (Scotland) Act).

Therefore, whether or not the cyberbullying is taking place in school time, if it is affecting a child's wellbeing, then there would appear to be a role for the school via the Named Person.

### **Sanctions for inappropriate behaviour in school**

The focus in government guidance is on creating a positive ethos in the school in order to prevent bullying occurring. That said, all schools should have a policy on how they deal with unacceptable behaviour. Green's education manual suggests withdrawal of privileges (e.g. not being able to participate in a school club for a time) and detention (although noting that there is no legal authority for detention of pupils after school hours).

Exclusion is only possible on two grounds. Firstly that a parent refuses to comply or allow a pupil to comply with the rules, regulations or disciplinary requirements of the school, secondly, that the school considers that, in all the circumstances, to allow the pupil to continue his attendance at the school would be likely to be seriously detrimental to order and discipline in the school or the educational wellbeing of the pupils there.

If the behaviour reached the level of a criminal offence, then it would be a matter for the police.

The DCSF<sup>1</sup> guidance linked to in the Scottish Government's 2010 child protection guidance recommends the following:

"Once the person responsible for the cyberbullying has been identified, it is important that, as in other cases of bullying, sanctions are applied. Steps should be taken to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully, as well as ensuring access to any help that they may need. Schools will have existing sanctions in place for bullying behaviour, and these should apply equally to cyberbullying. In addition, it is important to refer to any Acceptable Use Policies (AUPs) for internet and mobile use, and apply sanctions where applicable and practical. Technology-specific sanctions for pupils engaged in cyberbullying behaviour could include limiting internet access for a period of time or removing the right to use a mobile phone on the school site, for example."

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<sup>1</sup> Department for Children Schools and Families, a former department of the UK government.

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**Camilla Kidner**  
**Senior Researcher**  
**Schools and children's services**  
**SPICe**  
**5 March 2014**

**Education and Culture Committee**

**7th Meeting, 2014 (Session 4), Tuesday, 11 March 2014**

**Cyber-bullying**

**Background**

1. The Committee has agreed to hold an evidence session on how schools respond to cyber-bullying, and has identified the following broad issues for discussion—

- whether schools and education authorities should treat cyberbullying differently from other forms of bullying;
- how schools can best respond to gender differences in cyber-bullying;
- the most effective means of reducing cyber-bullying;
- how schools should respond to cyber-bullying that takes place outwith school; and
- how schools work with parents and the wider community to tackle the problem of cyber-bullying.

**Written submissions**

2. The Committee has received written evidence from some of those who will be providing oral evidence—

- Zero Tolerance (**page 2**)
- Respect Me (**page 5**)
  
- NSPCC Scotland has also provided a submission (**page 9**)

Clerk to the Committee  
6 March 2014

**Briefing: Scottish Parliament's Education and Culture  
Committee evidence session on the issue of cyber-bullying**



**11 March 2014**

Zero tolerance is a charity working to prevent violence against women in all its forms. This briefing with therefore focus on gender-based 'cyber-bullying'.

Key points:

- 'Bullying' is not an appropriate term for behaviour which in a non-school context would be defined as sexual harassment, stalking or assault
- Technology allows 'bullying' behaviour to be more anonymous, and to target the victim at any place and time; however the causes are the same as for other types of bullying and abusive behaviour

Gender-based cyber-bullying takes place in a context in which:

- Pornography is normalised for young people, particularly boys
- Sexualised images of young women are extremely prevalent in all aspects of popular culture
- Gendered double standards mean that young men gain kudos from a high level of sexual experience, while young women who behave or dress in a sexual way are labelled 'sluts'.
- Very few schools tackle these issues, and many young people do not think the RSHPE they receive is adequate

Acts of gender-based abuse which occur online may include:

- The distribution of 'revenge porn' (the non-consensual sharing of explicit images of the victim, in order to humiliate and control)
- Targeting of young women and girls in online forums for their appearance and/or sexual behaviour. Other young women may join in or instigate this; however it is still rooted in gendered double standards and may be seen by some young women as a way of deflecting similar negative attention from themselves.
- Harassment of a girl or young woman by a boyfriend or ex-boyfriend
- Targeting of young men and women who are not 'appropriately' masculine or feminine. This may include elements of homophobic abuse, regardless of the sexual orientation of the victim.

These behaviours will usually have an offline element. It is not possible to draw a clear line between bullying and abusive behaviour and schools should receive guidance and support on how to respond. As a guide, school staff should consider what the response to a particular behaviour would be if adults were involved; for example, boys who touch girls sexually without their consent should not be let off with a 'boys will be boys' response when if this were to happen to an adult it would

be (and is) sexual assault; similarly with 'cyber-bullying' which in many circumstances would be considered harassment if happening to an adult. While the intention should not be to unduly penalise a child, an appropriately serious and consistent response is the only way to ensure girls and young women feel safe in school, and to prevent behaviour escalating.

Gendered bullying and abusive behaviours, having the same roots, present similar preventative opportunities. To prevent gendered 'cyber-bullying' and abuse schools should:

- Develop and maintain a school ethos which promotes equality and respect, and actively challenges sexism, homophobia and discrimination
- Encourages both boys and girls to value girls for their abilities and personalities, not their appearance
- Includes discussion and critique of gender stereotypes in RSHPE and other relevant areas of the curriculum
- Takes all forms of gendered abuse, including name-calling, groping, and on and offline stalking and harassment seriously, with clear consequences for perpetrators including involvement of the justice system where appropriate, and with clear pathways for teachers and other school staff to follow
- Ensures teachers have access to continuing professional development on delivering effective RSHPE which counters abusive behaviour, including reflecting on their own values

In addition, the Scottish Government must provide clear guidance to schools on delivering RSHPE in a way that promotes gender equality and equal, respectful relationships.

### Young people's comments

Below are some comments by young people from our research report 'He's the stud and she's the slut: Young people's views on sex, pornography and relationships' which illustrate the gendered context shaping their behaviour.

*"Women want the feeling of pleasure just as much as men do, but it seems nowadays that if a woman wants to be as openly sexually active as a man (who would be idolised for it), she is criticised."* Female, 19, survey

*"Practically all of the guys that are my age want sex and if they don't get sex they break up with their girlfriends. I think that guys act like that because they want more experience in sex. If a girl has more experience she is automatically called a slut or [seen as] being easy."* Female, 16, survey

*"Can we just stop with the double standards and slut shaming on women?"* Female, 17, survey

*"[A slut is] someone who shows their tits on Facebook."* Male, focus group

(discussion starts about sharing naked pictures)

Young man: "... after the relationship, hahaha, after it breaks down... like go back out with me or I'll put it on Facebook."

Young man 2: "To show everyone, look you're a fool..."

"LGBT relationships are not mentioned in school sex ed. This really needs to change." Female, 19,  
Survey

"School only tells you what sex is and how to avoid getting pregnant instead of the things that are equally as important." Female, 15, survey

## respectme Scotland's anti-bullying service

respectme is Scotland's anti-bullying service. It is managed by SAMH, The Scottish Association for Mental Health and LGBT Youth Scotland. The service was launched in 2007 and is fully funded by The Scottish Government, it builds adult confidence and competence to recognise and deal with all kinds of bullying behaviour. The service provides strategic policy support, offers skills development training and campaigns to raise awareness. The service was externally evaluated between 2009 and 2011 and was found to be a 'catalyst for change' and was a 'credible' and 'robust' anti-bullying service. The service was instrumental in developing the National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People and ensures all stakeholders operate in-step with this approach.

respectme's resources and approach to anti-bullying is recognised internationally, we have delivered training and materials across Europe and the UK as well as the US. We work with all adults who play a role in Children's lives – parents to policy makers and we have trained teachers, social care staff, foster carers, football coaches, residential workers and many people in many other roles.

Bullying is behaviour that makes people feel frightened, hurt, threatened and left out. It impacts on a person's ability to feel in control of themselves (their 'agency') and to respond effectively. This behaviour can harm physically and emotionally and the threat is typically sustained. This behaviour takes place in a variety of places, including on-line.

Online bullying was an emerging issue when the service launched early 2007 and at the request of the then Minister, respectme delivered a campaign on cyberbullying that urged parents to 'connect' with what their children were doing on-line not 'disconnect' from the internet. We found that parents and adults who understood how social media worked, what it was used for and how to make it safe or monitor it, were much more confident when dealing with bullying that happened on-line.

Over the year's respectme developed resources, web content and a very popular training event on cyberbullying. We were able to refine and develop confidence with our core messages about online bullying and communicate these to our stakeholders through newer campaigns and resources aimed at adults and at children and young people. Our learning has now seen us bring the core messages on online bullying into our generic anti-bullying training.

These key messages include:

**Bullying online is all about relationships – not technology** We must focus on equipping young people with the skills to conduct themselves online in a more respectful manner; the skills to manage these environments safely, and to develop their confidence and abilities to negotiate relationships and problems. This is built on promoting and developing resilience. But we also have to equip parents with the knowledge and understanding about how these

sites work; how to make them safe and, most importantly, how to talk to their children about using them.

**‘Cyberbullying’ is bullying** – it is still about relationships that are not healthy or being managed or role modelled well. It is behaviour done by someone to someone else, it is the **‘where’** this is taking place that is new. The behaviour appears to be migrating, as children spend more time on-line, the behaviour they have always exhibited and experienced comes with them.

It is important to include cyberbullying in your policies and procedures on anti-bullying and not see it as something entirely separate - it is still rooted in relationships between people. Our work and international research supports our assertion that you deal effectively with bullying that happened online as part of your whole approach to bullying. Carving it off as something different dilutes the reality of bullying experienced by children and young people – this is that they can experience bullying online and in person simultaneously.

**The internet is a place, not a thing** – for many the internet is a tool that they use for a variety of things, buying, sending messages or research. To most children and young people it is a social space that they spend time in and use to stay in touch with their friends. This principle underpins all of our anti-bullying work in this area. This led to a very successful video campaign in 2011 called ‘She’s still going somewhere’, the message for adults was, whether your child is going into town or online, they are still going somewhere and you need to be just as interested and concerned about where they are going and who they are going with.

Like all places children and young people go to, there are risks.

Children and young people do not differentiate a great deal between friendships online and in person – most of their interactions on-line or using their smart phones is with friends and people they interact with in other areas such as schools or where they live. This is not to say they do not know the difference but it is as natural for your friendships to be evident in both your day to life online and where you live or go to school.

**Children and young people use this to communicate** –the purpose of using smart phones, consoles or laptops is primarily about staying in-touch with friends, this is as important for young people today as it was 40 years ago. They have different means at their disposal but the principle is the same.

**Adult fear and anxiety** – has been the biggest hurdle in dealing with cyberbullying. This has had a very high media profile at times and it appears ‘new’ and for parents or adults who do not use social media or connect with their friends using the internet, this is a challenging and at times bewildering experience. There are so many types of phones, connections and complex safety features and so on. That is why respectme’s training focusses on developing

adult skills and confidence and their understanding of how and why technology is used this way.

We have developed a two and a half hour training session for parents that we will be piloting across the Central belt later this year. This session will involve some 'hands-on' experience on social networking sites and leaning about safety settings and how they work.

Lots of colleagues have said they are 'technophobes' or are not 'tech savvy' and have voiced how much they dislike Facebook or twitter. We have maintained that if you work with children and young people or are a parent or carer – that is no longer good enough. You need to know! For some that will require a real effort to spend time and utilise the relationship they have to learn this. We cannot abdicate responsibility for this to software. We need to connect and learn about how young people use the internet and the phones or laptops they access it from. They use it mainly to talk to and meet their friends.

Many adults have experience of managing risk when working with children and young people, this is a new place for us to consider. We need to be as imaginative and creative with the internet as we have been in other places.

respectme undertook extensive research on October 2011 on this issue that both confirmed our messages and informed the work we do.

This research involved 3,944 young people from 29 of Scotland's 32 local authorities aged 8 - 19 years. It confirmed that children and young people are online almost every day. They use phones and laptops, boys also use games consoles to connect with friends and socialise. For the most part, the friends they talk to at school are also the friends they chat to on-line. They do not draw any difference between talking to a friend on the phone, instant messaging or on the way to school – it's all talking to friends.

16% say they have been cyberbullied – this is reflective of the findings from colleagues in the rest of the UK. 25% worry about cyberbullying,

55% say they are online every day for 1 – 3 hours, nearly 10% claim they are on for 5 hrs. or more

63% of children bullied online knew the person who was doing this and 40% of the time this carried over into school. Children who had been bullied on-line stated that reading a nasty comment was worse than hearing it or knowing it had been said. Children who had not been bullied on-line were ambivalent about the difference in impact.

There is a real fear that anonymity is pushing this behaviour online – however there is little research to support this – what we do know is that believing they will not get caught and not fully understanding how permanent posting are online link to bullying and aggressive behaviours more than anonymity – many social network sites have a ‘/name’ culture and most abusive behaviour online is not actually anonymous.

The impact of this behaviour is the same as the impact of other types of bullying, fear, anxiety and worry about repercussions. It is likely for many children and young people that if they are being bullied, say in school, it is highly likely they may also experience bullying behaviours online as well.

71% of children who were bullied would like to tell a parent or carer, 43% would tell a friend and 31% would want to tell a teacher.

This year will also see respectme undertake new research into children and young people’s experiences of bullying online and off. This research will enable us to help parents and professionals get a clear national picture of how young people are experiencing bullying in 2014. Crucially this will support and influence effective responses that recognise relationships play out on line and face to face more than ever.

Schools have struggled at times to deal with bullying that happens on-line as they believe it happens ‘out of school’, respectme’s take on this is that bullying happens to individuals, the impacts are felt by them and they take this with them wherever they go. If they tell their teacher something happened and they are worried, like any disclosure of this kind, teachers and schools must respond in a supportive way. Children will be telling a teacher for good reason; they believe they can help them.

Cyberbullying can be more intrusive and children and young people may find fewer ‘escape routes’ as switching off their phone is rarely an option. While messages can be blocked, deleted or reported, they can be seen by hundreds of others within minutes and incidents can spiral out of control very quickly. A comment made while angry to a friend can be seen and shared in no time at all.

respectme has developed very successful guidance for children and young people on bullying, staying safe and their own behaviour on-line as well as resource for adults. There is a need to help adults develop skills and confidence in this area though. There is still a gap between what they currently know and what they need to know about the platforms and devices children and young people use.

A new publication for parents and carers will also be delivered this year and this will cover anti-bullying advice including online bullying.

Brian Donnelly

Director respectme

February 2014

**NSPCC Scotland briefing: Cyberbullying**

03/ 03/ 2014

**Summary of key points**

- Cyberbullying is on the increase, in 2012/13 alone ChildLine there was an 87 per cent increase in counselling sessions carried out with young people about cyberbullying.
- Cyberbullying should be a core component of the school curriculum with a focus on: the possible consequences of young people's actions online, the impact of cyberbullying and the importance of forming healthy and respectful relationships online.
- A 'whole school' approach to anti-bullying should be taken with support given to young people experiencing cyberbullying even when incidents occur outside the school gates.
- Public awareness of the issue should be increased through a public information campaign. Teachers should also be trained in how to recognise and handle cases of cyberbullying.

**About NSPCC Scotland**

NSPCC Scotland is working with others to introduce new child protection services to help some of the most vulnerable and at risk children in the country. We are testing the very best models of child protection from around the world, alongside our universal services such as ChildLine the ChildLine Schools Service, and the NSPCC Helpline. Based on the learning from all our services we seek to achieve cultural, social and political change in Scotland – influencing legislation, policy, practice, attitudes and behaviours so that all children in Scotland have the best protection from cruelty.

**Bullying and cyberbullying**

*You can't imagine how I feel. I wake up every morning scared to go to school, scared about the comments people will make and scared about the walk home in case I bump into the popular girls. Then when I get home I log into my social network account and I have messages of hate everywhere I look which point out everything I loathe about myself. I don't want to exist anymore and I don't deserve to be alive.*

*(Girl aged 14)*

Bullying has consistently been a key issue for children and young people contacting ChildLine over the years. For almost two decades, bullying was the top problem children brought to the service. It was overtaken in 2010 by family relationship problems, and now represents the third most common concern. Bullying is the most frequently visited advice page on the ChildLine website, followed by cyberbullying. Young people also post messages and offer each other support and advice on ChildLine's moderated message boards.<sup>1</sup>

In the year 2012/ 2013, over 30,300 young people contacted the service across the UK about bullying. Of these, just over four and a half thousand talked about cyberbullying. While this represents a relatively small proportion of contacts within the wider issue of bullying, this figure denotes an 87% increase since 2011/12.

Girls are more likely to contact ChildLine (3:1), and this is reflected in contacts about cyberbullying. Cyberbullying appears to impact a slightly older age group, mainly 12

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.childline.org.uk/Talk/Boards/Pages/Messageboards.aspx>

– 15 year olds, with only 16% of contacts about this issue coming from children under 11, compared to face to face bullying whereby 28% of contacts come from young people under 11.

Young people who contact the service about cyberbullying mainly talk about being bullied via the internet, through social networking sites, chat rooms and online gaming sites or receiving threatening or offensive calls and messages on their mobile phones.

Where bullying occurred over the internet, the issues young people talked about included harassment and stalking, people hacking into their personal accounts, sending threatening messages and inappropriate pictures being received and/or posted online.

ChildLine has a number of other online related categories applied to counselling sessions in order to provide insight into the issues children experience online. In 2012-13, ChildLine carried out just over 10,600 counselling sessions where young people talked about a problem they had experienced online; a 65% increase compared to 2011-12. The main issues young people talked to ChildLine counsellors about were cyberbullying, online sexual abuse, sexting and social networking issues. Again this issue appears to impact young teens with nearly 60% of counselling contacts about Online Safety and Abuse coming from young people aged between 13-16 year olds.

### **Should schools and education authorities treat cyberbullying differently from other forms of bullying?**

*I have no sense that young people are aware that certain things they are doing on-line would be considered a criminal offence. In fact I would say they are completely oblivious that certain things are illegal. (Child Line Counselling Supervisor)*

NSPCC consider cyberbullying to be primarily a type of bullying behaviour which crucially needs addressed within a wider, whole school approach to anti-bullying. Whilst some cyberbullying can be anonymous, contacts to ChildLine suggest young people often know who is bullying them and it is often not limited to the internet but also happening face to face, i.e. the internet had become another 'channel' through which to be bullied. NSPCC Scotland strongly support the *Respect Me* model of anti-bullying, which promotes respectful behaviour in all human relationships, emphasising children's and human rights to respect and dignity, whether face to face or in cyberspace<sup>2</sup>. Nevertheless, there are some specific issues around cyberbullying that schools, young people and parents need to be aware of, including;

- The 'anonymity' of cyberspace can be a dis-inhibitor, leading people to say extreme things they may not say face to face. According to ChildLine counsellors, there can be very high levels of 'nastiness' on social networking sites that may be increasingly accepted as 'normal', making children less likely to realise they are being bullied.
- The public nature of cyberbullying can be extremely hard for young people to cope with. The internet provides a platform for others to find out what is happening, and also at times to participate and continue the abuse. The sense that the whole world is involved can greatly increase the pain and humiliation for the young person.

<sup>2</sup> [http://issuu.com/keywest/docs/making\\_a\\_real\\_difference\\_-\\_evaluati?e=1098417/3911092](http://issuu.com/keywest/docs/making_a_real_difference_-_evaluati?e=1098417/3911092) A PDF copy of "Making a real difference" An External Valuation of Respect Me Scotland's anti bullying service" accessed 04 March 2014

- Young people, teachers and parents need to fully understand the potential dangers of socialising in cyberspace; not just grooming but peer pressure, cyber-bullying and sexting. Education and awareness raising is crucial to empower young people and adults to understand the potential consequences of online actions. Young people need to be aware that actions in 'cyberspace' are not out with the legal framework. Raising awareness that for example, sending indecent images could lead to prosecution will prevent harm in general as well as preventing young people from inadvertently being drawn into the legal system.
- All bullying can make young people feel extremely isolated and powerless and can have both short and long term impact on their emotional and mental health. Cyberbullying cuts off a channel of communication/ socialisation that is now an integral part of most young people's lives, aggravating the sense of isolation.

### How can schools best respond to gender differences in cyber-bullying?

*I used to sext this guy last year and everyone found out. It caused me to lose all my friends and people hated me for it. People still call me nicknames and I feel left out of everything. It's making school unbearable with everyone taunting me. I am so angry with myself that I made such a stupid mistake.*

*ChildLine message boards*

Whilst there does not appear to be a clear gender differences in the extent to which girls and boys experience cyberbullying overall<sup>3</sup>, it is clear that *certain kinds* of cyberbullying are not gender neutral. For example, the ratio of girls to boys contacting ChildLine about sexting is 9:1, with many girls describing feeling bullied or coerced into sending images, or alternatively voluntarily sending images which are subsequently used against them. Sexting when seen in this way is a gendered form of cyberbullying.

A recent NSPCC pilot study into young people's experiences of sexting, which sought to distinguish young people's problems from 'moral panic' headlines, uncovered a diversity of experiences which contradict easy assumptions about sexting as a 'singular phenomenon'<sup>4</sup>. Sexting cannot be understood in absolute terms, as 'wanted' versus 'unwanted' sexual activity; much of young people's *engagement* with sexual messages/ images lies in the ambiguous zone. For example, few teenagers wish to be excluded from the sexual banter, gossip and flirtatious activity endemic to youth culture. However, **to take part is to be under pressure.**

Much of young people's talk, therefore, reflects an experience that is pressurised yet voluntary: they 'choose' to participate, but often cannot choose to say 'no'. The

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<sup>3</sup> Respectme's 2011 survey on cyberbullying found 49% boys and 51% girls had experienced cyberbullying whilst an EU Kids online survey found a *higher* percentage of boys experienced online bullying compared to girls. Twenty three per cent of boys reported online bullying compared to nineteen per cent of girls. Analysis of ChildLine information shows that three times more girls than boys contact the service about 'cyberbullying', however this is not dissimilar to the ratio of girls: boys contacting the service overall, across all problems.

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/resourcesforprofessionals/sexualabuse/sexting-research-report\\_wdf89269.pdf](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/resourcesforprofessionals/sexualabuse/sexting-research-report_wdf89269.pdf) a PDF copy of J Ringrose R Gill Livingstone , L Harvey A qualitative study of children, young people and 'sexting' accessed 03 March 2014

research found that young people have become normalised to acts of sexual aggression and exploitation and highlighted how intricately these have become embedded in their peer culture. The exchange of sexual images of girls is almost a form of currency among boys and the accumulation of pictures and sexualised messages is a means of building a reputation. The research indicated that because of these sexualised practices, children are entering adulthood with a skewed impression of what is appropriate sexual behaviour.

Subsequently, whilst NSPCC strongly believe that cyberbullying must be addressed within a whole-school rights based approach to anti-bullying based on respectful human relationships, there is a clear need for the Sexual Health and Relationships Education (SHRE) curriculum in Scotland – as well as teacher training - to 'evolve' in line with children's use of and experiences around mobile and on-line technology. This must extend to teachers better understanding how cultural phenomena influence children's developing ideas about sexuality and sexual behaviour.

Whilst Scotland has made considerable progress in implementing an SHRE curriculum in the last decade, the recent report of the Public Petitions Committee's Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation suggests there is some way to go, concluding that whilst there are many examples of good and innovative practise in Scottish schools,

***“it is clear . . . that much of what is provided . . . is left largely to the discretion of the head teacher. Moreover, although Curriculum for Excellence lays significant emphasis on health and well-being, in practice the time and other resources available for SHRE are often limited. There are also questions about the level of training available for teachers involved in SHRE and the extent to which the subject, as one that does not, in itself, lead to any qualification, receives any degree of priority in schools, or, indeed, in school inspections”.***

A key limitation of SHRE is also clearly its inability to reach those outside school, such as transient families, young people who persistently truant or looked-after children and excluded children, not in receipt of formal education. These groups may be at an increased risk of exposure to particularly risky sexual behaviour.

NSPCC Scotland are aware of several awareness raising programmes in schools which are addressing the gendered nature of 'sexual bullying' and violence in young people's relationships, in-line with the Scottish Governments gender based definition of violence against women and girls. These include Rape Crisis's *TESSA* programme and the Violence Reduction Unit's *Mentors in Prevention* programme.

However, it is clearly unacceptable that there should be a 'postcode lottery' on whether young people receive an adequate education in such a vital area. The Public Petitions Committee recently recommended that all schools have safety programmes including interactive safety workshops and covering internet and social media dangers and that education programmes need to show young people how to recognise and challenge sexual bullying and challenge gender stereotypes. It may be that it is time for SHRE to achieve 'subject status' in Scotland, with dedicated teachers. Furthermore, youth work programmes dedicated to outreach and targeting of vulnerable groups are essential to meet the needs of excluded groups of vulnerable young people.

**What are the most effective means of reducing cyber-bullying?**

*'Just saying no does not work. . . . For a lot of young people internet access in their pockets is an integral part of their life and it's how they keep in touch with their friends' (Peter Davis, CEO, CEOP)*

ChildLine counselling supervisors stress above all the role of communicating, awareness raising, educating and role modelling about respectful human relationships, including partner relationships, is vital to reducing *all forms* of bullying behaviour including cyber-bullying.

**Curriculum for Excellence** has placed the theme of Health and Wellbeing as a responsibility of all staff, alongside literacy and numeracy, as core teaching. Health and Wellbeing Experiences and Outcomes promoted by Education Scotland mean the curriculum and the school learning environment must be geared towards supporting children to: *develop self-awareness; self-worth and respect for others; build relationships and build resilience and confidence; acknowledge diversity and understand that it is everyone's responsibility to challenge discrimination.*

ChildLine staff in consultation also pointed to the clear **ethical obligations of providers**, stressing that the 'safety' of online sites can vary dramatically. NSPCC Scotland consider it vital that moderators play a more active role providing a human presence on sites which allow people to communicate and that there is greater sense of safety on on-line sites, with 'report' buttons clearly visible, regular flash up reminders for young people and prompt responses to reports of problems. Sites should also clearly show provisions for young people to turn to if they are being bullied or harassed. In Addition, NSPCC would like to see all social networking site providers signing up to the European Commission's 'Safe Social Networking Principles for the EU'

ChildLine provides 'tools' for young people to help them defuse pressure to send explicit images. The ChildLine app – Zipit - offers humorous images to send rather than explicit ones, as well as advice for young people on engaging in safe chat and on what to do if you feel threatened or if an image becomes public, and a direct link to ChildLine<sup>5</sup>. Contacts to ChildLine usually take place when the issue has escalated beyond their control: the app is designed to provide preventative support before an issue escalates.

### **How should schools respond to cyber-bullying that takes place out-with school?**

Schools have a duty of care to young people and whilst bullying may not always be obvious to teachers in school, this does not mean it is not going on. Where incidents of bullying come to light, within or out with the school, the school has a responsibility to be supportive of the young person and work with them towards addressing the issue, being sensitive to their right to be involved in decisions about action. The GIRFEC approach, now enshrined in legislation via the Children and Young Peoples Bill, enshrines the principle of intervening early where there is concern about a child's wellbeing. Bullying can impact significantly on many aspects of a child's wellbeing including safety, achieving, included and respected.

### **For further information, please contact:**

Alison Wales  
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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.childline.org.uk/Play/GetInvolved/Pages/sexting-zipit-app.aspx>