



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee

Sue Webber MSP
Convener
Education, Children and Young People
Committee
The Scottish Parliament

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By e-mail

Dear Convener,

ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) support for young people

At our meeting on 21 February, the Committee took evidence from Ramiza Ahmad MSYP and Zainab Adeleye MSYP, the Convener and Deputy Convener of the Equalities and Human Rights Committee at the Scottish Youth Parliament.

One of the issues raised during the session was the importance and availability of ESOL courses and support for children and young people for whom English is not their first language. This is particularly relevant in light of the number of Ukrainian children who have arrived in Scotland as a result of the war in Ukraine and are being taught in Scottish schools.

We heard that support currently available does not appear to be consistent across local authority areas in Scotland and can be particularly difficult to access and coordinate for those children who are transitioning from school to university, college or work.

The Committee wished to bring this issue to the attention of the Education, Children and Young People Committee and would welcome clarity on whether the Committee has had an opportunity to explore this matter in any detail with the Scottish Government and local authorities. The Committee is interested as to whether the level of support in place is adequate, consistent, appropriately resourced and is meeting the additional demand.

Furthermore, we heard that the work and remit of the Scottish Youth Parliament does not appear to be well known or promoted across Scottish schools and the MSYPs reported to us that their experience of school engagement has been inconsistent.

They highlighted that members of the Scottish Youth Parliament would welcome increased engagement with current MSPs specifically where they are visiting schools or dealing with issues affecting children and young people.

Members of the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee would welcome the opportunity to work alongside the Education, Children and Young People Committee or take the lead in taking forward any actions to address the issues raised.

We look forward to your response.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joe FitzPatrick". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Joe FitzPatrick MSP
Convener, Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee