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To: organisations listed at Annex

Our ref: Equal Protection 1/2020

File ref: F20180039831

29 May 2020

Dear Colleague

Children (Equal Protection from Assault) (Scotland) Act 2019

1. This Circular is to draw your attention to the Children (Equal Protection from Assault) (Scotland) Act 2019 (“the Act”). This Circular is issued in line with section 2 of that Act.
2. The Act will remove the common law defence of “reasonable chastisement”. At present, this defence is available to parents and carers charged with assaulting a child in their care. This will cease in Scotland on 7 November 2020, when the removal of the defence will come into force. The Scottish Government is committed to implementing this legislation in line with that date.
3. The Scottish Government has formed an Implementation Group to help implement the legislation. Group members include Social Work Scotland, Police Scotland, the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service, and children’s charities. Minutes of the Group’s previous meetings are available online at <https://www.gov.scot/groups/children-equal-protection-from-assault-scotland-act-implementation-group/>.
4. The Scottish Government will provide further information about the Act, including support and advice for parents, as implementation work progresses. The Parent Club website already provides information about coping with being a parent and handling behaviour: <https://www.parentclub.scot/>
5. This Circular is being sent to the bodies listed in the Annex. It is an open circular that will be published on the Scottish Government website. Please feel free to circulate this to any other bodies you think may have an interest in the subject matter, or to let us know about anyone you think we should contact about this.
6. Should you have any questions, please contact me using the details above.

Yours faithfully

Sarah Meanley
Family Law

Annex

Aberlour Child Care Trust
Action For Children
ADHD Coalition
Army Families Federation
Association of Directors of Education in Scotland
Barnardo's Scotland
Be Reasonable Scotland
Black and Ethnic Minority Infrastructure Scotland (BEMIS)
Boarding Schools Association
British Association for Child and Adolescent Public Health
British Medical Association Scotland
Centre for Excellence for Children's Care and Protection
Child Law Centre
Children 1st
Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland
Church of Scotland
Circle
Clan Child Law
Contact
Convention of Scottish Local Authorities
Crossreach
Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service
Cyrenians
Educational Institute of Scotland
Education Scotland
Equality and Human Rights Commission
Equality Network
Faculty of Advocates
Faculty of Public Health
Family Law Association
Families Outside
Fathers Network Scotland
Home-Start UK
Humanist Society Scotland
Inspiring Scotland
Law Society of Scotland
LGBT Youth Scotland
All local authorities in Scotland
Mellow Parenting
Ministry of Defence
Muslim Council of Scotland
National Parent Forum of Scotland
Naval Families Federation
National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Scotland
NHS Education for Scotland
NHS Regional Health Boards
One Parent Families Scotland
Parent Network Scotland
Parenting Across Scotland
Play Scotland
Police Scotland
Promoting A More Inclusive Society (PAMIS)
Public Health Scotland
Quakers
Quarriers
Relationships Scotland
Roman Catholic Church
Royal Air Force Families Federation
Royal College of General Practitioners Scotland
Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health
Royal College of Nursing Scotland
Saheliya
Scottish Autism
Scottish Children's Reporters Administration
Scottish Churches' Parliamentary Office
Scottish Council of Independent Schools
Scottish Council of Jewish Communities
Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service
Scottish Human Rights Commission
Scottish Secondary Teachers' Association
Scottish Youth Parliament
Scottish Women's Aid
Shared Parenting Scotland
Smart Play Scotland
Social Work Scotland
The Spark
Who Cares? Scotland
Zero Tolerance