**Department for Education**

2024-0042687

**Stephen Morgan MP**
**Minister for Early Education**

Ellie Costello, Parliamentary Vice Chair
Special Educational Consortium
By email: ellie@teamsquarepeg.org

17 January 2025

Dear Ms Costello,

Thank you for your correspondence of 18 December, addressed to myself and the Minister for Schools, regarding isolation rooms. I am replying as the minister responsible for this policy area.

Every pupil deserves to learn in a safe, calm, classroom and we will always support our hard-working and dedicated teachers to make this happen.

We recognise that the use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions, including seclusion, can have a significant and long-lasting effect on the pupils, staff members and parents involved, as well as the wider classroom. The government has therefore committed to a programme of work to minimise the use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions in all schools in England, including special schools and alternative provision.

The department is also currently updating the use of reasonable force in schools guidance (2013) to help schools minimise the need to use reasonable force and other restrictive interventions, including seclusion. The current guidance is available on the GOV.UK webpage at: tinyurl.com/24HCZEWU. Updates to the guidance will be informed by the department's call for evidence, which closed on 11 May 2023, along with independent research into the use of reasonable force, physical restraint and other restrictive practices in special schools and alternative provision settings, stakeholder engagement, and data collection via the department's omnibus survey.

We remain committed to commencing Section 93a of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, so that recording significant incidents of reasonable force, and reporting incidents to parents/carers, will be made a legal duty for schools. This will ensure that parents are informed of any significant incident of use of force as soon as practicable after the event.

During the consultation period the department will be engaging with all our stakeholders, including the Special Education Consortium, and inviting them to respond formally. Any feedback we receive at this stage will be used to inform further revisions to the guidance.

I appreciate your kind invitation to meet. Unfortunately, due to diary commitments, I am unable to do so at present. However, departmental officials would be delighted to meet with the Special Educational Consortium as part of our consultation process. Departmental Officials will reach out to arrange this once the consultation is launched.

Thank you for writing to me. I hope that this response is useful.

Yours sincerely,



**Stephen Morgan MP**
**Minister for Early Education**