

As part of the grassroots organisation Safeguarding Our Schools - Scotland, I contacted Respect Me and asked if we could meet with someone from the organisation to discuss concerns around an increase in bullying incidents in schools. These incidents had been raised with us by parents and teachers and we thought the most appropriate solution would be to have a discussion with the national anti-bullying agency and try to tackle it in a proactive way. We sent our request on 17th May 2022 and received an immediate response advising that it had been passed to Lorraine Glass, Interim Director. Lorraine quickly got in touch with us and set up a meeting for 01st June 2022. Lorraine asked us to forward our concerns, which we done and heard nothing back until the evening of 31st May 2022 when Lorraine emailed to say that she was cancelling our meeting for the following morning because she thought it "would fail to advance the discourse in the direction you desire".

We believe that our meeting was cancelled, and our concerns dismissed due to them being about bullying occurring based on belief in biological sex/non-belief in gender identity ideology, sometimes referred to as gender critical beliefs. We feel that we were dismissed before even being listened to and the bullying incidents we had weren't of concern and we believe that this is discrimination and dereliction of duty from a government funded agency who say this on their website - "We work with all adults involved in the lives of children and young people to give them the practical skills and confidence to deal with children who are bullied and those who bully others".

Safeguarding Our Schools - Scotland are working with parents and teachers to build stronger relationships with their schools and to have difficult conversations about the issues around gender identity ideology and safeguarding. These issues include very clear and upsetting examples of bullying taking place when children do not use preferred pronouns (due to belief and/or disability) amongst other things. We provided some examples to Lorraine and were really encouraged that we would be meeting her to try and carve out a balance around the evident examples of conflicting rights. We believe that all children deserve to go to school and be free from bullying and that concerns should be dealt with professionally and shouldn't be conflated with political agendas.

We are concerned that there is a possible conflict of interest with regards to LGBT Youth Scotland and their political position and their ability to remain impartial on issues that we were raising.

We would like this complaint to be handled in the professional manner that our meeting should have been and would welcome a response as soon as possible.

Safeguarding Our Schools - Scotland