

FOI 202200329739 – Information to Be Released

Request: *All correspondence (including emails, attachments, typed or handwritten notes, letters, notes/records of phone calls, minutes of meetings, briefings, WhatsApp messages or otherwise) regarding the Mermaids Charity. Please provide correspondence from 25 September 2022 onwards.*

1. Some of the information requested has already been publicly released under FOI 202200323251. You can find this information here: [Communications regarding Mermaids charity since May 2021: FOI release - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#).

2. Email Correspondence about Sunday Mail Query – 13 October 2022

From: [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
Sent: 13 October 2022 14:50  
To: [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
Cc: [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
Communications Social Justice, Housing & Local Government  
<CommunicationsSocialJusticeHousing&LocalGovt@gov.scot>; Communications  
Education & Skills <CommunicationsEducation&Skills@gov.scot>; [redacted]  
<[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted]  
<[redacted]@gov.scot>; News Desk <Newsdesk@gov.scot>  
Subject: RE: SpAd View - Sunday Mail - SG funding of Mermaids

[redacted]

Proposed Response

For Info

The Scottish Government has no relationship with, and does not fund, Mermaids .

Background

Mermaids is not registered as a charity in Scotland, only England and Wales.

From: [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
Sent: 13 October 2022 14:45  
To: [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
Cc: [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
Communications Social Justice, Housing & Local Government  
<CommunicationsSocialJusticeHousing&LocalGovt@gov.scot>; Communications  
Education & Skills <CommunicationsEducation&Skills@gov.scot>; [redacted]  
<[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted]  
<[redacted]@gov.scot>; News Desk <Newsdesk@gov.scot>  
Subject: RE: SpAd View - Sunday Mail - SG funding of Mermaids

For clarity, Mermaids are mentioned twice in the supporting transgender young people in schools guidance. Once on p.40 in the context of referring to agencies that provide advice and support to parents of transgender children; and once on p.63 as part of a longer list of additional resources. We do not work with Mermaids directly, primarily because they don't really operate in Scotland. They did not provide advice in the creation of the guidance. [redacted] At present we have no plans to update the guidance.

Thanks,  
[redacted]

From: [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
Sent: 13 October 2022 14:34  
To: [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
Cc: [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; Communications Social Justice, Housing & Local Government <CommunicationsSocialJusticeHousing&LocalGovt@gov.scot>; Communications Education & Skills <CommunicationsEducation&Skills@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; News Desk <Newsdesk@gov.scot>  
Subject: RE: SpAd View - Sunday Mail - SG funding of Mermaids

[redacted]

From: [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
Sent: 13 October 2022 14:33  
To: [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
Cc: [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; Communications Social Justice, Housing & Local Government <CommunicationsSocialJusticeHousing&LocalGovt@gov.scot>; Communications Education & Skills <CommunicationsEducation&Skills@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; News Desk <Newsdesk@gov.scot>  
Subject: RE: SpAd View - Sunday Mail - SG funding of Mermaids

They are not registered as a charity in Scotland only E&W

Many thanks  
[redacted]

**[redacted]** | **[redacted]** | Third Sector Unit | COVID Recovery & Public Service Reform Directorate | Scottish Government | Mobile: **[redacted]**

From: **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>  
Sent: 13 October 2022 14:31  
To: **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>; **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>; **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>  
Cc: **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>; **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>; **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>; **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>; **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>; **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>; **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>; **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>; **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>; **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>;  
Communications Social Justice, Housing & Local Government  
<CommunicationsSocialJusticeHousing&LocalGovt@gov.scot>; Communications Education & Skills <CommunicationsEducation&Skills@gov.scot>; **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>; **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>; **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>; News Desk <Newsdesk@gov.scot>  
Subject: RE: SpAd View - Sunday Mail - SG funding of Mermaids

**[redacted]**

From: **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>  
Sent: 13 October 2022 14:28  
To: **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>; **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>  
Cc: **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>; **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>; **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>; **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>; **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>; **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>; **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>; **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>; **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>; **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>;  
Communications Social Justice, Housing & Local Government  
<CommunicationsSocialJusticeHousing&LocalGovt@gov.scot>; Communications Education & Skills <CommunicationsEducation&Skills@gov.scot>; **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>; **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>; **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>  
<**[redacted]**@gov.scot>; News Desk <Newsdesk@gov.scot>  
Subject: RE: SpAd View - Sunday Mail - SG funding of Mermaids

**[redacted]**

We're dealing with a separate query on this now.

Thanks  
**[redacted]**  
**[redacted]** | Education & Skills  
m: **[redacted]**

@scotgovedu | gov.scot/news

From: [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
Sent: 13 October 2022 14:16  
To: [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
Cc: [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; Communications Social Justice, Housing &  
Local Government <CommunicationsSocialJusticeHousing&LocalGovt@gov.scot>;  
Communications Education & Skills <CommunicationsEducation&Skills@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; News Desk <Newsdesk@gov.scot>  
Subject: RE: SpAd View - Sunday Mail - SG funding of Mermaids

As info not spokesperson  
The Scottish Government has no relationship, and does not fund Mermaids .

[redacted]

From: [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
Sent: 13 October 2022 13:46  
To: [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
Cc: [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; Communications Social Justice, Housing &  
Local Government <CommunicationsSocialJusticeHousing&LocalGovt@gov.scot>;  
Communications Education & Skills <CommunicationsEducation&Skills@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; News Desk <Newsdesk@gov.scot>  
Subject: SpAd View - Sunday Mail - SG funding of Mermaids

[redacted]

The Sunday Mail are asking what, if any, relationship SG has with Mermaids and if we provide/have provided funding to them (full details below).

Policy have agreed the line below. Grateful for SpAd review.

Many thanks

[redacted]

## Proposed Response

A Scottish Government spokesperson said:

“The Scottish Government does not fund Mermaids.”

## Background

The Supporting Transgender Young People in Schools guidance offers education authorities and schools non-statutory guidance on legislation, policy and practice to inform their approaches to supporting young people and their families. The guidance refers to Mermaids as an organisation which may support schools, young people parents and carers in the provision of information and advice.

The Scottish Government will consider whether any amendment to the guidance is required in light of the conclusion of consideration of complaints by the Charity Commission.

## Query

I was hoping you could give me details of any ongoing relationship the SG has with Mermaids and also how much money the SG has paid to Mermaids .

Thanks

**[redacted]**

--

**[redacted]**  
Sunday Mail

**[redacted]**

Scottish Government | Communications | St Andrew's House | Regent Road |  
Edinburgh | EH1 3DG  
t: **[redacted]**m:**[redacted]**

3. Email Correspondence about Sunday Mail Query – 13 October 2022

From: **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>

Sent: 13 October 2022 15:39

To: **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>

Subject: Cleared response for **[redacted]**/Sunday Mail on Mermaids

**[redacted]**

Cleared response from **[redacted]**.

**[redacted]**

Response

For Info

The Scottish Government has no relationship with, and does not fund, Mermaids .

Background

Mermaids is not registered as a charity in Scotland, only England and Wales.

**[redacted]**

Scottish Government | Communications | St Andrew's House | Regent Road |  
Edinburgh | EH1 3DG

t: **[redacted]**m: **[redacted]**

4. Email Correspondence about Sunday Mail Query – 13 October 2022

**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 13 October 2022 13:19  
**To:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
Communications Social Justice, Housing & Local Government  
<CommunicationsSocialJusticeHousing&LocalGovt@gov.scot>; Communications  
Education & Skills <CommunicationsEducation&Skills@gov.scot>; [redacted]  
<[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted]  
<[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: Policy View - Sunday Mail - SG funding of mermaids

Hi [redacted],

My team and the other teams copied into this email don't fund Mermaids. We've also done an erdm search - there is an FOI stating that Mermaids got no SG funding 2018-21 and nothing has come up for funding for 2021 onwards. So I'm happy with the proposed response on funding.

The background information is from colleagues in inclusive education and would need to be cleared by them. I think [redacted] is working today.

Thanks,

[redacted]

[redacted]

**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 13 October 2022 12:43  
**To:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
Communications Social Justice, Housing & Local Government  
<CommunicationsSocialJusticeHousing&LocalGovt@gov.scot>; Communications  
Education & Skills <CommunicationsEducation&Skills@gov.scot>; [redacted]  
<[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** Policy View - Sunday Mail - SG funding of mermaids

[redacted]/colleagues



The Sunday Mail are asking what, if any, relationship SG has with Mermaids and if we provide/have provided funding to them.

Based on most recent policy lines, grateful for review/insight on proposed response here.

### Proposed Response

A Scottish Government spokesperson said:

“The Scottish Government does not fund Mermaids.”

### Background

The Supporting Transgender Young People in Schools guidance offers education authorities and schools non-statutory guidance on legislation, policy and practice to inform their approaches to supporting young people and their families. The guidance refers to Mermaids as an organisation which may support schools, young people parents and carers in the provision of information and advice.

The Scottish Government will consider whether any amendment to the guidance is required in light of the conclusion of consideration of complaints by the Charity Commission.

### Query

I was hoping you could give me details of any ongoing relationship the SG has with Mermaids and also how much money the SG has paid to Mermaids .

Thanks

**[redacted]**

--

**[redacted]**  
Sunday Mail

**[redacted]**

5. Email Correspondence about Letter to Ms Somerville – 19 October 2022

From: **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>  
Sent: 19 October 2022 12:12  
To: **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>; **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>;  
**[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>; **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>;  
**[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>  
Cc: **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>  
Subject: RE: Mermaids Inclusion in ScotGov Guidance (Content of Original Complaint to Charities Commission)

Hi **[redacted]**,

Yes I can take this one. The short answer, for future reference, is Scottish Government don't fund or have a relationship with Mermaids, so essentially the parent should take it up with Mermaids directly. They're also not a registered charity in Scotland, so not really relevant to us in terms of charity law.

Thanks,

**[redacted]**

From: **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>  
Sent: 19 October 2022 11:44  
To: **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>; **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>;  
**[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>; **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>;  
**[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>  
Cc: **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>  
Subject: FW: Mermaids Inclusion in ScotGov Guidance (Content of Original Complaint to Charities Commission)

Hi all,

I have received the below MiCase. I don't think this is for the LGBTI Equality team to answer but not 100% which team it sits best with between Charity Law, Gender Identity Healthcare and Inclusive Education.

Could you please let me know if you think it's for your team?

Many thanks,

**[redacted]**

**[redacted]**

Directorate for Equality, Inclusion & Human Rights | Scottish Government

From: **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot> On Behalf Of Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care  
Sent: 13 October 2022 11:37  
To: Public Engagement Unit <CorrespondenceUnit@gov.scot>  
Cc: Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care <CabSecHSC@gov.scot>  
Subject: FW: Mermaids Inclusion in ScotGov Guidance (Content of Original Complaint to Charities Commission)

OR

Kind regards,

**[redacted]**

Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care  
St Andrew's House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG

All e-mails and attachments sent by a Ministerial Private Office to any other official on behalf of a Minister relating to a decision, request or comment made by a Minister, or a note of a Ministerial meeting, must be filed appropriately by the recipient. Private Offices do not keep official records of such e-mails or attachments.

Scottish Ministers, Special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See [www.lobbying.scot](http://www.lobbying.scot)  
Apologies for this not having been brought to your attention earlier.

From: **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gmail.com>

Sent: 13 October 2022 09:35

To: Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care <CabSecHSC@gov.scot>;

Inclusive Education <Includedu@gov.scot>

Subject: Mermaids Inclusion in ScotGov Guidance (Content of Original Complaint to Charities Commission)

Dear Ms Somerville

You will have seen some of the press coverage around the Mermaids scandal over the supply of breast binders to girls as young as 13 even where they know their parents won't allow one due to the risks to physical health.

**[redacted]**:

<https://archive.ph/YuMU4>

**[redacted]**. However, the binder issue is the tip of the iceberg. **[redacted]** the Charities Commission in 2020 and as you will see, the forum was an unregulated free for all with adolescents eagerly recommending GenderGP to each other. Mermaids were not allowed to publicly endorse GenderGP as part of the terms of their National Lottery Grant so they endorsed adolescents doing so in the private Youth Forum- ages 12-19 (I also have a screenshot proving this).

There were many suicidal teens with moderators rarely popping in to intervene- usually it was left to other adolescents to provide support and advice. Self medication was frequently discussed- I have another screenshot where an under 18 asks about upping his self medicated cross sex hormones and the moderator only says self medicating "is not something we cover" and advises CHANGING medication can cause big problems so see a doctor WHEN YOU CAN. There were no warnings about how dangerous self medicating is in the first place. Children as young as 12 would have read that and walked away thinking self medicating was no big deal.

Children would encourage each other to lie to their GP in order to obtain cross sex hormones and there was no intervention from moderators. I have many many more screenshots in addition to **[redacted]**.

I cannot emphasise enough how unsuitable and dangerous the Mermaids Youth Forum is and it needs immediate removal from the Scottish Government guidelines while the Charities Commission investigation takes place. **[redacted]**. This was despite them being privy to the attached information which the Scottish Government was not.

No parent, if aware of the content of the Youth Forum, would be happy that their child's school is sign posting them to it.

Yours sincerely

**[redacted]**

Sent from my iPad

6. Email Correspondence about Times Query – 12 October 2022

**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 12 October 2022 13:52

**To:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Cc:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; Communications Education & Skills <CommunicationsEducation&Skills@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: For policy view - mermaids - The Times

Hi [redacted]

[redacted]

The Supporting Transgender Young People in Schools guidance offers education authorities and schools non-statutory guidance on legislation, policy and practice to inform their approaches to supporting young people and their families. The guidance refers to Mermaids an organisation which may support schools, young people parents and carers in the provision of information and advice.

If, following the consideration of complaints by the Charity Commission, there is a need to consider these references further, the Scottish Government would do so.

The Scottish Government guidance makes clear that young people may choose to bind their chest. The guidance highlights the risks associated with this practice in relation to PE and advises the young person themselves to decide whether or not to wear a binder. The guidance neither promotes the use of binders or prevents it, it simply reflects that young people may make their own choices in these matters.

Thanks

[redacted]

[redacted]

Support and Wellbeing Unit : The Scottish Government : Area 2B North : Victoria Quay :  
Edinburgh : EH6 6QQ

Phone [redacted]: Blackberry [redacted]

Email: [\[redacted\]@gov.scot](mailto:[redacted]@gov.scot)

[redacted].

**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 12 October 2022 13:31

**To:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Cc:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; Communications Education & Skills <CommunicationsEducation&Skills@gov.scot>

**Subject:** For policy view - mermaids - The Times

Policy colleagues, we've been approached by the Times about the Mermaids transgender charity – will we remove it from transgender guidance in schools, following the Charity Commission probe in England and action by DoE??  
I can't see any lines we've issued previously on this, grateful if policy colleagues can advise on lines to take  
Many thanks **[redacted]**

**From:** **[redacted]**< **[redacted]**@thetimes.co.uk>  
**Sent:** 12 October 2022 12:52  
**To:** **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@socialsecurity.gov.scot>  
**Subject:** Re: mermaids

Sorry  
Here is the article on the DofE

<https://schoolsweek.co.uk/dfe-removes-trans-charity-mermaids-from-school-wellbeing-resources/>

On Wed, 12 Oct 2022 at 12:47 **[redacted]**< **[redacted]**@thetimes.co.uk> wrote:  
Hello  
It is being reported that the dept of education in England has removed Mermaids from their list of health and wellbeing organisations for schools to turn to amid the Charity Commission probe.  
Can the SG comment if they will also remove the charity from their transgender guidance for schools for the time being?

**[redacted]**.  
Thanks

--  
**[redacted]**,  
The Times  
**[redacted]**  
**[redacted]**

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**[redacted]**,  
The Times  
**[redacted]**  
**[redacted]**

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7. Email Correspondence about Mermaids Charity – 14 October 2022

From: [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

Sent: 14 October 2022 11:58

To: [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; Gender Identity and Healthcare Access <genderidentityhealth@gov.scot>

Cc: [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; Communications Health & Social Care <CommunicationsHealth&SocialCare@gov.scot>

Subject: For policy views- Mermaids Charity links hosted on National Gender Identity Clinical Network for Scotland

Hello policy colleagues,

Just coming to you with something which we have had flagged to us by colleagues at NHS NSS. They have been approached this morning about the National Gender Identity Clinical Network for Scotland hosting links to the charity Mermaids despite there being an ongoing investigation into the charity in England and Wales over safeguarding concerns.

NHS NSS have been asked for comment and whether they support this in light of recent revelations or if action is being taken to remove this until the outcome of the investigation is known.

As they have flagged I just wanted to check in what the SG position on this is?

Thanks,  
[redacted]

[redacted]



8. Email Correspondence with National Gender Identity Clinical Network – 14 October 2022

From: nss ngicns <nss.ngicns@nhs.scot>

Sent: 14 October 2022 15:47

To: [redacted] <[redacted]@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk>; [redacted] (NHS Grampian) <[redacted]@nhs.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@nhs.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@nhs.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk>; [redacted] <[redacted]@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk>; transparentsees <transparentsees@gmail.com>; [redacted] (NHS Highland) <[redacted]@nhs.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@nhs.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@nhs.scot>; [redacted] @ed.ac.uk; [redacted] <[redacted]@ggc.scot.nhs.uk>; [redacted] <[redacted]@lgbthealth.org.uk>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@nhs.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@ggc.scot.nhs.uk>; [redacted] <[redacted]@nhs.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@ggc.scot.nhs.uk>; nss ngicns <nss.ngicns@nhs.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@lgbtyouth.org.uk>; [redacted] @lgbtyouth.org.uk; [redacted] <[redacted]@ed.ac.uk>; [redacted] <[redacted]@nhs.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk>; [redacted] <[redacted]@ggc.scot.nhs.uk>; Gender Identity and Healthcare Access <genderidentityhealth@gov.scot>; [redacted] (NHS Grampian) <[redacted]@nhs.scot>; [redacted] (NHS FIFE) <[redacted]@nhs.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk>; [redacted] <[redacted]@equality-network.org>; [redacted] <[redacted]@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk>

Subject: NGICNS Media Inquiry

Dear Steering Group members,

We wanted to make you aware that we have received a media inquiry about linking to Mermaids as a resource for young people and their families and have supplied the following response:

“The National Gender Identity Clinical Network supports improvements to trans healthcare in Scotland which includes a duty of care to support young gender questioning people. The person centred care needs of these young people are complex and it is essential that they, their carers and families have access to a range of information.

The Network keeps the information on its website under review and, at this stage, do not intend to change any resources.”

Kind Regards,

[redacted]

National Specialist and Screening Services Directorate (NSD)

Procurement, Commissioning, and Facilities

NHS National Services Scotland

Email [redacted]@nhs.scot

<https://www.cyans.scot.nhs.uk/>

<https://www.hincyp.scot.nhs.uk/>

<http://www.ngicns.scot.nhs.uk/>

[redacted]

9. Excerpt of The Times Article '*Most trans children just going through a phase, advises NHS*' from 25 October 2022, Quoted in Email Correspondence about Times Query – 25 October 2022

From: [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

Sent: 25 October 2022 14:31

To: [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

Cc: [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; News Desk <Newsdesk@gov.scot>; Communications Education & Skills <CommunicationsEducation&Skills@gov.scot>;

[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; Communications Social Justice, Housing & Local Government <CommunicationsSocialJusticeHousing&LocalGovt@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

Subject: Media query: transgender guidance in schools; gender reform and medical issues - The Times

Hi all

The Times is following up two stories in the press today.

The Times - Tuesday, 25/10/2022

Most trans children just going through a phase, advises NHS

**[redacted]**

The new "watchful approach" adopted by the NHS is a significant change of course from the "affirmative" approach advocated by campaign groups, including Mermaids.

10. Excerpts of Times Article '*Youth Charity Reported over Breast Binders Advice*' Shared When Drafting Briefing – 26 October 2022

[...]

“Mermaids , which is being investigated by the Charity Commission in England and Wales for allegedly supplying chest-binding devices to teenagers without their parents’ knowledge.”

[...]

Previous messages had showed the youth worker encouraging the child to involve their mother when seeking advice. The worker urged the child to compose an email with their mother to Mermaids, asking for guidance.

They also highlighted an online forum for parents of transgender and non-binary children.

Safeguarding Our Schools questioned why LGBT Youth Scotland was signposting resources by Mermaids on its website before the investigation into the English charity’s safeguarding approach had concluded.

LGBT Youth Scotland has continued to promote resources by Mermaids on its website and chat room function since the case opened. Members of the Scottish charity also endorsed a tweet supporting Mermaids on October 6.

Since October 13, however, LGBT Youth Scotland has displayed an “Important Notice” beneath links to Mermaids resources which declares its awareness of the complaints against the charity. It reads: “We fully support regulatory investigations into the safeguarding of children and young people, and understand from the Charity Commission that the opening of a compliance case is not in itself a finding of wrongdoing.”

11. Email Correspondence about Drafting of Response to PQ S6W-11735 – 2  
November 2022

**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 02 November 2022 11:37  
**To:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: PQ - S6W-11735 - Deadline Date 7th Nov

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

Support and Wellbeing Unit | e: [redacted]@gov.scot |

t: [redacted]m: [redacted]



[redacted]

**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 02 November 2022 11:29  
**To:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: PQ - S6W-11735 - Deadline Date 7th Nov

Hi [redacted]

Hope all well with you? Thanks to [redacted] for lines, I'll include any lines that [redacted]/ [redacted] might offer and then send round a draft of the PQ for comment.

Regards

[redacted]

[redacted] | Scottish Government | Directorate for COVID Recovery and Public Service Reform | Area 3-H North | Victoria Quay | Edinburgh EH6 6QQ

**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 02 November 2022 09:21  
**To:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: PQ - S6W-11735 - Deadline Date 7th Nov

Hi [redacted],

[redacted]

Thanks,  
[redacted]

[redacted]

Directorate for Equality, Inclusion & Human Rights | Scottish Government

**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 02 November 2022 09:19

**To:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Cc:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: PQ - S6W-11735 - Deadline Date 7th Nov

Hi [redacted],

Great to hear from you and thanks for taking on this PQ. I'm copying in [redacted] from my team who can give you lines that we've used in our FMQ/FOI. Also, copying in [redacted] and [redacted] from inclusive education for lines about their guidance that signposts Mermaids, in case they have anything to add.

Thanks,

[redacted]

[redacted]  
[redacted]

**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 01 November 2022 17:29

**To:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Subject:** FW: PQ - S6W-11735 - Deadline Date 7th Nov

Hi [redacted]

I'm helping out [redacted] with the PQ, would you be able to provide some lines on Mermaids that I can include in the background note?

Thanks

[redacted]

[redacted] | Scottish Government | Directorate for COVID Recovery and Public Service Reform | Area 3-H North | Victoria Quay | Edinburgh EH6 6QQ

**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 01 November 2022 13:34  
**To:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: PQ - S6W-11735 - Deadline Date 7th Nov

Will do – thank you

[redacted]. I will send over a few lines on the actual charity regulation bit.

Many thanks

[redacted]

[redacted] | Third Sector Unit | **COVID Recovery & Public Service Reform Directorate** | Scottish Government | Mobile: [redacted]

**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 01 November 2022 13:31  
**To:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: PQ - S6W-11735 - Deadline Date 7th Nov

[redacted]

[redacted]

**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 01 November 2022 12:07  
**To:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: PQ - S6W-11735 - Deadline Date 7th Nov

[redacted]

Many thanks

[redacted]

[redacted] | Third Sector Unit | **COVID Recovery & Public Service Reform Directorate** | Scottish Government | Mobile: [redacted]

**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 01 November 2022 11:51  
**To:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: PQ - S6W-11735 - Deadline Date 7th Nov

[redacted]

[redacted]

**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 01 November 2022 11:16  
**To:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: PQ - S6W-11735 - Deadline Date 7th Nov

[redacted] – is there capacity for someone else in TSU to deal with this is and I can input?

Many thanks

[redacted]

[redacted] | Third Sector Unit | **COVID Recovery & Public Service Reform Directorate** | Scottish Government | Mobile: [redacted]

**From:** [redacted]  
**Sent:** 01 November 2022 09:10  
**To:** ET FMQ/PQ Mailbox <ETFMQPQ@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: PQ - S6W-11735 - Deadline Date 7th Nov

Hi [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]  
[Directorate for Equality, Inclusion & Human Rights | Scottish Government](#)

Many thanks

[redacted]

[redacted] | Third Sector Unit | **COVID Recovery & Public Service Reform Directorate** | Scottish Government | Mobile: [redacted]

**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** ET FMQ/PQ Mailbox  
**Sent:** 01 November 2022 08:52  
**To:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** ET FMQ/PQ Mailbox <ETFMQPQ@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** PQ - S6W-11735 - Deadline Date 7th Nov

Hello

I would appreciate it if you could take a look at the below PQ and let me know if this is for your area.

[S6W-11735](#) **Rachael Hamilton:** To ask the Scottish Government what its response is regarding the impact in Scotland of the Charity Commission's investigation of the Mermaids charity.

**PQ deadline is – 07/11/2022**

If not your area, grateful if you could let me know why and point me in the right direction of who you think may be able to lead.

Thank you in advance  
**[redacted]**

**[redacted]**



12. Excerpt of Attachment from Email Correspondence Agreeing Answer to PQ  
S6W-11735 – 2 November 2022

**BACKGROUND NOTE FOR S6W-11735**

- The Scottish Government has no relationship with and does not fund Mermaids.
- Mermaids are not a registered charity in Scotland.
- Charities are independent organisations. Any concerns about a charity should be raised with the people responsible for managing the charity, or the appropriate regulator.

Contact Name: **[redacted]**

13. Email Correspondence from Drafting Response to FOI 202200323251 – 5  
October 2022

**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 05 October 2022 13:44

**To:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
Freedom of Information <foi@gov.scot>; Director of Justice  
<DirectorofJustice@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Cc:** [redacted] <[redacted]>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted]  
<[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted]  
<[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot >

**Subject:** RE: FOI - TRIAGE - Communication with or about Mermaids Charity since  
May 21 - 202200323251

Hi

To confirm that I have searched the erdm file for Supporting Transgender Young  
People in School Guidance and my inbox and have no correspondence with  
Mermaids.

I also confirm that I have not met with any representatives from Mermaids therefore  
there is no information held in relation to this. I also confirm that we do not provide  
funding to Mermaids – therefore no information is held in relation to this aspect of the  
request.

Mermaids is referred to as an organisation from which parents and carers can  
receive support within the Supporting Transgender Young People in Schools  
Guidance Supporting transgender young people in schools: guidance for Scottish  
schools - gov.scot (www.gov.scot) and this is publically available information.

I hope that this is helpful to your consideration of the FOI.

Thanks

[redacted]

[redacted]

Support and Wellbeing Unit : The Scottish Government : Area 2B North : Victoria  
Quay : Edinburgh : EH6 6QQ  
Phone [redacted]: Blackberry [redacted]  
Email: [redacted]@gov.scot

[redacted]

**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 05 October 2022 12:33

**To:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; Freedom of Information <foi@gov.scot>;  
Director of Justice <DirectorofJustice@gov.scot>; [redacted]  
<[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Cc:** [redacted] <[redacted]>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted]

<[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted]  
<[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: FOI - TRIAGE - Communication with or about Mermaids Charity since  
May 21 - 202200323251

Hi,

Copying in [redacted] and [redacted] who work on inclusive education for their views on this FOI as they are more likely to work with Mermaids than ourselves.

We don't work with Mermaids. However, I had an introductory meeting with them in June 2021, which would fall in the scope of this request.

Thanks,

[redacted]

[redacted]

**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 05 October 2022 09:54  
**To:** Freedom of Information <foi@gov.scot>; Director of Justice <DirectorofJustice@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [redacted] <[redacted]>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: FOI - TRIAGE - Communication with or about Mermaids Charity since May 21 - 202200323251

Hi [redacted]

Re the request;

Please provide information about any Scottish Government communications with or about the charity Mermaids since 1 May 2021. Please details of any meetings, including any dates, agendas and minutes, and any records created in that period relating to past, present or possible future funding.

Mermaids responded on one of our consultations but we've had no direct contact as part of our work on the Bill.

We wouldn't deal with a Mermaids normally as our stakeholder as they are more children and Young people oriented. I've copied in [redacted] to see if Equalities would have had more engagement, failing that I wonder if Charities Team might have dealings also.

Hope this is helpful

[redacted]

[redacted] Gender Recognition Unit  
Room 1W.10 | St Andrew's House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG |



**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** Freedom of Information  
**Sent:** 05 October 2022 09:08  
**To:** Director of Justice <DirectorofJustice@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [redacted] <[redacted]>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** FOI - TRIAGE - Communication with or about Mermaids Charity since May 21 - 202200323251

Hi all,

Please see the FOI request below. It looks like this may be in relation to your policy area. Please confirm this sits with you or advise us immediately if it does not; suggesting business areas that are better suited.

Please note the following:

### **Timescale**

- The response to this case should issue as soon as possible and no later than the statutory deadline which is **02/11/22**.

### **Immediate Actions**

Please:

- 'Assign to self' through the 'Case Actions' tab on MiCase: MiCase - View Case 323251
- Send the requester an **FOI specific acknowledgement letter**, following the standard template (FOISA Request Templates, page 5). The acknowledgement issued by MiCase is not FOI specific and we are required to do this.
- Complete all relevant document as your case progresses, including the:
  - (i) Mandatory Statement of Compliance listing information identified as in scope and a summary of decisions made
  - (ii) Searches Template recording details of searches carried out.
- Use the **Response Wizard** contained in MiCase for ALL letters to the requester.
- Complete and submit a **mandatory** Pre-publication checklist for gov.scot before requesting publication on the SG website.

### **Sensitivity**

- In FOISA terms we are assessing this case as **routine**. This means it should not require a Ministerial decision in terms of disclosure.  
*The sensitivity assessment can change once full searches have been completed. If after searching you consider that the response requires a Ministerial decision please engage with the FOI Unit to help us reassess the case.*
- Please ensure that decisions on disclosure are taken by officials of appropriate seniority (normally C Band or above). You may find our Submissions Templates useful here:  
<https://erdm.scotland.gov.uk:8443/documents/qA962816>.
- If necessary please sight your Comms team if you consider that parallel media handling is required.

### **Requests for legal advice, or requests which capture legal advice**

You should always consult the relevant team in Scottish Government Legal Directorate (SGLD) if you receive a request for/relating to legal advice or there is material from the Law Officers (the Lord Advocate and the Solicitor General). SGLD can also help in identifying any legal advice within the scope of the request.

### **Guidance**

Detailed guidance is available here Freedom of Information (FOI): SharePoint: 2020-2025 and SharePoint Collection.

### **Saving and ERDM**

Please save all correspondence and evidence of how you reached your final decision within the appropriate ERDM file - you will find this by searching for the FOI number. This will help speed up the process should the request go to review or appeal.

Many thanks,  
**[redacted]**

**[redacted]** | **[redacted]** | Scottish Government | 2W St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG  
**Yammer:** @FOI - Community

-----Original Message-----

From: Central Enquiry Unit <CEU@gov.scot>  
Sent: 05 October 2022 09:00  
To: Freedom of Information <foi@gov.scot>  
Subject: FOI - TRIAGE - Freedom of Information request - Mermaids - 202200323251

-----Original Message-----

From: **[redacted]**<request-905017-fb0d222f@whatdotheyknow.com>  
Sent: 05 October 2022 00:00

To: Central Enquiry Unit <CEU@gov.scot>  
Subject: Freedom of Information request - Mermaids

Dear Scottish Government,

Please provide information about any Scottish Government communications with or about the charity Mermaids since 1 May 2021. Please details of any meetings, including any dates, agendas and minutes, and any records created in that period relating to past, present or possible future funding.

Yours faithfully,

**[redacted]**

-----

Please use this email address for all replies to this request:  
request-905017-fb0d222f@whatdotheyknow.com

Is ceu@gov.scot the wrong address for Freedom of Information requests to Scottish Government? If so, please contact us using this form:  
[https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/change\\_request/new?body=scottish\\_government](https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/change_request/new?body=scottish_government)

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For more detailed guidance on safely disclosing information, read the latest advice from the ICO:  
<https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/help/ico-guidance-for-authorities>  
<https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/help/ico-anonymisation-code>

Please note that in some cases publication of requests and responses will be delayed.

If you find this service useful as an FOI officer, please ask your web manager to link to us from your organisation's FOI page.

14. Email Correspondence – Reminder of FOI 202200323251 Response  
Deadline – 7 October 2022

**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 07 October 2022 14:30

**To:** [redacted] <[redacted]>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; Director of Justice <DirectorofJustice@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: FOI - TRIAGE - Communication with or about Mermaids Charity since May 21 - 202200323251

Hi all,

Thanks to those who have sent over returns so far. I have copied a few extra people in who may have information to be included. I am now leading on this FOI so could anyone who hasn't yet responded please send me over information that would fall under the following request by **COP Friday 14 October**:

*Please provide information about any Scottish Government communications with or about the charity Mermaids **since 1 May 2021**. Please details of any meetings, including any dates, agendas and minutes, and any records created in that period relating to past, present or possible future funding.*

If easier, you can also save emails directly to the eRDM file for this case here. When carrying out inbox/eRDM searches, could you also let me know the phrase used to search so I can use this in the FOI paperwork?

Many thanks,

[redacted]

[redacted]

Directorate for Equality, Inclusion & Human Rights | Scottish Government

15. Email Correspondence – Reminder of FOI 202200323251 Response  
Deadline – 10 October 2022

**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 10 October 2022 09:37

**To:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Cc:** [redacted] <[redacted]>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: FOI - TRIAGE - Communication with or about Mermaids Charity since May 21 - 202200323251

[redacted]

I didn't recall a meeting.

However, on searching my inbox against "Mermaids", I found two emails/calendar details of the meeting to which [redacted] refers from June 2021, which mat fall within the terms of the request, but nothing else.

I've copied [redacted].

[redacted]

Scottish Government | Justice Directorate | Civil Law and Legal System | Family Law  
GW-15 | St Andrew's House | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG



**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 10 October 2022 09:19

**To:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Cc:** [redacted] <[redacted]>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Subject:** FW: FOI - TRIAGE - Communication with or about Mermaids Charity since May 21 - 202200323251

[redacted]

I don't recall any meetings with Mermaids since May 2021. Do you agree? I searched for the word "Mermaids" in my in and out boxes and come up with nothing, apart from the emails below.

[redacted]



16. Email Correspondence – Reminder of FOI 202200323251 Response  
Deadline – 10 October 2022

**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 10 October 2022 11:20

**To:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Cc:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]>

**Subject:** RE: FOI - TRIAGE - Communication with or about Mermaids Charity since May 21 - 202200323251

[redacted]

Hi. [redacted] has found a couple of emails (above) relating to the meeting on 8 June 2021 (which I remember attending). I have searched my in and out boxes for “Mermaids” and found nothing but will double check I have nothing else relating to the meeting on 8 June 2021 and will revert.

[redacted]

17. Email Correspondence – Request for Response from Mental Health Directorate for FOI 202200323251 – 7 October 2022

**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 07 October 2022 15:55

**To:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: FOI - TRIAGE - Communication with or about Mermaids Charity since May 21 - 202200323251

Hi [redacted],

I searched my mailbox and eRDM space using the key word 'Mermaids,' which returned one entry. This was a presentation by Stonewall that had 'Mermaids' logo on one of the slides – but there was no communication with the charity or about them. So, nil return from me.

Kind regards

[redacted]

**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 07 October 2022 15:36

**To:** Director of Mental Health <DirectorofMentalHealth@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Subject:** FW: FOI - TRIAGE - Communication with or about Mermaids Charity since May 21 - 202200323251

Hi all,

We have received an FOI concerning communications with the charity Mermaids. Could you please have a look at the details below and send over any information you have by **COP Friday 14 October**.

Many thanks,

[redacted]

[redacted]

Directorate for Equality, Inclusion & Human Rights | Scottish Government

18. Email Correspondence – Request for Response from Mental Health Directorate for FOI 202200323251 – 14 October 2022

**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 14 October 2022 13:17  
**To:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** Communities Team Return - FOI 202200323251- Communication with or about Mermaids Charity since May 21 - Search results From Mental health Communities team - [redacted] to 14 October 2022

Hi [redacted]

I can confirm that I have conducted a search on eRDM and we have no record of any communications with or about the Mermaids Charity. Essentially a Nil return.

Let me know if you need more information.

[redacted]

[redacted] | Wellbeing and Prevention Unit | Improving Mental Health & Wellbeing  
Mental Health Directorate | St Andrews House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG

Phone : [redacted] Email: [redacted]@gov.scot



**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 12 October 2022 13:04  
**To:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: FOR CONFIRMATION: FOI 202200323251- Communication with or about Mermaids Charity since May 21 - - Search results for Communities team - Deadline 14 October 2022

Yes – sounds like a clear nil to me!

**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 12 October 2022 12:59  
**To:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** FOR CONFIRMATION: FOI 202200323251- Communication with or about Mermaids Charity since May 21 - - Search results for Communities team - Deadline 14 October 2022

Hi,

Thanks [redacted]. It's as as we thought.

**[redacted]** – just to alert you to this FOI on possible communications with the charity Mermaids and confirm you're content with **[redacted]** responding as **[redacted]** suggests below – i.e. nil return as we haven't had any communication with them.

Thanks

**[redacted]**  
**[redacted]**

**[redacted]** | Wellbeing and Prevention Unit | Mental Wellbeing and Social Care Directorate | DG-Health and Social Care

' **[redacted]** | : **[redacted]**@gov.scot

**[redacted]**

**From:** **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 12 October 2022 12:36

**To:** **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>

**Cc:** **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>

**Subject:** FOI 202200323251- Communication with or about Mermaids Charity since May 21 - - Search results for Communities team - Deadline 14 October 2022

Hi **[redacted]**

I carried out a search on Erdm and did not locate any correspondence between our team and the Mermaids charity. Additionally I have searched the list of Projects provided by the TSIs for year 1 of the communities Mental Health and Wellbeing fund and did not find any record of funding be provided to them.

I suggest that we put in a nil return stating that we have searched eRdm (WPU files) and the CMHW fund returns.

If you agree, I can respond to **[redacted]** copying in **[redacted]** and **[redacted]**.

Let me know if you need more information.

**[redacted]**

**[redacted]** | Wellbeing and Prevention Unit | Improving Mental Health & Wellbeing | Mental Health Directorate | St Andrews House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG

Phone : **[redacted]** Email: **[redacted]**@gov.scot



**From:** **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 11 October 2022 10:42

**To:** **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>



Thanks,

**[redacted]**

19. Email Correspondence Request for Information for FOI 202200323251 – 11 October 2022

**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 11 October 2022 11:18

**To:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Subject:** FW: FOI - TRIAGE - Communication with or about Mermaids Charity since May 21 - 202200323251

Hi [redacted],

I hope you are well. Could you please consider the below request for information for an FOI on Mermaids? Sorry, I should have included you in the original commission!

Thanks,

[redacted]

[redacted]

Directorate for Equality, Inclusion & Human Rights | Scottish Government

20. Email Correspondence on Briefing Information for Minister for Equalities – 12 October 2022

From: **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>

Sent: 12 October 2022 17:13

To **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>; **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>; **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>; **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>; **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>; **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**@gov.scot>

Cc: Communications Social Justice, Housing & Local Government

<CommunicationsSocialJusticeHousing&LocalGovt@gov.scot>; Communications

Education & Skills <CommunicationsEducation&Skills@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: Mermaids Lines - Minister for Equalities

Hi,

For awareness, I've transcribed the relevant aspect of the interview below.

Best wishes,

**[redacted]**

Partial transcript of interview between **[redacted]** and Ms McKelvie, Minister for Equalities and Older People – 12 October 2022

**[redacted]**: You'll probably have seen over the last few days reports about the charity that supports young Trans people, Mermaids. That's a charity that's apparently now under investigation by the Charity Commission because one of its trustees has been found to have some links with paedophilia organisations, or minor-attracted persons, whatever they call themselves nowadays. There was another worker who apparently had been posting images of himself, pornographic images of himself. The question is about the charity, the people that there, and the safeguarding of who they have got involved. That is a charity, probably one of the few that helps transgender children, that has got a massive profile and it is signposted by a lot of organisations including those funded by the Scottish Government. Is the government looking at what is happening with that charity, the investigation the Commission is doing, and whether or not you suggest that not a charity we should be signposting Scottish children to. Maybe something like LGBT Youth Scotland is able to pick up the slack in that area, if that was the case?

CM: Okay. Did you say there's a Charity Commission investigation, or a police investigation?

**[redacted]**: I think there's a Charity Commission investigation, looking at their processes for hiring, and so on. It's making sure that their safeguarding is correct.

CM: Okay. I've not picked up all of that recent stuff. We've had conference in Aberdeen and that's a couple of days out, so I've not picked up on that. If it's a charity registered in England, it would probably not be my place to say anything at this point. I'll pick up the point on what our response is to that. I'll need to go away and look at that, as I don't have any details on that yet. **[redacted]**, that is my honest





Hi [redacted],

Passing on some lines as requested for questions around our relationship with the charity Mermaids and some top lines. I am copying in colleagues who supplied these lines or may have lines to add.

For context, the Mermaids website is a linked resource in the Supporting Transgender Young People in Schools guidance.

#### Schools

- The Supporting Transgender Young People in Schools guidance aims to support schools and education authorities to fulfil their responsibilities in meeting all children and young people's needs including those who are transgender.
- The guidance highlights sources of support for schools, young people and their families in meeting the needs of young people who are exploring their gender identity.
- It is for schools and education authorities to determine the best resources, in light of their local circumstances, which support pupils' learning.
- *If asked about chest binders story:* The Scottish Government's 'Supporting transgender young people in schools' guidance neither promotes nor prevents the use of binders, it simply reflects that young people may make their own choices in these matters.

#### Funding/Charity Conduct

- Charities are independent organisations. Any concerns about a charity should be raised with the people responsible for managing the charity, or the appropriate regulator.
- The Scottish Government does not fund Mermaids.
- We fund LGBT Youth Scotland and Time for Inclusive Education (TIE) who support LGBTI young people across Scotland.

#### Top Lines

##### **Our current work to improve the lives of LGBTI people includes:**

- Reform of the Gender Recognition Act
- Providing funding to organisations promoting LGBTI equality in Scotland over 2021-2024 through the Equality and Human Rights Fund
- Supporting Gender Identity Service improvements
- Taking forward the government's commitment to end conversion practices, introducing legislation by the end of 2023
- A programme of action to promote equality and wellbeing for non-binary people, informed by the Non-Binary Working Group
- Continuing to develop a new Human Rights Bill, which will, as far as possible within devolved competence, include provision to ensure equal access for everyone to the substantive rights contained in the Bill, including LGBTI people.

Thanks,

**[redacted]**

**[redacted]**

Directorate for Equality, Inclusion & Human Rights | Scottish Government

21. Excerpt of Email Correspondence – Handover Note – 13 October 2022

From: [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

Sent: 13 October 2022 17:30

To: [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;  
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

Subject: Handover note

Hi all,

Here's a summary of priorities for next week, which we discussed earlier.

**FOIs**

- Mermaids

22. Excerpt from Email Correspondence – Clearance Request FOI  
202200323251 – 14 October 2022

**From:** [redacted]

**Sent:** 14 October 2022 15:01

**To:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Cc:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Subject:** FOI 202200323251 - Mermaids

Hi [redacted],

Could you please clear this FOI? It is due on 2 November.

23. Excerpt from Email Correspondence on Communications Planner – 25 October 2022

**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 25 October 2022 11:20

**To:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;

[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;

[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Cc:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; Communications Social Justice, Housing & Local Government <CommunicationsSocialJusticeHousing&LocalGovt@gov.scot>;

[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: Policy review - comms planner

Hi [redacted],

I also wanted to flag that we will be responding to an FOI on Mermaids this week. I can send you more info separately if that would be helpful?

24. Email Correspondence on FOI 202200323251- 25 October 2022

**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 25 October 2022 16:21

**To:** [redacted]<[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;

[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Cc:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Subject:** Mermaids FOI

Hi all,

Here is the information for the FOI on Mermaids that is due to be released over the next couple of days. I'll let you know when it has been published.

Thanks,

[redacted]

[redacted]

Directorate for Equality, Inclusion & Human Rights | Scottish Government

25. Excerpt from Correspondence from Member of Public – 27 October 2022

From: [redacted] <[redacted]@gmail.com>  
Sent: Thursday, October 27, 2022 9:30:27 AM  
To: Robison S (Shona), MSP <Shona.Robison.msp@parliament.scot>  
Subject: Children and the GRC

CAUTION: This e-mail originated from outside of The Scottish Parliament. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Shona Robison MSP,

[...]

It is of concern that LGBT Youth Scotland has been offering advice on a controversial garment known as breast binders for girls in an online chat room without the knowledge of their parents. LGBT Youth Scotland wrote the school guidance on trans issues endorsed by the Scottish Government. In it they downplay the risks associated with this wearing binders even though there is much evidence that it can cause serious health issues such as tissue damage and breathlessness. How can parents trust the Scottish Government with their children when it endorses this Charity's disregard to the wellbeing of children? This situation seems remarkably similar to that of the Charity Mermaids now being investigated for supplying chest binders to children also without their parents' knowledge. LGBT Youth Scotland are still referring children to Mermaids before their investigation by the Charity Commission is concluded. Should this charity continue to be endorsed by the Scottish government?

[...]

I look forward to your reply,  
Kind Regards,

[redacted]

\*\*\*\*\*

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26. Excerpt from Correspondence from Member of Public – 27 October 2022

From: **[redacted]**< **[redacted]**@hotmail.com>  
Sent: 07 October 2022 18:05  
To: First Minister <firstminister@gov.scot>  
Subject: Feminist really?

Dear First Minister,

I have read today your dismissal of the decades of work that JK Rowling has done for woman and children. No recognition of all the evidence that she is a top rate feminist. One example being the Volant Charitable Trust <https://volanttrust.org>, which is now worth nearly £70m, to focus on women's and children's issues. Furthermore, she has (at great personal expense) shed a light on the scary ideology that is hell bent on 'transing children' and thankfully now we can see Tavistock, Mermaids are under serious scrutiny because of it. Have you read the Cass Review?

[...]

Yours hopefully.  
**[redacted]**.

27. Excerpt from Correspondence from Member of Public – 18 October 2022

From: **[redacted]**< **[redacted]**@yahoo.co.uk>  
Sent: 18 October 2022 12:09  
To: First Minister <firstminister@gov.scot>  
Subject: Say no to the GRA

**[redacted]**

Dear First Minister,

Q 3

Is this in the best interests of children? I hope the education information being taught in Scottish schools is being scrutinised after the latest information on the Tavistock's damaging positive affirmation policy and the damage it has inflicted on countless children. I'm sure that there will be no mention of Mermaids following the safeguarding issues which have arisen lately.

Kind regards,  
**[redacted]**