



George Hannah  
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Dear Alison

Thank you very much for your letter to the Minister for Children, Young People and the Promise of 23 October. I lead on unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) policy, including age assessments, within the Scottish Government and have been asked to reply on the Minister's behalf.

You may be interested to learn that in addition to the Herald article, Scottish Ministers decried the use of scientific age assessment methods to age assess UASC during two parliamentary debates on the Illegal Migration Act this year. Maintaining our distinctive approach to age assessment in Scotland as the UK operationalises provisions in the Nationality and Borders Act 2022 and now, the Illegal Migration Act 2023, is important to the Scottish Government and reflects our commitment to giving children's rights the highest possible protection. The Scottish Government-produced age assessment guidance has consistently advised against use of such techniques on child welfare grounds as well as scientific unreliability.

Thank you for sharing BASW's statements which clearly set out your position on the UK Government's approach to age assessments. I would like to reassure you that we are engaging the Home Office on their proposals and will work with operational partners as they are developed.

Yours sincerely

Sian Morland  
**CPJ : Child Protection**

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