GIRFEC
Q&A for Practitioners

For more information go to
www.girfec-aberdeenshire.org

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What is Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC)?

GIRFEC is the Scottish Government’s approach to help all children and young people grow, develop and reach their full potential. It is an approach that:

• puts the wellbeing of the child or young person at the heart of decision making;

• takes a holistic approach to the wellbeing of a child or young person;

• works with children, young people and their families on ways to improve wellbeing;

• advocates preventative work and early intervention to support children, young people and their families; and

• ensures that every child is supported in a timely and proportionate way.

The approach is underpinned by the recent Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, the Early Years Framework, Curriculum for Excellence and a range of programmes to support improvements in services.

GIRFEC is being threaded through all existing policy, practice, strategy and legislation affecting children, young people and their families.

Which aspects of GIRFEC are included in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014?

The Act has put into statute some key aspects of GIRFEC:

• it sets out what we mean by ‘wellbeing’;

• it formalises the role of the Named Person, already widely used across Scotland, ensuring that a Named Person will be available for every child from birth to 18 (or older if still in school);

• it makes provision for a statutory Child’s Plan which provides a framework for information sharing between professionals.

When will the duties come into force?

The parts of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 which put aspects of GIRFEC on a statutory footing are expected to come into force on 1 August 2016.

Who will the duties apply to?

In summary the duties apply as follows:

Legal accountability for making available a Named Person and the Child’s Plan sits with health boards for children under 5 and with local authorities or independent/grant aided schools for children aged 5 to 18 (or older if still in school).

The Scottish Prison Service will be responsible for providing the Named Person while individuals under 18 are in their custody.

There are duties on a range of public bodies to share relevant information in an appropriate and proportionate way, and to support the role of the Named Person and delivery of a Child’s Plan.

All of the duties in the Act fall on organisations and not on individual members of staff. However, the duties will be carried out by practitioners delivering services on behalf of the relevant organisation.

Adult services will have a key role in supporting the duties under the Act. As they may become aware of a risk to a child’s wellbeing through their engagement with adults.

In such circumstances we would expect the adult service worker to consider the risk and to consider if this information is relevant to the Named Person and ought to be shared with them.

The adult service worker may continue to support the Named Person and the child through their ongoing engagement with the adult.