
Report to Housing, Health and Care Committee

Date of Meeting: 22 August 2013

Subject: Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC)

Report by: Assistant Head of Social Services, Childcare

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 This report details the progress made in implementing the national programme *Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)*.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee notes progress made in implementing the national programme *Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)* as detailed in this report, and provides comment and challenge as appropriate.

3. CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 *Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)* was introduced by the Scottish Government in 2007, and is a national programme that aims to improve outcomes for all children and young people in Scotland.
- 3.2 The *Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)* approach has been endorsed by the Scottish government as the delivery mechanism to achieve the social policy framework of *Equally Well*, the *Early Years Framework* and *Achieving our Potential*. All three frameworks are underpinned by:-
- A recognition that patterns for adult life are often set in the earliest years.
 - A commitment to early intervention to address or prevent problems before they become entrenched.
 - A commitment to building capacity in local communities and within families to help them tackle their problems.

A summary of the approach is attached as *Appendix 1*.

3.3 The Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) approach enables all children and young people to develop their capacities as outlined in Curriculum for Excellence: as successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors to society. Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) provides a framework for all services and agencies working with children and families to deliver, where necessary, a coordinated approach which is appropriate, proportionate and timely.

3.4 The overall impact of Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) to date includes:-

- Multi-agency working is being strengthened through improved planning and sharing of information both at a strategic and operational level. This includes the appointment of staff, from August, within the Public Protection Unit at Larbert Police Station to develop more effective working in Child Protection.
- Current practices in joint working have been reviewed and key areas of strength have been identified. Across the shared services of education and social services in Stirling and Clackmannanshire, a new service delivery model is being developed to support our most vulnerable children and young people.
- Strategic partnership working between Education and Social Services, Falkirk Council, Police Scotland, Forth Valley Health Board and the Third Sector have been strengthened.

3.5 The governance structure for the implementation of *Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)* consists of the Clackmannanshire and Stirling Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership co-chaired by the Head of Education and the Head of Social Services. This group is supported by the Clackmannanshire and Stirling Children and Young People's Implementation Partnership which is co-chaired by an Assistant Head of Education and an Assistant Head of Social Services.

3.6 GIRFEC into practice

In order to fully embed *Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)* there is a need to ensure:-

- i. culture change;
- ii. systems change; and
- iii. practice change.

3.7 Culture Change

Culture change is concerned with putting children and families' needs at the centre of planning and action. Building knowledge and understanding of each service and how different roles can work separately or together within local communities to create effective support networks for children and young people is central to culture change. A range of activities has been progressed to support achievement of this objective for example through:-

- Multi-agency training days which have enabled colleagues to critically reflect on key *Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)*

principles. Such joint-training opportunities have enabled staff at all levels to develop a shared understanding of roles and responsibilities.

- Implementation of the *Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)* approach is strongly underpinned by strong leadership and the commitment from senior officers within Services as well as being a recurring item on the agenda of management meetings.
- GIRFEC should be seen as a continuum of services from Early Years, and Early Intervention, through to statutory involvement with families e.g. child protection. The Children Services Partnership, through the Children and Young Persons' Implementation Partnership also relates to other relevant partnership activity e.g. in relation to substance misuse, violence against women, Early and Effective Intervention for young people becoming involved in offending, and the work of the Early Years Collaborative.

3.8 Systems Change

Systems change is concerned with streamlining all systems, processes and paperwork to reduce bureaucracy, increase efficiency and eliminate duplication. A range of activities has been implemented to support this objective:-

- The experience of young people is now framed around eight wellbeing indicators, summarised as "SHANARRI" (Appendix 2). These influence children's experience, within both universal and targeted services, through the health and wellbeing outcomes of Curriculum for Excellence and through the promotion of positive relationships at all levels.
- In partnership with other agencies, the staged intervention approach to assessment of need has been reviewed to ensure that children receive support when it is required.
- The Integrated Assessment Framework combines the assessment and planning processes carried out by professional agencies working with children, young people and their families. The planning process is being established to support statutory planning for children and young people across Education, Social Work, Health and other partners. Children and their families are more involved in all planning processes.

3.9 Practice change

- Practice involves the skills, competence and confidence of the workforce, as well as clear roles and tasks expected from individuals. Integrated working is an essential part of effective practice in children's services. Practice also includes the theory, knowledge and use of appropriate tools to help in assessment, planning and activities. Effective practice focuses on actions to improve outcomes for the child or young person.

- An on-going, comprehensive, multi-agency training programme has been delivered to practitioners from the Education Service, Third Sector, Police, Youth Services, Housing, Social Services and NHS. Participants are trained in the use of each of the tools that are integral to supporting the roll-out and sustainability of the GIRFEC approach within their own establishments. An example is the focus given to the lowest performing 20% within schools.
- Communication has been strengthened to share information with children and young people; their families and professionals. All children and young people in schools and nurseries have been issued with a postcard to share with their families highlighting the source of information.
- The Forth Valley Early and Effective Intervention (EEI) Project, based in the Multi-Agency Assessment and Screening Hub at Larbert Police Station is in operation to ensure effective co-ordination and delivery of appropriate interventions for children and young people who have been involved in offending behaviour. This includes consultation between Social Services, the Education Service, and the EEI Co-ordinator to enable routing of concerns accurately to destinations that will support earlier intervention.

4.0 Sustainability Implications

4.1 Activity to implement GIRFEC is geared towards developing sustainable services for the future.

5.0 Resource Implications

5.1 *Financial Details*

5.2 There are no financial implications to this report

5.3 Finance have been consulted and have agreed the financial implications as set out in the report. N/A in this instance Yes

5.4 *Staffing*

There are no staffing implications in this report.

6.0 Exempt Reports

6.1 Is this report exempt? Yes (please detail the reasons for exemption below) No

7.0 Declarations

The recommendations contained within this report support or implement our Corporate Priorities and Council Policies.

(1) **Our Priorities** (Please double click on the check box)

- The area has a positive image and attracts people and businesses
- Our communities are more cohesive and inclusive
- People are better skilled, trained and ready for learning and employment
- Our communities are safer
- Vulnerable people and families are supported
- Substance misuse and its effects are reduced
- Health is improving and health inequalities are reducing
- The environment is protected and enhanced for all
- The Council is effective, efficient and recognised for excellence

(2) **Council Policies** (Please detail)

8.0 Equalities Impact

- 8.1 Have you undertaken the required equalities impact assessment to ensure that no groups are adversely affected by the recommendations?
N/A on this occasion Yes No

9.0 Legality

- 9.1 It has been confirmed that in adopting the recommendations contained in this report, the Council is acting within its legal powers. Yes

10.0 Appendices

- 10.1 Please list any appendices attached to this report. If there are no appendices, please state "none".

Appendix 1 - The implementation of GIRFEC
Appendix 2 - The Wellbeing indicators

11.0 Background Papers

- 11.1 Have you used other documents to compile your report? (All documents must be kept available by the author for public inspection for four years from the date of meeting at which the report is considered)
Yes (please list the documents below) No

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The Implementation of Getting it Right for Every Child

Across Scotland, the Getting it Right for Every Child approach is the foundation for work with **all** children and young people. This approach is underpinned by shared principles and values, recognising Children's Rights. It calls for services to think differently and requires a positive shift in culture, systems and practice within and across services. The focus must be on improved outcomes for children and young people through greater joined up working.

Getting it Right for Every Child must thread through all policies, strategies, practice and legislation affecting children and young people. Services need to have a shared understanding of an agreed approach to working with children and young people and to multi-agency working.

The principles of Getting it Right for Every Child are:-

- Promoting the well-being of individual children and young people.
- Keeping children and young people physically and emotionally safe.
- Putting the child at the centre.
- Taking a whole-child approach.
- Promoting opportunities and valuing diversity.
- Providing additional help that is appropriate and timely.
- Supporting informed choices.
- Working in partnership with families.
- Respecting confidentiality and sharing information.
- Promoting the same values across all working relationships.
- Using expertise of all partners.
- Co-ordinating help.
- Building a competent workforce.

Getting it Right for Every Child is founded on 10 core components, which can be applied in any setting, and in any circumstance. They are at the heart of the GIRFEC approach in practice and provide a benchmark from which practitioners may apply the approach to their areas of work.

1. A focus on improving outcomes for children, young people and their families based on a shared understanding of well-being.
2. A common approach to gaining consent and to sharing information where appropriate.
3. An integral role for children, young people and families in assessment, planning and intervention.

4. An integral role for children, young people and families in assessment, planning and intervention.
5. A co-ordinated and unified approach to identifying concerns, assessing needs, agreeing actions and outcomes, based on the Well-being Indicators.
6. Streamlined planning, assessment and decision-making processes that lead to the right help at the right time.
7. Consistent high standards of co-operation, joint working and communication where more than one agency needs to be involved, locally and across Scotland.
8. A Lead Professional to co-ordinate and monitor multi-agency activity where necessary.
9. Maximising the skilled workforce within universal services to address needs and risks at the earliest possible time.
10. A confident and competent workforce across all services for children, young people and their families.
11. The capacity to share demographic, assessment, and planning information electronically within and across agency boundaries through the national eCare programme where appropriate.

What does GIRFEC means for children and young people?

- Confident that they will get the help they require.
- Understand what is happening to them and why.
- Appropriately involved in discussions and decisions affecting them.
- Know that they have been listened to.
- Experience a streamlined, co-ordinated response from practitioners.

What does GIRFEC means for practitioners?

- Putting the child or young person first.
- Developing a shared understanding with other services/agencies and working closely with them.
- Using common tools and processes.

What does GIRFEC means for managers?

- Providing leadership and strategic support to implement the changes in culture, systems and practice to embrace GIRFEC agenda.
- Planning for the transition as staff move from current working to new child centred processes.

The Wellbeing Indicators

(SHANARRI)

- Safe
- Healthy
- Achieving
- Nurtured
- Active
- Respected
- Responsible
- Included

