

## Getting It Right For Every Child

### Focused on children most at risk, our fundamental purpose is to:

- make effective decisions about a need to refer a child to a Children's Hearing
- enable children and families to participate in Hearings
- provide suitable accommodation for Children's Hearings
- disseminate information and data to inform and influence improved outcomes for children and young people

### What is the "Getting it Right" agenda?

"Getting it Right For Every Child" (GIRFEC) is a programme of change driven by the Scottish Government and designed to ensure that appropriate action is taken for each child. It has the following aims:

- Children and young people get the help they need when they need it and are central to the process of finding solutions.
- Everyone working with children and young people uses a consistent and equitable approach and works more effectively together to improve outcomes for children and young people.
- Everyone is clear of their personal responsibility to do the right thing for each child and how they contribute to the collective responsibility to do the right thing for each child.
- Parents and children benefit from a collaborative approach which results in fewer meetings, requires them to give their information only once, and jointly develops with professionals one plan that will meet all of their needs.
- Agencies and professionals are freed up to get on and respond to children and take appropriate, proportionate and timely action with the minimum of paperwork, bureaucracy and duplication.



## SCRA's role

SCRA has been actively engaged at each stage of the process and will continue to be committed to working with partners both within and outwith the Hearings System to support the implementation of the GIRFEC agenda and to ensure that it produces the best possible outcome for the children who are referred to us.

## The Highland Pathfinder Project

The Pathfinder operates as a partnership between agencies including the Highland Council, Northern Constabulary, and NHS Highland, as well as the Voluntary Sector and SCRA. It is intended to develop and embed the GIRFEC approach.

This means that where any agency or individual has a concern about a child and there is no indication that the child is at risk of harm, a single plan will be produced by a named person, usually in health or education. Other agencies will be brought in as appropriate.

Where a child does appear to need compulsory measures then, the referral is made to the Reporter as part of an integrated multi-agency plan. The Child's Plan becomes the means of supporting the referral, with all agencies involved signed up as 'partners to the plan'.

The evaluation of the Highland Pathfinder was published in November 2009. It found a number of indicators of good progress and of the positive impact that GIRFEC had made on culture and practice. These included:

- More rational and streamlined procedures.
- Growing evidence that children's needs are being identified at an earlier stage and, where required, the appointed Lead Professional is more able as a result of this to get the necessary support in place much more quickly.
- Emerging signs that the role of the Lead Professional is contributing to a more focused response to children's needs and concerns.

Feedback from families and children and young people indicates that they:

- Feel more integrated into the whole process of planning and delivering support and, in the case of parents and carers, feel they have a clearer idea of what they can do to help their children.
- Know they have access to someone with a clearly identified lead role who is responsible for their plan.
- Feel that they are now more aware of when things are happening and what the processes are likely to involve.