

Named Person Service Policy & Procedure

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This document should be used in conjunction with our GIRFEC and Child Protection, Safe Guarding and Well-being Policy.

What is a Named Person?

Most children and young people get all the help and support they need from their parent(s), wider family and community, but sometimes, perhaps unexpectedly, they may need a bit of extra help.

Many parents say that when they need help it's not available and they don't know who to go to. The Named Person ensures that there is someone who is responsible for helping them get the support they need if and when they need it.

Children and young people from birth to 18, or beyond if still in school, and their parents will have access to a Named Person to help them get the support they need.

A Named Person will be a clear point of contact if a child, young person or their parents want information or advice, or if they want to talk about any worries and seek support.

Who will be a Named Person?

A Named Person will normally be the health visitor for a pre-school child and a promoted teacher - such as a Head Teacher, or guidance teacher or other promoted member of staff - for a school age child.

Regius School's Named Person is : Stephen Kennedy, Head Teacher

The Named Person duties are integrated into their current role and strengthen the support they currently provide, formalising their role as a clear contact for children, parents and other people working with them.

In Regius School, the Head-Teacher will be the Named Person and may involve other staff as required or delegate duties to trained staff.

What will the Named Person do?

The Named Person will be available to listen, advise and help a child or young person and their parent(s), provide direct support or help them access other services. For example, the Head Teacher might ask for help from a speech and language therapist, or may put parents in touch with a local bereavement counselling service.

They will also be a point of contact for other services if they have any concerns about a child's or young person's wellbeing.

What happens when help is asked for or a concern is raised?

When the child or young person, their parent(s), or someone who works with them asks for help or raises a concern, a Named Person will carefully consider the situation by asking five questions:

1. What is getting in the way of this child's or young person's wellbeing?
2. Do I have all the information I need to help this child or young person?
3. What can I do now to help this child or young person?
4. What can my agency do to help this child or young person?
5. What additional help, if any, may be needed from others?

The Named Person will discuss this with the child or young person and their parents, and where appropriate, with other professionals, to get the help the child, young person or parents need.

They will then support the child, young person and their parents to access appropriate help. Each situation will be unique to the child or young person, and the way they are supported will be tailored to their individual needs.

The Named Person will only offer advice or support in response to a request from a child or parent, or when a wellbeing need is identified. They can help a child, young person or their parent(s) address their concerns early and in some cases avoid bigger concerns or problems developing.

There is no obligation to accept the offer of advice or support from the Named Person.

Who will provide and support Named Persons?

Local authorities and health boards are the main organisations that have a duty to make sure a Named Person is available to children and young people wherever they live or learn. They will make sure children, young people and parents know about their local Named Person service and what it means for them.

Other organisations, like independent or grant-aided schools, secure accommodation services and the Scottish Prison Service (for the small number of young people held in custody), have a duty to make sure a Named Person is available to the children and young people in their care.

Information about a child's needs, specific circumstances and the help they have already received may be shared with a Named Person and other services if asked to provide additional support.

The child or young person and parent(s) will know what information is being shared, with whom and for what purpose, and their views will be taken into account. This may not happen in exceptional cases, such as where there is a concern for the safety of a child or someone else.

Key facts about the Named Person

A Named Person will be available to children and young people across Scotland from birth to age 18, or beyond if still in school.

This means a child, young person, parent, or someone who works with them, knows who they can approach for help or advice if they need it. A Named Person will normally be a health visitor for pre-school children and a head teacher, guidance teacher or other promoted member of staff for school aged children and young people.

The Named Person will work with children, young people and their parent(s) to get the help they need, when they need it.

A Named Person has a responsibility to respond to a request for help or a concern about a child's or young person's wellbeing but there is no requirement to take up the offer of advice or support. A Named Person does not replace or change the role of a parent or carer. The rights and responsibilities of parents to raise their children and provide for their wellbeing needs stay the same.

The Named Person service will help families and the services that support them to work in partnership.

A Named Person will be a clear point of contact available to parents, children and young people by law to make getting help and advice more straightforward and joined up. There is no obligation to take up the offer of advice or support. Named Persons have no new legal powers to compel parents, children or young people to accept advice, support or help.

Effective communication, including sharing relevant information where appropriate, is essential to ensure children, young people and families get the right help at the right time.

Every child's needs and circumstances are unique and a Named Person will work with a child or young person and their parent(s) to offer the right advice and support. Information about their needs and circumstances may be shared with a Named

Person if it's relevant to understanding what help they may need and it supports their wellbeing, this will be done in discussion with the child and their parent(s), unless there is a child protection concern.

The new law makes good practice the national standard across Scotland to ensure that support is available to all if they need it.

The GIRFEC approach and the Named Person approach already operates in many parts of Scotland. The Named Person service builds on the supportive role teachers and health visitors have long offered to children and parents.

The Named Person is mainly provided by health and education services.

The Named Person will support specialist services, such as social work and mental health services, as they continue to respond to the needs of vulnerable children and families. A Named Person does not remove the responsibilities of others working with children, young people and families or change current child protection procedures. The police and or social work will continue to be contacted immediately if a child is believed to be at risk of significant harm.

The GIRFEC approach makes better use of available resources.

GIRFEC provides a common approach to thinking about wellbeing and co-ordinated planning. This helps to ensure that targeted support is provided where it's required to help a child or young person.

What is GIRFEC?

GIRFEC is the national approach in Scotland to improving outcomes and supporting the wellbeing of our children and young people by offering the right help at the right time from the right people. It supports them and their parent(s) to work in partnership with the services that can help them.

It puts the rights and wellbeing of children and young people at the heart of the services that support them – such as early years services, schools, and the NHS – to ensure that everyone works together to improve outcomes for a child or young person.

What does GIRFEC mean for children, young people and their parent(s)

GIRFEC means:

- You understand what is happening and why.
- You have been listened to carefully and your wishes have been heard, understood and taken into consideration.
- You feel confident about the help you are getting.

- You are appropriately involved in discussions and decisions that affect you.
- You can rely on appropriate help being available as soon as possible.
- You experience a more straightforward and co-ordinated response from the people working with you.

GIRFEC in law

Key elements of the GIRFEC approach are:

- a description of how people working with children, young people and parents understand and consider a child or young person's wellbeing.
- children, young people and families can expect services to work together to provide support and help.
- Children and young people who need extra support which is not generally available will have a Child's Plan.

How does GIRFEC work?

GIRFEC ensures children and young people get consistent and effective support for their wellbeing wherever they live or learn. Making good practice the national standard in Scotland.

This includes:

- a description of how people working with children, young people and parents understand and consider a child or young person's wellbeing;
- making a Named Person available as a clear point of contact for children, young people and parents, who will provide advice, information, and support, and help to access other services if needed; and
- a single planning framework – the Child's Plan – to ensure a consistent approach to how a range of extra support that is not generally available is planned, delivered and coordinated to a child's specific needs and circumstances. This plan is developed in partnership with the child and their parent(s).

Principles behind GIRFEC

The GIRFEC approach:

- **is child-focused.**
It ensures the child or young person – and their family – is at the centre of decision-making and the support available to them.
- **is based on an understanding of the wellbeing of a child.**
It looks at a child or young person's overall wellbeing – how safe, healthy,

achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included they are – so that the right support can be offered at the right time.

- **is based on *tackling needs early*.**

It aims to ensure needs are identified as early as possible to avoid bigger concerns or problems developing.

- **requires *joined-up working*.**

It is about children, young people, parents, and the services they need working together in a coordinated way to meet the specific needs and improve their wellbeing.

Child's Plan

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 ensures a single planning framework – a Child's Plan – will be available for children who require extra support that is not generally available to address a child or young person's needs and improve their wellbeing.

The Child's Plan is part of the GIRFEC approach to promote, support and safeguard the wellbeing of children and young people. The Scottish Government is working with Parliament to agree a timetable to enable commencement in 2018.

What's in a Child's Plan?

Every plan, should include and record:

- information about the child's wellbeing needs including the views of the child and their parent(s);
- details of the action to be taken;
- the service(s) that will provide the support;
- the way in which the support is to be provided;
- the outcome that the plan aims to achieve; and
- when the plan should be reviewed.

A Child's Plan will also record who will coordinate the support. This person is known as the Lead Professional for the plan who will work with the child and their parent(s) to keep them informed.

Who ensures a Child's Plan is working well?

Overall responsibility for delivering a Child's Plan sits with an organisation, such as a health board, local authority or independent school. The [Lead Professional](#) will ensure the Child's Plan is managed properly. The Lead Professional will;

- make sure that the child and their parent(s) understand what is happening at each point so that they can be involved in the decisions that affect them;

- ensure the Child's Plan is accurate, up-to-date, taken forward and reviewed regularly; and
- consult and work with the child's Named Person.

The Lead Professional will be a practitioner who is chosen because they have the right skills and experience to ensure the Child's Plan is taken forward properly, and who can work with the child, their parents, their Named Person and other services supporting the child.

Information about a child's needs, specific circumstances and the help they have already received may be shared with the Lead Professional and other services involved in the Child's Plan. The child and parent(s) will know what information is being shared, with whom and for what purpose, and their views will be taken into account. This may not happen in exceptional cases, such as where there is a concern for the safety of a child or someone else.

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What is a Lead Professional?

Where it has been agreed that a Child's Plan should be prepared there will be a Lead Professional to make sure that the Child's Plan is managed properly and to co-ordinate the support described in the Plan.

What does the Lead Professional do?

The Lead Professional will:

- make sure that the child and their parent(s) understand what is happening at each point so that they can be involved in the decisions that affect them
- ensure the Child's Plan is accurate, up-to-date, implemented and reviewed regularly
- consult and work with the child's Named Person

The Lead Professional will be a practitioner who is chosen because they have the right skills and experience to ensure the Child's Plan is managed properly, and who can work with the child, their parent(s), their Named Person and the other services who support the child. Depending on the situation, including consideration of the child's needs, the Lead Professional and Named Person may be the same person.

Information about a child's needs, specific circumstances and the help they have already received may be shared with the Lead Professional and other services involved in the Child's Plan.

In most circumstances, the child and parent(s) will know what information is being shared, with whom and for what purpose, and their views will be taken into account. This may not happen in exceptional cases, such as where there is a concern for the safety of a child or someone else.

Who can be a Lead Professional?

The Lead Professional will be someone employed by one of the services involved in supporting the child and family. When a Child's Plan is prepared the partners to the plan, including the child and parents where appropriate, will need to consider who is the right person to take on the role of Lead Professional. In making that decision they will need to choose the practitioner who has the right skills and experience, and who can work with the child, the parents, the Named Person and the other services who support the child.

Information sharing

Please note this information is under review and should be read in context of the current Children and Young People (Information Sharing) (Scotland) Bill.

Appropriate sharing of relevant information is a vital part of the early intervention approach that is at the heart of GIRFEC. Sharing the right information at the right time improves outcomes for children, young people and their families and can help prevent concerns growing into problems.

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act provides that information should be shared between services and the Named Person if it is likely to be relevant to promote, support or safeguard the wellbeing of the child. Information to be shared should be discussed with child and family unless there is a specific reason not to i.e. a child protection concern.

Current data protection principles and privacy laws already permit information sharing when it is necessary to prevent or address a risk to wellbeing. These laws apply to all existing information management and data processing by public bodies and those who provide services on their behalf.

Rules for sharing information

By following these 'golden rules' of information sharing, people working with children, young people, families and other professionals can ensure that children and young people have the best outcomes possible:

- Adhere to the [principles of the Data Protection Act 1998](#)
- Share information that is necessary, relevant and proportionate
- Record why information has been requested or shared
- Make the child, young person or family aware of why information is being shared*

**Unless there are child protection concerns.*

Preventing early concerns growing into serious problems

Every inquiry into a child's death in the UK over the last 40 years has found that effective sharing of information within and between agencies is fundamental to improving the protection of children and young people. This was confirmed by the 2001 report, 'It's everyone's job to make sure I'm alright'.

The various inquiries all showed that no single service had a full, clear picture about what was going on in the child's life. In all cases, early indications of a threat to wellbeing had been missed, or hadn't been responded to at the earliest opportunity.

As we are resident in the City of Edinburgh Council area, the documents provided to support our procedures are City of Edinburgh Council Child Planning Documents.