

item:	6
report:	CYP03/08

GETTING IT RIGHT FOR EVERY CHILD

By Marj Stewart

Summary

This report updates members about progress on the development and implementation of '*Getting it right for every child*' in Inverness and Highland.

1. Training and Development

- 1.1 As a result of competing training demands and continuing development of the practitioner guidance, lead professional training was postponed and will now commence on 14th January. The team tested the training over two days in December with a group of key professionals, and as a consequence the material was able to be further enhanced. Training will be delivered in Associated School Groups (ASGs) and will run throughout January and February, and the courses are all full or nearly full, with 240 places having been offered. Further courses will be organised from March as required.
- 1.2 Parallel work is being developed around the ASGs to help embed the GIRFEC processes into practice immediately following the training.
- 1.3 Local practitioner guidance is now at an advanced stage to coincide with the training courses.
- 1.4 The national practitioner guidance is to be based on the Highland model, and is expected to be launched late in January.
- 1.5 Highland business processes have now been mapped by the Business Analysts who have been working with the team, and, subject to 'sign off' by the GIRFEC Chief Officer Group, these will be tested in other local authorities as part of the Scottish Government's 'learning partner' arrangements.

2. Health

- 2.1 The final version of the Public Health element of the child's record has now been produced and training on the changes has been organised for delivery from 16th January 2008 and relevant changes to the public health nurse guidance will follow shortly.
- 2.2 Within health, the lead officer has continued to engage with other key practitioners and agencies to consult and to raise awareness. These sessions have included involvement at: national eHealth meetings and a two day conference; Highland Child and Adolescent Mental Health workshops with more planned for 2008; a meeting with the Scottish Government's Communication's Officer (GIRFEC); and linking with NHS Highland media to ensure dissemination across the NHS.
- 2.3 The health lead has also continued to work with practitioners to identify further areas of required practice change and this will inform the health reference group action plan. This area of work has includes consultation in relation to training needs of staff working within adult services.

3. Education

- 3.1 The education lead in the team has moved to another position within the Council and discussions are underway to secure a replacement. The replacement will work to ensure the assessment framework is embedded into Phoenix E1, and to drive forward and support implementation in schools.
- 3.2 The use of the child concern form (police) within schools has been under discussion and a cross agency working party has been set up, chaired by the GIRFEC police lead to agree on use and follow up.
- 3.3 Discussions have taken place between the Highland GIRFEC team and senior members of the Support for Learning Division (Scottish Government) to confirm compatibility between legislation, national policy and GIRFEC principles and practice, and to broaden and strengthen links across all educational initiatives and guidance.

4. Police

- 4.1 All officers in the Northern Constabulary force area (Highland and Islands) are now using the Child Concern Form operationally to record information where there are care and welfare concerns for a child. Outside Inverness area, information is still shared in existing processes. Within Inverness early figures suggested that 70% of children coming to the attention of the Police for non offending matters were being dealt with by means other than by routine referral to the Children's Reporter. This pattern has remained consistent.
- 4.2 Northern Constabulary has now taken forward practice change in relation to the use of GIRFEC processes for those children who are involved in anti-social and offending behaviour. The IT system needed to support this is nearing completion. In early 2008 training will take place in the Pathfinder area to key members of staff who will cascade train the remaining members of staff in these new processes with a view to making the practice change from March 2008. Work between the Police Lead and the Youth Development Officer will continue to drive this change forward.
- 4.3 ACPOS, in partnership with the Scottish Government, is looking at a national IT solution for a Vulnerable Persons Database which would support the vision and aims of GIRFEC. ACPOS is confident that there is existing software (Sentinel) which is already 80% fit for purpose and would be easily adapted in the future

5. Social Work

- 5.1 The social work lead has been working to support social work operational teams and staff members to use the assessment format and Child's Plan within Carefirst. She is also supporting the development work that will mean that in the near future, e-facilities will be available to enable Children's Hearing reports to be created from these documents without cutting and pasting. Staff have been noting improved ease of use for recording observations and are finding an improvement in quality of recording and planning through the structure of the assessment process.
- 5.2 Discussions have taken place with the Children's Reporter regarding embedding GIRFEC principles into training for panel members. Furthermore, as a pilot, a number of Children's Plans in the new format will be submitted to the Children's Reporter where it has been agreed that referral is necessary.

6. IT

- 6.1 The IT lead officer issued the first draft of the Business Requirements Definition to the Project Board in November. Work is progressing on strengthening the document in terms of security requirements, integration of Child Protection Messaging, and considerations relating to Framework Adaptor configuration.
- 6.2 Identification of appropriate strategic solutions for GIR Pathfinder each partner agency is progressing. The majority of strategic developments are now incorporated within each agency's obligations as part of the Data Sharing Partnership's workstream and monitoring programme.
- 6.3 The IT Lead and Data Sharing Manager are supporting the Transforming Technologies Division of the Scottish Government to ensure the realisation of the benefits that may be anticipated from the eCare messaging framework as part of GIRFEC implementation. This includes work towards scoping development of the next generation of the eCare framework.

7. General Issues

- 7.1 Where the single meetings structure is in use, for example where children and young people who are in need of protection and are also looked after, they and their families are reporting greater satisfaction and understanding of the process, and that they are feeling more involved. Practitioners across the agencies are reporting similar improvements in the planning and therefore their ability to deliver services appropriately and effectively.
- 7.2 The Scottish Government is shortly to launch a series of national (GIRFEC) roadshows to assist other local authorities with their planning and the Highland team will be significantly involved in this, along with the Domestic Abuse pathfinders. As part of this process, the Scottish Government will be making a DVD about the Highland GIRFEC journey for ongoing use across Scotland
- 7.3 Scottish TV intend to feature the GIRFEC developments in Highland as part of a new daily magazine programme, later this month.
- 7.4 A business case has been presented to the Scottish Government in regard to extension to funding to take GIRFEC further forward in Highland, and discussions are ongoing regarding the detail of what is required and what will be expected in regard to outcomes.

8. Conclusion

- 8.1 As Lead Professional training in Inverness begins this month, GIRFEC will move into a different phase – from development to action. While many of the original challenges have been ironed out, some others have yet to be resolved and some answers will only be found as practice changes and as local structures begin to change and groups work through the issues. The GIRFEC professional leads will continue working with all of the agencies to support this change process.

Recommendation

The Joint Committee is invited to note the progress made and to comment on this report.



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