

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: Corporate Policy and Performance

DATE: 14 June 2012

ACTING DIRECTOR: Patricia Cassidy
DIRECTOR Fred McBride

TITLE OF REPORT: Getting it Right for Every Child Policy 2012-15

REPORT NUMBER: ECS/12/028

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide elected members with background information about the national Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) Model and describes the way we have supported the development of the Getting it Right model with our community planning partners in Aberdeen. As a number of directorates in the council provide support and services to children, young people and families directly or indirectly this report seeks council approval for the Aberdeen Getting it Right for Every Child policy.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the committee

- (i) note the details of the national Getting it Right for Every Child Model;
- (ii) endorses our joint Getting it Right for Every Child approach with our community planning partners; and
- (iii) on behalf of the council approves the Getting it Right Policy.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications as a result of this report.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

All departments in the council that deliver services to children and their families directly or indirectly are represented on the Integrated Children's Services Partnership who oversee the implementation of the Getting it Right Model. Some

staff may require further training to understand the new approach. A continuum of training and support for all staff will be developed to support the full implementation of the Getting it Right model.

5. BACKGROUND

5.1 Getting it Right for Every Child is the overarching national policy aimed at improving the outcomes for children and young people. The Getting it Right approach is now reflected in all national legislation, standards and procedures. Getting it Right ensures people working across organisational boundaries work to a common set of values and principles use a common set of assessment tools and contribute to a single planning process to improve the outcomes for children, young people and their families.

5.2 In 2001, the Scottish Executive undertook an extensive audit of services for children and young people and recommended an agenda for change. For Scotland's Children required local authorities, police forces, health boards and voluntary organisations to:

- Consider children's services as a single service system;
- Establish a joint children's services plan;
- Ensure inclusive access to universal services;
- Coordinate needs assessment;
- Coordinate intervention; and
- Target services to meet needs and reduce inequalities

5.3 The Getting it Right model was piloted in four local authorities in Scotland. The pilot programmes tested approaches to improve systems, culture and practice to improve the joint assessment and planning for children and young people. The current national model has provided community planning partners with guidance on how we jointly improve the outcomes for all children and young people in Scotland.

'No matter where they live or whatever their needs, children and families need to know where they can seek help, what help is available, that the help is appropriate to their needs and will be delivered to the highest possible standard.'

5.4 The Getting it Right model gives clear authority and responsibility to agencies and professionals working with children, families and local communities to work together in a way that brings practicality and reality to the vision set out in For Scotland's Children.

The key aims of Getting it Right are to:

- ensure that all services are child centred;
- children get the help they need, when they need it;
- responses to meet the needs of the child are timely, appropriate and proportionate;
- action must improve outcomes for the child;
- the capacity of families and communities to meet the needs of the child are strengthened; and
- practitioners are enabled to spend more time with children and families

It was acknowledged as a result of the pathfinders that implementing the values, principles and core components of Getting it Right would lead to improved outcomes for children and young people and would ensure that resources could be used more effectively and efficiently to meet needs.

5.5 GETTING IT RIGHT FOR EVERY CHILD IN ABERDEEN

Aberdeen has been working to implement Getting it Right since 2006. An Integrated Assessment Framework was piloted in Dyce, the local Integrated Assessment Framework and Single Planning Process and Operational Guidance was developed, and multi agency training and guidance was delivered between July 2007 and April 2009.

- 5.6 The Integrated Children's Services Team continued to draw together and expand the training and development programme and to further revise processes, policies, procedures and to develop local practice tools to ensure that learning from the national pathfinders was taken into account to ensure Getting it Right for Every Child as an approach could be mainstreamed by all key partner organizations by March 2013.
- 5.7 In 2010 the Integrated Children's Services (ICS) Partnership, which provides the joint governance for the implementation of Getting it Right for Every Child, agreed that implementing and embedding the Getting it Right approach would be critical to enabling us to achieve our vision for children and young people and would be the model that all agencies and services will follow in the city.
- 5.8 The ICS Partnership agreed to further develop our local approach to take account of the learning from the national pathfinders and also a number of the improvement actions from INEA2, SWIA Substance Misuse Inspection, SWIA Performance Inspection, and the HMIE Child Protection Inspections. All partner agencies agreed to fully adopt the national Getting it Right model and have worked together to produce new joint Getting it Right for Every Child Guidance.

5.9 GETTING IT RIGHT POLICY 2012 - 15

The Getting it Right model will be used for all children. Most children make their way from birth to the world of work with only the support of their family and the universal (health and education) services. A small number of children (between twenty and thirty percent) will need more help and the Getting it Right approach will ensure that the most vulnerable children or young people and their families who need additional support get the appropriate, proportionate and timely help, as speedily as possible.

The Getting it Right Practice Model and operational guidance has been developed jointly by all the public, private and third sector agencies for all staff who work with children and families directly or indirectly in the city.

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL'S GETTING IT RIGHT POLICY 2012 -2015

We are committed to improving the outcomes for all Aberdeen's children and young people, in particular, those who are most vulnerable. We will embed the Getting it Right approach in our planning and service delivery to enable us to achieve our vision for children and young people. We will work with all partner agencies and services in the city to ensure we follow the national Getting it Right model.

Our Getting it Right approach is underpinned by values and principles which apply across all aspects of working with children and young people and their families. They reflect the rights of children as expressed in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and they build on the Scottish Children's Charter (2004).

The Getting it Right Principles

- Promote the well-being of individual children and young people.- This is based on understanding how children and young people develop in their families and communities and addressing their needs at the earliest possible time.
- Keep children and young people safe - Emotional and physical safety is fundamental and is wider than child protection.
- Put the child at the centre - children and young people should have their views listened to and they should be involved in decisions that affect them
- Take a whole child approach -Recognise that what is going on in one part of a child or young person's life can affect many other areas of his or her life.
- Build on strengths and promoting resilience - Use a child or young person's

existing networks and support where possible.

- Promote opportunities and value diversity - Children and young people should feel valued in all circumstances and practitioners should create opportunities to celebrate diversity.
- Provide additional help that is appropriate, proportionate and timely - Provide help as early as possible and considering short and long-term needs.
- Support informed choice - Support children, young people and families in to understand what help is possible and what their choices may be.
- Work in partnership with families - Support, wherever possible, those who know the child or young person well, know what they need, what works well for them and what may not be helpful.
- Respect confidentiality and sharing information - Seeking agreement to share information that is relevant and proportionate while safeguarding children and young people's right to confidentiality.
- Promote the same values across all working relationships – Recognise respect, patience, honesty, reliability, resilience and integrity are qualities valued by children, young people, their families and colleagues
- Make the most of bringing together each worker's expertise - Respect the contribution of others and co-operating with them, recognise that sharing responsibility does not mean acting beyond a worker's competence or responsibilities.
- Co-ordinate help -Recognise that children, young people and their families need practitioners to work together, when appropriate, to provide the best possible help
- Build a competent workforce to promote children and young people's well-being - Ensuring individual learning and development and improvement in interagency practice to support the process.

Getting it Right Core Components

Getting it Right for Every Child is founded on 10 core components. These are:

- Focusing on improving outcomes for children, young people, and their families based on a shared understanding of well being.
- Establishing a common approach to gaining consent and to sharing information where appropriate.
- Actively promoting the involvement of children, young people and families in

assessment, planning and intervention.

- Taking a co-ordinated and unified approach to identifying concerns, assessing needs, agreeing actions and outcomes, based on the wellbeing indicators.
- Streamlining planning, assessment and decision making processes leading to the right help being available at the right time.
- Modeling high standards of co-operation, joint working and communication where more than one agency needs to be involved.
- Establishing a lead professional to co-ordinate and monitor of multi-agency activity.
- Maximising the use of the skills of the workforce within universal services to address needs and risks as early as possible.
- Supporting staff to become confident and competent in their delivery of service to children, young people and their families; and
- Sharing demographic, assessment, and planning information appropriately.

Our practice model will be based on using professional experience and skills to assess children's needs and to maximise the support that we offer and deliver to children, and their families.

Key Roles and Responsibilities

Everyone who works with a child or young person has a responsibility to ensure the child or young person is safe, and supported to achieve their full potential.

To Get it Right for Aberdeen's Children and to ensure that when there are concerns about a child it is clear who is responsible for ensuring that support is offered, two roles have been agreed, the Named Person and the Lead Professional. Every child and young person will have a named person from either health or education services.

The Named Person

The named person is responsible for making sure that every child or young person has the right support in place to maintain their wellbeing and to encourage them to reach their developmental potential across each key life stage. These are not new responsibilities and are within the existing responsibilities of health practitioners, head teachers or members of the senior management or pastoral team in a secondary school.

The named person is allocated according to the child's contact with the universal services.

Age of child	Professional assuming the role of named person	Timescale of responsibility
Pre-birth until 10 days old	Community midwife	During pregnancy until day 10 following the birth.
11 days old until first day at primary school	Health visitor	From day eleven following the birth until the first day at primary school. A child born after 1 March 2007 whose parents or carers decide to home educate will be retained by the Health Visitor.
Primary School	Head teacher or nominated member of the school's management Team.	From the first day in primary 1 until the first day they attend in secondary 1, The responsibility is not affected by non attendance.
Secondary School	The head teacher or an agreed member of the school's management team.	From the first day at secondary school until leaving school. This responsibility is not affected by non-attendance.
Children or young people who are excluded or removed from role	Head teacher or nominated member of the school's management team.	

The Lead Professional

Where an assessment and plan for a child or young person involves practitioners from two or more agencies in delivering actions, one of these practitioners will be appointed as the Lead Professional.

The choice of the lead professional will be agreed taking account of the views of the child and family, the kind of support that the child needs, the complexity of the plan, previous contact and/or relationship with the child or family and if there are statutory responsibilities.

Where a child is looked after or whose name is on the child protection register, the lead professional will always be a social worker.

Child or Young Person's Views

We all have a statutory duty to proactively seek and take account of the views of the child or young person and their family. We will ensure that the child or young person's views are included in all assessment or planning.

The Getting it Right Tools

The Getting it Right model and tools will be used by all practitioners who are in contact with children or young people and those in adult services where the adults are parents. The model will be used on both a single and multi-agency basis.

We will ensure that in order to deliver the appropriate intervention we will be alert to young people's wellbeing, development and behaviour and will keep an up to date chronology that is regularly reviewed. We will use the Well Being Wheel, My World Triangle and Resilience Matrix to support all assessment and planning.

We will use common language and common terms that we can explain to children, young people and their families. All meetings involving people from different services or agencies may be called a multi agency meeting. Some meetings may be specifically named by function e.g. Child Protection Case Conference, LAC Review, Core Group.

We will use a consistent approach to recording and sharing of confidential information.

We will support staff to embed the approach in their practice through continual professional development, training and guidance and we will further enhance the profile of Getting it Right policy and practice approach to parents and young people.

We will amend all existing policies and processes to align with the national Getting it Right model and implement systematic self evaluation to ensure the approach is embed, practice is improved and outcomes for children and their families are achieved.

6. IMPACT

- 6.1 The implementation of the Getting it Right Policy should improve the outcomes for all children and young people but particularly for those with the most needs. There are no implications for the environment, health and safety, property, and or equipment contained within this report. There will be a requirement for all services to review policies to ensure they align with the Getting it Right model.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Children (Scotland) Act 1995
- National Care Standards
- For Scotland's children

- Getting it Right for Every Child
- A Curriculum for Excellence
- Additional Support For Learning 2004

8. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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