

What is the GIRFEC approach?

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.

Most children get all the support and help they need from their parent(s), wider family and local community, in partnership with services like health and education. Where extra support is needed, the GIRFEC approach aims to make that support easy to access and seamless, with the child at the centre.

It is for all children and young people because it is impossible to predict if or when they might need extra support.

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.

Further information

Other information leaflets in this series include **Understanding Wellbeing, Named Person** and **Child's Plan**.

For more information on Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) visit: www.gov.scot/girfec

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getting
it right
for every child

Getting it right for every child

Promoting, supporting and safeguarding the wellbeing of children and young people

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 is about improving the wellbeing of children and young people in Scotland. The Act is wide ranging and includes key parts of the *Getting it right for every child* approach, commonly known as GIRFEC.



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 central 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).

Parents are, with very few exceptions, the best people to raise their children. Nothing in the Act changes parents' rights and responsibilities.



What does GIRFEC mean for me?

For children, young people and their parent(s) it 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.

For people working in children and adult services it means:

- the child or young person is at the centre of your work, understanding what their unique needs are and how you can help.
- You use common tools, language and processes to consider a child or young person's wellbeing, working closely with them, their parent(s) and other professionals, supporting them where appropriate.
- You feel confident that you have the right information to provide the best support you can to a child or young person and their parent(s).

Getting it right across Scotland

Services and community organisations across Scotland already use the GIRFEC approach to ensure the way they support children, young people and their parents is consistent and effective.

The GIRFEC approach is not new and has grown over a number of years from the practice of health and education professionals, and feedback from the children and families they support.

