

What does the Scottish Government's recent announcement on Getting it right for every child mean?

On 19 September 2019 John Swinney, Deputy First Minister, made a statement to the Scottish Parliament which will be of interest to everyone who works with children and families. You can find the details of his statement here –

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/getting-right-child/>

In his statement the Deputy First Minister reaffirmed the Scottish Government's commitment to Getting it right for every child as Scotland's approach to helping ensure that children get the right support at the right time.

The [GIRFEC Practice Panel's report](#) and the [Government's response](#) were also published alongside the statement. In light of the Panel's findings and recent changes to the legislative landscape, the Scottish Government will no longer pursue legislation to underpin the named person and child's plan. Instead Government will work with partners to build on current good practice within existing legislation. This approach has also been endorsed by senior leaders responsible for standards and practice in health, social work, social care and education in an [open letter](#) published in October.

What this means for the named person service and child's plan

The named person and child's plan provisions within the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 have not been commenced. As this law has never been in force, this does not affect the existing named person or child's plan practice, only the legislation that would have made it law.

Across Scotland, families are already benefitting from having a named person who can offer help and support to children and families when they need it. Scottish Government is fully supportive of current named person practice being delivered in line with existing laws and guidance on data protection, confidentiality, human rights and other relevant rules of law.

Health visitors and senior teachers in Scotland will be supported to continue to fulfil a named person role within their current wider remit so that more families can benefit from a professional contact who is accessible and responsive when families want or need advice, information or support.

Child plans are also being used across children's services and have been well received. Children and families are already benefitting from practitioners working closer together in a coordinated way to support children in all aspects of their wellbeing.

Child plans and named person services will be supported and promoted as part of the upcoming refresh of the GIRFEC policy and practice refresh.

What this means for Information Sharing practice

The key priority for Scottish Government is how best to support and promote good practice so that practitioners can confidently handle information in a way that respects the rights of the individual and ensures that children, young people and families get the help they need.

Practitioners should be assured that if they have a genuine concern about a child's wellbeing, they can share relevant information if it is lawful and proportionate in order to help a child to get the right help, from the right service at the right time. Any such information sharing must be carried out in a manner which complies with the relevant rules of law, such as data protection, human rights, and confidentiality.

Scottish Government will now work with stakeholders to develop a suite of products to support and promote good, proportionate and lawful information sharing practice. This will include further training and guidance for practitioners and more information for children and families about how their personal data will be handled.