

"In a Nutshell" – Overview of Child Welfare (SW01)

GIRFEC – Getting it Right for Every Child

This principle, introduced in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, formalised the involvement of school staff, as part of many agencies, in helping to maintain children's wellbeing, using eight indicators - safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included – often known as SHANARRI. There has been much legal challenge to GIRFEC, principally concerned at information sharing. However, school staff are uniquely placed to identify concern about a pupil. For this reason, Edinburgh Steiner School follows the principles of GIRFEC.

Most children get all the help and support they need from their parents/carers, wider family and their community. The school plays a role in this, usually on an informal basis. For the vast majority of pupils, the GIRFEC approach would not be required or appropriate.

From time to time situations can arise when a pupil needs more support, and this may include for example the use of additional services from specialist providers like healthcare. In this situation parents would be offered the opportunity to develop a 'child's plan' with their teacher to co-ordinate the support to meet their child's needs. The Kindergarten Teacher, Class Teacher or Guardian would take the role of the 'Lead Professional' in this process and a 'Named Person' from the school would help co-ordinate the support needed. Legal terms are defined in the full policy, and legislation is also summarised there.

Child Protection

'Child protection' means protecting a child from child abuse or neglect. Abuse or neglect need not have taken place; it is sufficient for a risk assessment to have identified a likelihood or risk of significant harm from abuse or neglect.

All Child Protection situations are different. Although all staff have child protection awareness training, they should not hesitate to ask for support from the Child Protection Team. Trust your gut – feelings are an excellent guide.

Implementation

We have several linked policies in this area: principally SW03 – Child Protection and SW04 – GIRFEC.

Every member of staff has a responsibility for wellbeing: take time to **know the policies** and **keep alert** to signs that pupils may need some support or help.

Pupils are encouraged to raise concerns about their own wellbeing. Parents are advised that it is legitimate for them to express concerns to the Named Person / Child Protection Team, or a member of Management Group if they feel that a child's welfare is suffering or they may be being abused or at risk of harm.