

Dumfries and Galloway

GIRFEC Processes

Guidance for Named Persons

Communicating the function of named person to parents/carers

This guidance is for staff who hold the function of named person. We have produced it in response to queries raised through the GIRFEC Practice Log about how to inform parents about the function of named person.

The purpose of this guidance is to:

- Clarify how the function of named person is currently communicated to parents/carers in Dumfries and Galloway.
- Provide named persons with a 'script' that they can use when explaining the function to parents/carers.

How we currently communicate the function of named person

Pre-school children:

There is information about the named person and the 2014 Children and Young People Act within the Red Book that is issued to all parents at the Primary Birth Visit by the Health Visitor at 11 – 14 days after the child's birth.

When a Health Visitor first meets a parent, part of the discussion involves advising the parent that the Health Visitor fulfils the function of named person.

Primary school children and Secondary School Children:

For both primary and secondary schools, information about the named person, and how to contact them, will be in the school handbook and should also be included on the school website.

In primary school, the named person will often be the Head Teacher.

In secondary school the named person will often be a Principal Teacher with a pupil support role.

Key points that can be used when explaining the role to parents/carers

- The named person is the main contact within universal services for the child and their family on the child's journey from birth to adulthood.
- The function of named person was developed in Scotland following consultation with parents. Parents said that when they needed help, they were not always clear what help was available and who to go to. The named person ensures that parents have a single point of contact who will help them get the support they need, if or when they need it.
- Health Visitors and teachers have always been the main contacts for parents depending on the age of the child. The function of 'named person' formalises the role that Health Visitors and teachers have traditionally carried out. It means that a child, young person or their parents have a named individual who they can go to if they want information or advice, or if they want to talk about any worries and seek support.
- The named person function is there if needed, but children and families do not have to make use of their named person, and many children and their families will never need to do so.
- The function of the named person does not undermine or challenge the parental role – the aim is to assist parents to get help for their children if they need it.
- The 'named person service' is part of our GIRFEC approach and how we support children in Dumfries and Galloway. This includes:
 - Carrying out assessments of children's needs.
 - Using Requests for Assistance to seek additional support for the child from other services or agencies if this is needed.
 - As required, sharing relevant, proportionate information about the child. Any sharing would be undertaken within existing legislation and guidance.
 - Developing a Child's Plan to meet the needs of the child.

For further support:

Named persons and other practitioners can contact GIRFECPracticeLog@dumgal.gov.uk for advice on GIRFEC-related issues or to log any practice issues.