

## Getting it Right for Every Child – Next Steps

Margaret Curran, Minister for Parliament has announced a number of legislative reforms supporting the delivery of services for children across Scotland that will have a positive and lasting impact on the way services are delivered and the role children and young people have to play in this. The proposals affect everyone who is directly or indirectly involved in working with children – and co-ordination of reforms is critical to the care, protection, support and life chances of Scotland's children.

The Minister's statement on the legislative programme includes a decision to proceed with the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Bill that sets out provisions to improve the protection of vulnerable groups by preventing those who are unsuitable to work with children and adults at risk from doing so. It will also put in place the legislative framework required to deliver the new vetting and barring scheme recommended by Bichard and to make other necessary changes to procedures to further tighten protection. It is also planned to include provision for information sharing to protect children at risk

Ministers have also announced that they will consult on legislation to support the implementation of **Getting it Right for Every Child**. Consultation on a draft Children's Services Bill will take place later in the year with a view to the introduction of legislation early in the next Parliamentary Session. The legislation will establish the framework for reforming children's services and for strengthening and modernising the Children's Hearing's system.

In a statement following the announcement, Peter Peacock, Minister for Education and Young People has reaffirmed that the child should be at the heart of what everyone does and that children, young people, families and carers should get the help they need when they need it. Mr Peacock said, "These reforms are vital to ensure that children get the support they need to cope with the challenges of life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century."

Views given in response to the **Getting it Right for Every Child: Proposals for Action (June 2005)** consultation are being taken into account as part of the implementation of the reforms and there has been widespread support for the reform proposals. Copies of the Analysis of Consultation Responses are available on the website [www.scotland.gov.uk/publications/2006/03/13105254](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/publications/2006/03/13105254) along with the report into children's views on advocacy.

Ministers recognise that these reforms are complex and far-reaching. They depend not just on legislation but mainly on helping agencies to change systems, work closely together and support practice change to the benefit of the child. The Scottish Executive is keen to support agencies to implement the proposals contained in **Getting it Right for Every Child**. A single assessment, record and plan is currently being developed that will reduce bureaucracy and free up more time for working with the child. Additional tools and practical support will also be provided to assist practitioners and enable more direct work with children, young people, families and carers.

As part of this activity, a 'Pathfinder' project has been established in Highland to identify how to overcome the barriers to change, scope and develop the support needed by way of tools and training, and to inform how best to achieve practice change. Information about the Pathfinder project is available at [www.highland.gov.uk/yourcouncil/newsreleases/2006/May/2006-05-22-04](http://www.highland.gov.uk/yourcouncil/newsreleases/2006/May/2006-05-22-04)

Additional Pathfinders are being considered in other areas to explore particular aspects of the **Getting it Right for Every Child** implementation and identify new ways of working. The Pathfinders are expected to last for a couple of years. They will be evaluated as part of the development of **Getting it Right for Every Child** and to highlight lessons for wider dissemination.

The plan is ambitious. Legislative changes will require the development of guidance and training materials and will take time to implement. But significant practice change should start now, informed by the pathfinders. We know a great deal is already taking place and that good practice models exist across the country. The Scottish Executive is keen to work with partners to harness the best, do more of it and work in a smarter way to make a real difference to the lives of children across Scotland.

For further information about the implementation of Getting it Right for Every Child, please contact Boyd McAdam at [boyd.mcadam@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:boyd.mcadam@scotland.gsi.gov.uk)

For further information about the Pathfinder project, please contact Marie Tulbure at [marie.tulbure@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:marie.tulbure@scotland.gsi.gov.uk)

For further information about the progress of legislation, please contact David Thomson at [david.thomson@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:david.thomson@scotland.gsi.gov.uk)