

Single-Agency Identifying and Assessing Wellbeing Needs Guidance for Schools

The purpose of this guidance is to support schools to identify when a single agency assessment and plan is required, and to guide them through that process. This Education guidance will provide education practitioners with the support they need to identify concerns, initiate an assessment, and gather information to support the planning to improve the outcomes for children and young people.

Introduction

[Getting it Right for Every Child](#) is the national policy approach aimed at promoting the wellbeing of all children and young people in Scotland. *The Getting It Right* approach supports a staged process to the early identification and assessment of wellbeing needs, meeting these through a range of supports which is proportionate and helps to achieve positive outcomes for children, young people and families.

Support

Support is either *Universal* (core support from Education) *Generally Available* (extra help routinely available through wider Universal Services), or *Targeted Support/Intervention* (either through provision of targeted support/resources via Universal Services or involvement of a Targeted/Specialist Service).



Aberdeenshire are fully committed to embedding GIRFEC at the heart of their policies and services. Multi-agency GIRFEC Guidance and resources can be found on the [GIRFEC Website](#).

Children and Young People's Rights

Children and young people's human rights are at the heart of GIRFEC practice. The UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act came into Scottish law in January 2024. The Act provides a rights-based framework to uphold the rights of children and young people and to take their views into account in decisions that affect them.

Involving and Listening to Children and Young People

The **Lundy Model of Child Participation** provides a way of conceptualising a child's right to participation, as laid down in Article 12 of the UNCRC and should be used to support them to share their views and for these views to be considered in decisions that affect them.

The four elements of the Lundy model as seen on the next page, have a rational chronological order:

Space: Children must be given space, inclusive opportunities to form and express their view

Voice: Children must be facilitated to express their view

Audience: The view must be listened to

Influence: The view must be acted upon, as appropriate

Further information on the Lundy Model can be found on the [Queen's University of Belfast website](#)



Lundy Model of Child Participation



Lundy's Model of Participation as included in Ireland's National Strategy on Children and Young People's Participation in Decision-Making 2015-2023

One Good Adult

All adults who work with children and young people should strive to offer reliable, kind, hopeful and supportive relationships to the children and young people they work with. The One Good Adult Job Description was developed from what children and young people said characterises adults who support them well, and as such, is a helpful tool for schools to consider in their transition planning processes. Full details on the implementation of this can be found within the NHS Education for Scotland (NES) [One Good Adult Implementation Guidance](#).

Children and Young People's Wellbeing

A child or young person's wellbeing is influenced by everything around them, and will change at different points of their life, depending on their developmental needs and the risk and protective factors across a range of contexts. Concerns for a child or young person's wellbeing may arise due to their own individual growth and development, wider environmental factors, or from the impact of a family member or other significant person's circumstances.

When a wellbeing concern is identified or raised in relation to a child or young person, the **5 GIRFEC questions** should be asked:

1. What is getting in the way of this child or young person's wellbeing?
2. Do I have all the information I need to help this child or young person?
3. What can I do now to help this child or young person?



4. What can my service or organisation do to help this child or young person?
5. What additional help, if any, may be needed from others?

Most children make their way from birth to young adulthood needing nothing more than the help available from families, local communities, and universal school supports and therefore do not go beyond question 4 above. For a small minority more acute levels of need or risk exist. These children and young people can require higher levels of targeted support to be coordinated on either a single or multi-agency basis.

When a Single Agency Assessment is Needed

Sometimes a single agency assessment is required to clarify the factors giving rise to a wellbeing need, and the plans required to meet that need.

The factors giving rise to Wellbeing Needs generally fall within the following broad categories:

- Learning environment, e.g. Dyslexia friendly approaches not embedded, Total Communication approach not in place, etc.
- Family circumstances, e.g. adverse childhood experiences, care experienced, interrupted learning, young carer, Gypsy/Traveller community, etc.
- Disability or health, e.g. hearing or visual impairment, speech disorder, autism spectrum disorder, physical or mental health need, etc.
- Social and emotional factors, e.g. bereavement, social and emotional behavioural needs, experiencing bullying behaviour, etc.

A Wellbeing Need describes what is required to address what is actually required to overcome and/or minimise the impact. This could be class, school or cluster-based levels of support, or require input from partner agencies. An effective assessment requires an understanding of both the underlying factors and the resulting Wellbeing Need.

The above information would be documented within a single agency assessment when the situation is complex and/or enduring and requires further analysis and planning beyond what would usually take place within everyday teaching and learning. A single agency assessment is holistic and may consider factors from any aspect of the child or young person’s life beyond the scope of an Individualised Educational Programme (IEP).

Single or Multi-Agency Child’s Plan

Most children or young people’s needs can be met through an education single agency Child/Young Person’s Plan. There would usually be an expectation that a single agency assessment has been carried out prior to submitting a [Request for Assistance](#) from another agency.

Tools for Identifying and Assessing Wellbeing Needs

Assessment should be on-going, holistic, and consider contributing factors at the level of the individual child or young person, the school, the home and the community. The overarching aim of an assessment is to identify strengths and protective factors, as well as the vulnerabilities and risks. A robust and accurate assessment will allow practitioners to identify what interventions are needed to improve the wellbeing of that child or young person.

Chronologies

The analysis of a chronology can be helpful to build a more detailed picture of the factors underpinning a child or young person’s wellbeing needs. Information on Education Chronologies can be found within the Aberdeenshire [Education Single-Agency Chronology Guidance](#).

When analysing a chronology, it is important to systematically analyse the whole chronology, i.e. not just entries since the child/young person joined that school (where applicable) and consider the following:

- Are there any patterns emerging – in terms of resilience and vulnerability?



- What impact have previous interventions had?
- Have there been multiple school moves?
- Is there missing information from the chronology?

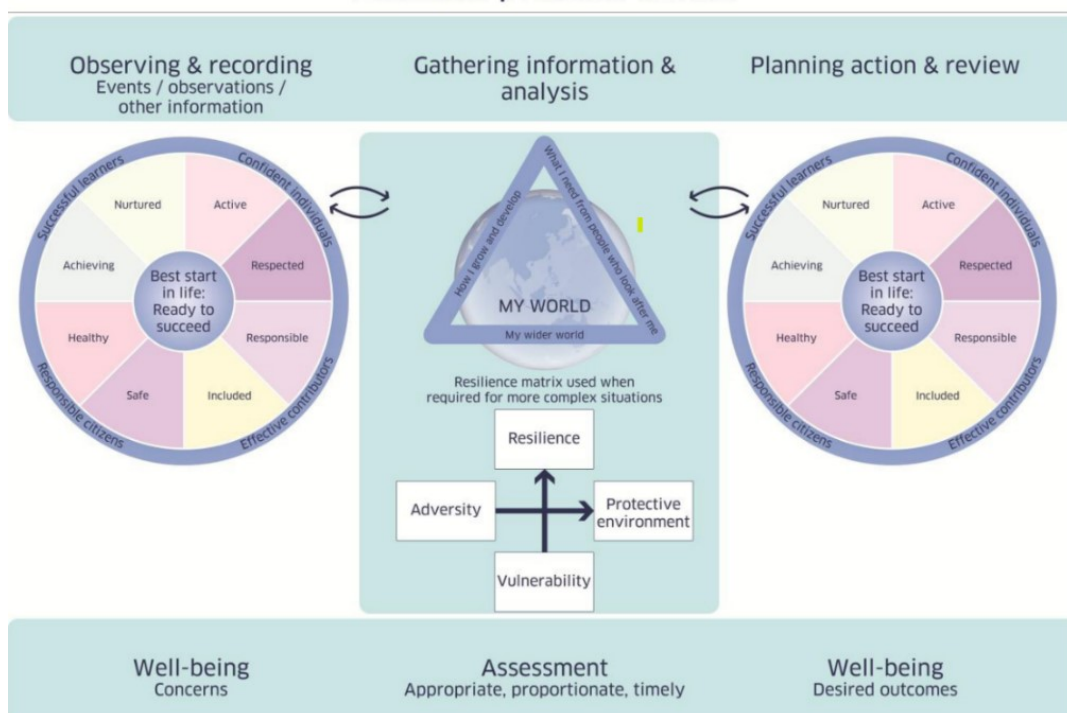
Further information can be found within the [ALDO](#) multi-agency GIRFEC module [Assessment and Chronologies](#)

National Practice Model

The [National Practice Model](#) helps us to identify concerns and undertake an assessment of need. It consists of the four elements outlined below:

- The [Wellbeing Indicators](#) which are used to frame relevant observations/recording and help highlight information that indicates specific areas of strength, need or concern.
- The [My World Triangle](#) which supports holistic assessment of a child or young person’s situation, by gathering and analysing information in the context of their wider world, in acknowledgement of connections between the different areas in a child or young person’s life.
- The [Resilience Matrix](#) which supports analysis of assessment information and looks at what impact this has on that individual child or young person, by considering the balance of resilience and strength factors against adversity, vulnerability, and risk.
- [Planning, action and review](#) where a child or young person needs extra help beyond the support *generally available* from Universal Services; and where one or more *Targeted Interventions* will be in place, a Child’s Plan should be considered (single or multi agency).

National practice model



Documents to Support Assessment

The following documents do not need to be used prescriptively but can aid individual practitioners in their thinking and may also be useful as a frame of reference in Child’s Plan meetings.

[Appendix A, Identifying and Assessing Wellbeing Needs using the Wellbeing Indicators](#), details key questions that should be considered when assessing the areas of strength, needs and concerns within each of the 8 Wellbeing Indicators.



[Appendix B, Identifying and Assessing Wellbeing Needs using the My World Triangle](#), details Education specific My World Triangle questions to consider.

Documenting a Single Agency Assessment

Following the consideration of the key Wellbeing Indicator questions, the education specific My World Triangle questions and the Resilience Matrix, where appropriate and required, concise information on the strengths, needs and concerns for the child or young person should be documented in the “**Education Child/Young Person’s Assessment**”, [Appendix C](#).

Child’s Plan Meetings

All assessment information should be documented in the “**Education Child/Young Person’s Assessment**”, [Appendix C](#) and brought to the Child/Young Person’s Plan meeting and shared with the child/young person and their family, who will also have relevant information to contribute. A plan to meet wellbeing needs should be developed and agreed by all parties. The expected outcome of each action on the plan should be clearly stated.

The GIRFEC “Record of Meeting” and “Child’s Plan” templates should be used when this is an Education Single Agency or a Multi-Agency Child/Young Person’s Plan meeting. Templates can be access on [VIVA Arcadia](#) or the [Aberdeenshire GIRFEC](#) website.

A Child/Young Person’s Plan is a working document that should be subject to an ongoing evaluation and review, with formal reviews taking place between 6 weeks to 6 months. The first review should occur within 3 months.

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