Information Sharing
Submission from the committee of the Scottish Guidance Association, on behalf of our members

As Guidance Teachers (other terms may cover the same role eg Pastoral Support), who are expected to undertake the role of Named Person, we are pleased that we are now being consulted, and involved in the processes around GIRFEC. We are reassured that the government intends to introduce a standardised checklist and guide for professionals to use. Since its inception, Guidance Teachers have been largely supportive of the principles underpinning GIRFEC. However, the lack of consistency and clear direction from leaders, has caused anxiety, frustration and unmanageable workload issues within the profession. It is heartening, then, to be able to take an active part in this stage of the process.

While we have been assured that the legal responsibility lies with the Named Person Service, we are keen to have clear and distinct guidelines, as it is hard to envisage a situation in which we would not be held accountable.

We are also concerned as to how best practice is going to be shared with frontline professionals. We envisage the need for extensive and ongoing training. Time would require to be made available for this, as it is of considerable importance, and cannot be shoehorned into the already full working day of a Guidance Teacher. Having consulted with our members, we are in favour of online training. Ideally, this would take us through scenarios, and give feedback which reassures us that we are following protocol. We would also appreciate a helpline, or online presence, which allows us to access help, should we require it.

We would like to see CPD packs provided, with worked scenarios, particularly those which are not straightforward, so that we can develop our confidence. These would require to relate to the three main stages of pre-school, primary school and secondary school.

A step-by-step summary, in the form of a flow diagram, would be really helpful, as an aide memoire. Bulky notes are not conducive to effective decision making during a case.

Although the issue of workload relates to GIRFEC in general, and not purely to Information Sharing, we would like to see this acknowledged and addressed.