

## How GIRFEC worked for Kyle

### **This example shows how having a Named Person at school helped Kyle and his family through a difficult time**

Eight-year-old Kyle had started bullying other children in the playground. This wasn't like him at all, and when asked about the incidents he became either sullen or tearful.

He was taken to the head teacher's office, where he became very upset and said that his step-dad had hit his mum, and left the family home.

The head teacher – as Kyle's **Named Person** – decided that treating this as a 'school' problem may not achieve the best outcome for Kyle. In order to get a better picture of why Kyle was upset and hurting other children – and to provide better support – she got in touch with his mum.

Kyle's mum confirmed that the relationship with Kyle's step-dad – which had been difficult for a while – had broken down. She said she was worried about how Kyle was coping. He had no contact with his biological father, but a good relationship with his step-dad and already wanted to know when he'd be seeing him again. She was concerned about the incidents at school, and at home she said Kyle had become quietly defiant, refusing to follow instructions, fighting with her about homework and making a fuss when he had to go to school. This was all very out of character as he had always enjoyed school before.

She also explained that both she and Kyle had been quite badly affected by the death of her mother earlier in the year. Kyle's gran had been very involved in looking after Kyle and he had often stayed with her at weekends.

While the head teacher's main aim was to support Kyle in school, taking a *Getting it right for every child* approach meant she could also consider how she could get help and support for the whole family.

With agreement from Kyle's mum, the head teacher got in touch with Women's Aid, who were able to support the family with advice about domestic abuse, and about safe future contact with Kyle's step-dad.

Back at school, the head teacher set up a review of Kyle's needs with his class teacher – who already had a good relationship with Kyle. With Kyle's mum's agreement, the class teacher used the 'My World Triangle' to structure a discussion with Kyle about his worries, and his recent behaviour in the playground. This allowed Kyle to talk about all aspects of his life – in school, at home and in the wider community.

Both agreed that he hadn't been achieving to his full potential that term, and had been angry with some of his class mates. Kyle agreed that some extra support for a short time might help him get back on track with his

work and his friendships. It was clear that the death of his gran and the loss of his step-dad had made him feel sad, angry and confused.

After a further discussion with his mum, the head teacher agreed to include Kyle in the school's next [Seasons for Growth](#) group. This is where children can get more support if they have experienced bereavement or loss. Kyle's mum asked if he could start going to a breakfast club, run by a learning assistant he knew and liked. She felt this might encourage Kyle to get ready for school, and could help take some of the stress out of their mornings.

Kyle's class teacher adjusted his class work to consolidate some aspects of literacy where Kyle was less confident – and Kyle agreed to work with a 'buddy' in the playground to help him manage his behaviour.

Kyle's mum got a copy of the plan and advice on how to support her son at home. Everyone agreed to review the plan after four weeks. During this time, the head teacher updated Kyle's pupil progress record and noted a summary of significant events, as part of a chronology.

Four weeks later at the review meeting, the class teacher reported that Kyle seemed happier in class and she hadn't heard about any more problems in the playground. She felt that the buddying arrangement was no longer needed. Kyle said he was getting on better with some of his friends, and liked going to the breakfast club. Kyle's mum said she felt a bit more relaxed, and had had a helpful visit from Women's Aid. She had a number to call if she needed them again.

It was agreed that the school would continue to support Kyle as planned, but there wouldn't be any more meetings unless things changed. Kyle's mum knew that she could contact the head teacher at any time if she had any concerns.

By being proactive and involving Kyle and his mum in discussions when Kyle first started to show signs of difficulty, the head teacher was able to put in place low-level support at school that prevented an escalation of the problems Kyle was having at school. Putting Kyle's mum in touch with Women's Aid was also part of her role as Named Person.

The situation also persuaded the head teacher that her staff might benefit from some refresher training about the impact of domestic abuse on children.

From the Scottish Government website

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Young-People/gettingitright/resources/case-studies/kyle>