

1st December 2003

Children's services will not improve with a 'one size fits all' approach

In its response to the children's green paper, Every Child Matters, Northgate today welcomed the government's focus on prevention and early intervention, but warned against imposing a 'one size fits all' approach to identification, referral and tracking (IRT) on local authorities.

Speaking today, Dave Meaden, managing director of Northgate public services said:

"Northgate warmly welcomes this green paper as a joined up and holistic approach to delivering the safety and well-being of our children. Our concern is that an over-reliance on structures may inhibit the development of innovative solutions at the front line. The government should recognise the value of incremental change and partnership as a more effective method of transformation than the traditional 'big bang' approach.

We hope that the government's children's bill will pave the way to allow flexibility and innovation at a local level, whilst working to implement a national strategy that safeguards our children and protects them against a postcode lottery."

-ENDS-

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Notes to editors

1. Northgate is a technology company with a difference. It is committed to high quality public services and understands the public sector. That knowledge is core to its business. Its task is to enhance public sector value through intelligent use of people and information technology systems and to share in the economic and social benefits that this brings.
2. Northgate assists local authorities and the police to promote community well-being by helping them provide citizens with accessible and responsive one-stop services.
3. Northgate works with councils to deliver integrated services for children by developing unified systems for identifying vulnerable children and referring them to the relevant professional help that they need.