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Domestic Abuse Awareness Programme For Schools:

Guidance Notes for Teachers



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 - Whitfield C of E Voluntary Aided Primary School, Whitfield



Foreword

by Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner
and Operation Encompass Patron, Dame Vera Baird QC



Operation Encompass has long been a game-changer when it comes to safeguarding within schools. Masterminded by its amazing co-founders, Elisabeth and David Carney-Haworth, it has helped provide early intervention for thousands of young people who have been present at police-attended domestic abuse incidents.

And, I'm delighted to say that the ambition to make a difference doesn't stop there. Launching here in Northumbria, and in collaboration with my office, Northumbria Police, Barnardo's, and our local authorities is a 'first of its kind' initiative - Operation Encompass: The Next Steps.

This project is a natural progression for Operation Encompass. It acknowledges that young people can be victims in their own right and, through education, it seeks to empower them so that they can shape their own future, enjoy healthy relationships and ultimately break the cycle of domestic abuse.

We value the opportunity to work with trusted and experienced teachers in delivering this project, with the support of school safeguarding liaison officers. Together, through this partnership work at grassroots level, we hope to end the intergenerational impact of domestic abuse – for good.

Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner
and Operation Encompass Patron,
Dame Vera Baird QC

Practice Guidance For Facilitators

The programmes are required to meet the Government Guidance for PSHE in:

[Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019](#)

[Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education](#)

Definition of Domestic Abuse

The Home Office and government definition of Domestic Abuse is under review as part of the new Domestic Abuse Bill, however it is currently set out as;

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass but is not limited to the following types of abuse:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial
- emotional

Controlling behaviour is: a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour is: an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.

This definition, which is not a legal definition, includes so called 'honour' based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage, and is clear that victims are not confined to one gender or ethnic group.

The Context of Relationship Education Programmes

Every school has children and staff who may have been or may be experiencing domestic abuse. Children may be experiencing anxiety, distress and emotional harm. There is a link between domestic abuse and child abuse.

It is important to raise awareness so we can prevent further harm and abuse.

Preventative work on this is vital, especially in schools, and the government is committed to this via PSHE within the school curriculum.

Violence and abuse in the home is very difficult to hide from young people, even when adults believe children are not aware it is happening, it is highly likely that they will be. Children in this situation may not understand themselves that they are experiencing domestic abuse because to them it may have become normalised.

Domestic abuse preventative education work can:

- Enable school staff to approach this subject within the framework of bullying and managing conflict;
- Help children recognise it and that it is not right (within the discussions on Children's Rights; UN Convention Article 9- 'Right to be safe');
- Assist in supporting children to be safe;
- Be part of work on relationship communication.

Planning and Creating a Safe Environment for Learning

It is important that those delivering the programme consider good practice along with the staff who know the children to create a safe environment in which to introduce this awareness session. This should be done using the same effective skills that are employed in the delivery of other sensitive PSHE curriculum subjects.

All sessions should be delivered within school procedure and protocol set out in their policies for:

- safeguarding
- child protection, including disclosure
- Relationships and Sex Education
- PSHE education

Teaching staff should be familiar with these policies and what to do in the event of a disclosure, before any sessions take place.

It is particularly important to consider children and young people with special educational needs - an education professional with knowledge of the child should review and adapt the session according to the needs of the audience.

It is important that adults delivering the sessions are also supported. Be aware that some school staff may themselves be victims of domestic abuse. Careful thought must be given to choosing appropriate members of staff to deliver the content.

Some issues to consider:

- Reflect on your own values re domestic abuse.
- Inform and prepare parents/carers about the session.
- Consider questions that may be asked in the session and prepare appropriate and sensitive responses, including being prepared to challenge assumptions and prejudice.
- Plan the lesson with clear outcomes for the development age of those in the session.
- Carefully review all materials for similarity of names and situations, which should be changed and sessions adapted accordingly.
- Plan and deliver with school staff who know the children.
- Look at ground rules for allowing safe discussion.
- Be aware of good practice re handling disclosure within the school's child protection policy.
- Pastoral leads should be consulted to find out if any pupils might be affected by the lessons due to past experiences, and plan accordingly.
- Acknowledge the content when planning the session so pupils can talk to a teacher in advance if they feel they will be particularly affected by the session and again before each session so as to reduce children's anxiety.
- Prepare for and ensure support is there during and post-session for any disclosures; i.e. where children can get support etc.
- Many schools will use a 'question box' or 'statement box' for pupils to access further support or to leave questions or comments for school staff to answer, either anonymously to be fed back to the whole class, or named for the adult to talk one-to-one with the pupil. If you don't have one consider using one for these sessions. Ensure that pupils understand what the 'box' is to be used for and that if the adult has concerns about the child then the school's safeguarding and child protection policy will be followed.
- At the end, give appropriate information where pupils can get help and support if the session has brought up any feelings for them.

Delivery model

Once you have decided to run a session and chosen the appropriate class you need to decide which strand you wish to deliver. This will depend on the current understanding of the class you will be delivering to, any issues currently/historically in the class and the maturity of the class. You may wish to deliver one strand a term and these can then be repeated the following year as the children will be older and the discussions will be different and in more depth.

Each strand has been designed to last approximately one hour but it is recommended that you go at the pace of the class. Two shorter sessions may be more appropriate for those with additional needs. Many of the resources can be adapted for pupils requiring extra support. The facilitators lists and prompt cards can be shortened to allow for less choice and more time spent in discussion. The same can apply to more able pupils who may wish to go into more depth with each scenario. Extension activities for more able pupils could include asking them to write their own scenarios which are more pertinent to known issues in the school/community.

The additional activity in each strand can be used as an alternative to Activity 1 or 2 or as an extra activity if time allows.

Ground Rules

Establish ground rules with the class - this process allows children to negotiate their safe involvement, ownership and inclusion in the session. It also sets the scene for supporting disclosures.

Begin each session by asking pupils if they have agreed general ground rules for PSHE lessons (most classes will have).

- Ask them to give examples of these rules and/or say why they are important.
- Add suggestions of your own including:
 - We will be honest, but we will not be asked to share personal stories about ourselves or anyone we know
 - We have the right to pass in discussion, and we will not put anyone else on the spot
 - We can disagree with each other's opinions, but will not judge, or make fun of anyone, or put anyone down
 - We will not make assumptions about other people, their views or experiences
- When these rules have been agreed make sure you, and the pupils, stick to them.

For examples of good practice see:

Expect Respect (women's Aid):

<https://1q7dqy2unor827bqjls0c4rn-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/21.-Supporting-Resources-Suggested-Ground-Rules.pdf>

Child Centred Policing Handbook:

<https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/sites/default/files/u26918/CYP%20police%20in%20the%20classroom%20handbook.pdf>

Importance of Reflection During the Session

Reflection is crucial in consolidating learning and enabling the facilitators to ensure children are safe and learning outcomes have been met.

You can support with questions such as:

- What did you learn from discussing ...
- What did you learn from other children in the class (especially if it differed from your own feelings and thoughts)
- What did you think about the ... activity etc
- What else do we need to think, learn or consider from today?

The use of Kolb's reflective cycle is helpful in assisting facilitators:



Dealing with Disclosure

Teaching staff should work within their own school policies and procedures for dealing with disclosures.

Preparing for disclosures is good practice. A good model approach is to; 'Receive, Reassure, React and Record'

Barriers to help-seeking and exiting abusive relationships

When discussing leaving a relationship this additional information may help pupils understand the difficulties and concerns of the abused.

Leaving an abusive relationship can seem overwhelming. Women often leave several times before finally deciding to end the relationship. There are many complicated reasons why it is difficult to leave an abusive partner.

It is normal to have doubts or fears or just feel overwhelmed at the thought of leaving. But the following should be considered:

- Domestic violence often starts as emotional abuse and becomes physical later.
- The abuser may try to make them think the violence is their fault.
- Abuse is not normal or OK.
- Abuse can happen to anyone.
- The abuser may be very good to them at times.
- Intimate partner violence is linked to serious physical and emotional problems.

Many abusers get even more violent after their victims leave. That's why a safety plan, agreed on with others in your life, can help keep you safe after you leave.

Creating a safety plan can help to know what to do if the abuser abuses you again.

A safety plan will help the abused be prepared:

- Identify a safe friend or friends and safe places to go.
- Keep an alternate mobile phone nearby.
- Memorise the phone numbers of friends, family, or shelters.
- Make a list of things to take if leaving quickly.
- Try to hide an extra set of car keys to be able to leave if the abuser takes away the usual keys.
- Contact the local family court for information about getting a restraining order.
- Protect online security.
- When leaving, try to take any evidence of abuse or violence.
- Keep copies of all paper and electronic documents.

Resources to support the programme

Support for pupils

Pupils should always be directed in the first instance to talk to a trusted adult either at home or at school. The Helplines poster can be printed and displayed in all classrooms.

Helplines

Below is a list of helpline numbers where you can talk to someone about abuse that might be happening in the home. In an emergency, please ring the police on 999 for immediate help.

Childline – 0800 1111

Free, 24-hour telephone helpline for young people anywhere in the UK. Trained counsellors offer comfort, support, advice and protection. Calls to Childline are confidential, and are free even from mobiles. Calls don't show up on phone bills. If you're deaf, hard of hearing or have difficulties with speech, you can use their textphone service on 0800 400 222 (not available at night). You can also look at their website: www.childline.org.uk.

Freephone 24 Hour National Domestic Violence Helpline – 0808 2000 247

This helpline service provides support, information and a listening ear to women and young people experiencing domestic abuse. It also helps women and young people find a place of safety in a women's refuge. (The National Domestic Violence Helpline is run in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge.)

Samaritans – 08457 90 90 90 (UK)

Samaritans is available 24 hours a day to provide confidential emotional support for people who are experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those which may lead to suicide.

Muslim Women's Helpline – 020 8904 8193 or 020 8908 6715

The Muslim Women's Helpline aims to provide any Muslim girl or woman in a crisis with a free, confidential listening service and referral to Islamic consultants, plus practical help and information where required.

NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000

If you're worried about a young person's safety or if you need help or advice, ring the NSPCC helpline or email them.

Broken Rainbow: 0300 999 5428

Our National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans* (LGBT) Domestic Violence Helpline provides confidential support to all members of the LGBT communities, their family, friends, and agencies supporting them. The helpline is run by trained LGBT people and provides a space where you can talk through what is going on, and explore your options.

Websites for young people

www.burstingthebubble.com

Australian site for young people experiencing abuse.

www.breakthecycle.org

US site. Aims to empower and educate youth to live a life free from dating and domestic abuse.

Other Resources

Leeds Animation DVD: Home Truths (need to purchase this) re young people's experiences of DA:

www.leedsanimation.org.uk

Barnardo's Real Love Rocks:

www.barnardosrealloverocks.org.uk/

Bristol Women's Aid: Spiralling Toolkit:

thehideout.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/spiralling_toolkit.pdf

Home Office: Disrespect Nobody

www.disrespectnobody.co.uk/index.php?dm_i=HSS,39S6K,57E35H,BPK8L,1

Love is Respect (USA website):

www.loveisrespect.org/is-this-abuse/

Childline:

www.childline.org.uk

Safer Lives (formerly: CAADA):

www.safelives.org.uk

PSHE Association:

www.pshe-association.org.uk

From Expect Respect:

<https://1q7dqy2unor827bqjls0c4rn-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/22.-Supporting-Resources-Sources-of-help.pdf>

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CHILDLINE

0800 1111
WWW.CHILDLINE.ORG.UK

NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HELPLINE

0808 2000 247

SAMARITANS

08457 90 90 90 (UK)

MUSLIM WOMEN'S HELPLINE

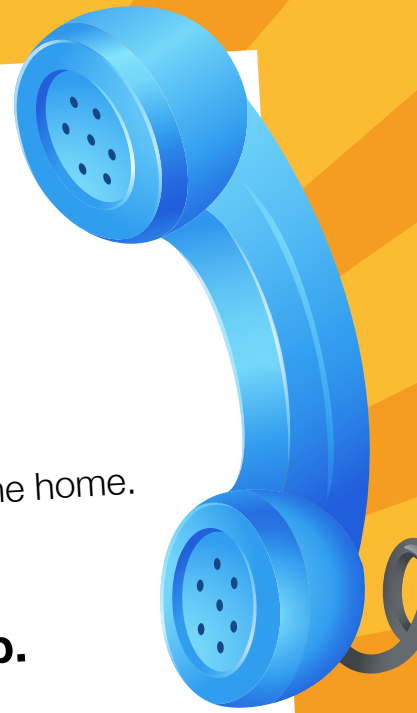
020 8904 8193 or
020 8908 6715

NSPCC HELPLINE

0808 800 5000

BROKEN RAINBOW LGBT HELPLINE

0300 999 5428



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