

Operation Encompass The Next Steps

Educating today • Empowering for tomorrow • Breaking the cycle of Domestic Abuse

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Rationale

Domestic Abuse is a 'cruel and complex crime'¹ which affects millions of people in our society every year and cuts across all strata of society. We must all work to achieve the cessation of Domestic Abuse.

Children exposed to domestic abuse are victims of child abuse.²

Definition of Domestic Abuse:

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, 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 sexual orientation. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to: psychological, physical, sexual, economic and emotional forms of abuse.

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 a person.³

Prevalence of Domestic Abuse:

A Domestic Abuse call is made to the police in England and Wales every 30 seconds.⁴

The Home Office estimates that two million adults (aged 16 to 59) experienced Domestic Abuse in the year ending March 2018, two thirds of whom were women.⁵

¹ Foreword to Consultation Response and Draft Domestic Abuse Bill 2019 by Home Secretary and Justice Secretary

² Consultation Response and Draft Domestic Abuse Bill 2019 Page 16

³ Consultation Response and Draft Domestic Abuse Bill 2019

⁴ HMIC 2014

⁵ Home Office 2019

Two women a week and 30 men a year are murdered.⁶

It is estimated that between one third and one quarter of children have experienced domestic abuse.⁷

It is estimated that 2.7 million children (aged 0-15) live with an adult who has experienced Domestic Abuse.⁸

Impact upon children

There is a large body of evidence that confirms that living in a home where there is Domestic Abuse is harmful for children. This has been recognised by the Government and is a commitment in the Consultation Response and Draft Bill document and Foreword:

We will recognise the devastating impact that Domestic Abuse can have on children who are exposed to it'

No child should ever experience the trauma caused by domestic abuse.

'No one should have to suffer the pain of this abhorrent crime, particularly at the hands of those closest to them. Children should not have to witness violence and abuse in their own homes'

Operation Encompass is a police and education early intervention safeguarding police and education partnership enabling support for children experiencing Domestic Abuse.

Operation Encompass The Next Steps builds upon this proven police and education partnership based upon early intervention, aiming to play a part in the national agenda to end Domestic Abuse.

The project will support strategic policy objectives 1 and 2 of the Draft Domestic Abuse Bill:

1. raise awareness and challenge assumptions,
2. support victims and their children

⁶ ONS (2014), Crime Survey England and Wales 2013 - 14. London: Office for National Statistics

⁷ Home Office 2019

⁸ Office of the Children's Commissioner

And the intended effects:

- permanently change the culture around, and the response to, domestic abuse;
- improve support for victims;
- decrease the incidence of domestic abuse;
- and reduce both the emotional and economic costs to victims, their families and the public and private sectors

We will demonstrate collaborative working across agencies, using and building upon each partner agency's skills and knowledge through:

- Promoting awareness of and education about Domestic Abuse in schools but also across the wider community
- Working to mitigate the risk of children growing up to become either victims or perpetrators of Domestic Abuse.
- Empowering children and young people, creating a culture where children and young people along with school staff, feel confident to talk about domestic abuse
- Building resilience in the whole school and wider community
- Further enhancing the support offered to adult and child victims of Domestic Abuse.

Throughout the work of Operation Encompass and Operation Encompass The Next Steps (OEtNS) the voice of the child is central, fundamental and of paramount importance.

Our work to break the cycle of Domestic Abuse has two main strands and will consist of but is not limited to:

Strand 1: Promoting awareness of and educating children and young people in school about Domestic Abuse.

Strand 2: Further enhancing the support offered to adult and child victims of Domestic Abuse through 'drop-in' sessions led by the School Safeguarding Liaison Officers

Strand 1:

Using the planned mandatory PSHE/RSE curriculum, OEtNS will support schools to develop those aspects which should enable children (EYFS-KS5) to participate in a developmentally age appropriate curriculum which will equip them to understand and identify;

- Healthy and respectful relationships
- Abusive, unhealthy and non-respectful relationships
- Healthy behaviours in themselves and others
- Unhealthy behaviours in themselves and others
- Emotions and the impact that these have upon themselves and others
- The impact of a person's behaviour on those around them
- That rules and expectations exist across society and within relationships
- That abuse is never acceptable
- That Domestic Abuse is socially unacceptable

Schools will ensure that what they deliver is appropriate to their pupils, becomes embedded practice and complements the PSHE/RSE curriculum culture and ethos of the school.

This strand supports the expectations and aspirations of the Home Office as stated in the Draft Domestic Abuse Bill 2019:

Domestic abuse is complex. It can go unidentified by agencies, families and friends, and even victims themselves. In order to transform the response to domestic abuse, it is important that it is first properly recognised and understood.

'We recognise that if we want to change attitudes we need to engage with children at the earliest possible opportunity. We know that exposure to domestic abuse can have a serious, lasting impact on children, with negative effects on their future behaviour and relationships. All children should be supported to understand that abuse is never acceptable '

'We want to help schools deliver high-quality relationships education that covers domestic abuse.'⁹

We will introduce regulations and statutory guidance for schools on Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education.

⁹ Home Office DA Bill 2019

In primary schools, we want to equip children with the foundations for healthy, respectful relationships.

In secondary schools, we propose teaching young people about healthy intimate relationships, and the concepts and laws relating to consent, sexual exploitation, grooming, harassment and domestic abuse.

Through this teaching, we can help children to understand domestic abuse, including coercive control, so they can recognise the signs of abuse and stay safe.

Domestic abuse involves many different acts and behaviours. These include physical violence, manipulation, isolation, control, and use of threats and humiliation which harm, frighten or punish a victim. We recognise that a simplistic description may fail to completely encompass the dynamics of power and control, and the risk that control represents to the victim

Strand 2:

The OEtNS pilot has enabled the Office of the Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner to employ twelve School Safeguarding Liaison Officers who will:

- In partnership with each school, co-deliver a piece of work which will form part of the Domestic Abuse PSHE/RSE awareness curriculum as identified in Strand 1.
- Be available in each school at specific identified times so that adult and child victims of Domestic Abuse can access advice and support.

This aspect of OEtNS is one way to remove barriers which deter victims from seeking support or asking for help and advice.

This strand supports the expectations and aspirations of the Home Office as stated in the Draft Domestic Abuse Bill 2019

'We want to help schools deliver high-quality relationships education that covers domestic abuse. This includes the provision of Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education. This will help equip children with the information they need to have healthy and respectful relationships, and leave school prepared for adult life.'

'We will also work with schools to provide advice, sources of expert information and recommendations of useful teaching resources such as lesson plans based on the government's Disrespect NoBody campaign.'

'We recognise that there is a need to provide more information to the public.'¹⁰

'We will allocate funding to support children affected by domestic abuse. In July 2018, the government launched a fund to give charities, local authorities and other organisations the chance to run programmes that intervene early and help children affected by domestic abuse.'¹¹

¹⁰ Home Office DA Bill 2019

¹¹ Home Office DA Bill 2019

PSHE/RSE curriculum

The DfE draft statutory guidance on RE, RSE and HE requires the teaching of healthy, respectful relationships, including domestic abuse, stating that 'Domestic Abuse, including coercive and controlling behaviour, should be addressed sensitively and clearly'¹²

OEtNS has identified three main areas of focus which should, through a spiral curriculum, build from learning appropriate to the very youngest of children (EYFS) through to learning appropriate for the oldest of young people in school (KS5).

We will focus upon enabling schools to think about appropriate conversations and discussions which will help children to develop emotional intelligence, empathy, self-awareness, resilience and a clear picture that abusive relationships are not acceptable. We want children to feel empowered to take action and give support if they feel that they or a friend /relative is in an abusive relationship.

This is a child led initiative both in terms of the content and the pace of the sessions.

Our work enables all children to be supported.

OEtNS in no way wishes to replace good practice that may well be in place in schools.

We will signpost schools to the resources already available which support the development of exploration of Domestic Abuse from EYFS to KS5.

PSHE/DA Awareness Raising



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¹² DfE RE, RSE and HE Draft Statutory Guidance Feb 2019