

Grove Vale Primary School

Domestic Abuse Policy September 2022

Approved by:	Date:
Last reviewed on:	September 2022
Next review due by:	September 2024

Domestic Abuse Information for Schools and Colleges

Domestic abuse is a vastly under reported crime affecting one in three women and one in six men. Two women are still killed on average every week by their partner or ex-partner. It is rarely a one off event and in most cases the abuse escalates over time. Around three quarters of the children or young people who have had a child protection plan have experienced domestic abuse. Domestic violence is experienced in all communities, in all socio economic groups, by LGBT people as well as in heterosexual relationships and by people of all ages.

The definition of emotional harm recognises that children and young people are affected not only by experiencing violence themselves but also by witnessing harm to others. Threatening, controlling, belittling behaviours are domestic abuse as well as physical harm.

Children living in households where domestic violence is happening are now identified as "at risk" under the Adoption and Children Act 2002. From 31 January 2005, Section 120 of this act extended the legal definition of harming children to include harm suffered by seeing or hearing ill treatment of others. This would include witnessing domestic abuse.

What does this mean for schools?

Schools can provide a safe retreat from problems at home but some children and young people will avoid coming to school to stay home to protect their parent or siblings.

Working Together to Safeguard Children states...

Professionals should ask direct questions about domestic violence and be alert to the signs that a child or mother may be experiencing domestic violence.

Professionals should ask young people direct questions about whether they are experiencing intimate partner violence.

Disclosure

Where domestic abuse is disclosed, school staff must follow Safeguarding Procedure.

- Don't question or interrogate the young person. This is the role of the police or social services.
- Offer reassurance and explain what will happen next.
- Record on CPOMS what has been said, what you have seen and what you may already know and share this promptly with your school Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- DSL to consider immediate risk of harm and, as appropriate, contact or refer to SPOC, contact non abusing parent or carer if safe to do so, or police or DV contact numbers.

Related issues

Female Genital Mutilation, Honour Based Violence and Forced Marriage.

The school DSL will have guidance on who to contact. Under no circumstances contact the victim's family or any persons in their community as this could put the young person in danger.

Intimate Partner violence

Research suggests that girls are the most likely victims and there is evidence of a link between seeing abuse at home and becoming victimised. It may be difficult for young people to recognise a relationship as abusive.

What should schools do?

- Respond sensitively and creatively following Operation Encompass notifications
- Provide opportunity for counselling, mentoring, contact with outside agencies for the child or young person.
- Offer understanding and support with school work and homework.
- Offer support to the non-abusing parent, including safety planning if it is possible the perpetrator may visit or contact school.
- Be aware of contact orders, injunctions, bail conditions, exclusion orders etc. especially when they include the school.
- Not disclose a refuge address keeping only the Post Office Box address on file (Head/DSL may know the actual refuge address)
- Consider transport arrangements if a child is in a temporary address to try to ensure he or she maintains their school place. Consider whether it is safe for the child to continue at their current school.

Contact:

United Against Violence and Abuse (UAVA) Helpline: 0808 80 200 28

These lines are managed by Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence Specialists and they are the doorway to additional services and information, for adults and children. <http://www.uava.org.uk/>

Resources

Disrespect No-body - Discussion guides and session plans to support the Government's campaign aimed at preventing abuse in teenage relationships, developed by the PSHE Association with the Home Office.

The Hideout - a dedicated website for young people up to the age of 21 where they can find information about relationship abuse and where to get help. www.thehideout.org.uk

Expect Respect - A free resource to download giving information about domestic abuse and its impact on children and young people. It also gives full lesson plans and resources on relationship matters from Year 1 to Year 13. (All DSLs already have this on their disk of resources given out when they trained.)

Freedom Charity - Empowering young people to feel they have the tools and confidence and support around the issues of family relationships which can lead to early and forced marriage and dishonour based violence.

www.freedomcharity.org.uk Helpline 08456070133

Safe Lives– Quick guide identifying and responding to young people affected by forced marriage.

LRSB Domestic Abuse Pages – Flow charts and guidance on responding to disclosures of domestic abuse from adults.