



One minute guide

Domestic Violence and Abuse - School Notifications

No. 120, May 2016

What are Domestic Violence and Abuse - School Notifications?

Tackling domestic violence and abuse ([guide](#)) continues to be a key priority for Leeds City Council and has been identified as one of the Council's seven breakthrough projects – see page seven of the [Best Council Plan](#).

One way in which Leeds is trying to improve the lives of those affected by domestic violence and abuse is to introduce 'Domestic Violence and Abuse—School Notifications'. This involves the local authority notifying a child's school or further education setting the next working day after a domestic violence or abuse incident has occurred when a child or young person was present at the incident.

Why is this important?

This is important because domestic violence and abuse is a safeguarding issue.

Statistics show that children are present in a household during a domestic violence incident 90% of the time. Often, the following day, children are ill-prepared to deal with the school day. By sharing the information with school, children can be helped to cope with what has happened and know that someone cares about how they feel and wants to support them.

How does it work?

Monday to Friday, each morning the Police provide information to the local authority about domestic violence incidents they have attended from the previous 24 hours and on Mondays, from the weekend.

Where a child was present in the household at the time of the incident and the child is of school age (4-18), the local authority will contact the Safeguarding Lead in the school or further education setting the next working day before 9am.

The school safeguarding leads can then accommodate the school day to lessen the impact and to support the child if they need it. The child is given comfort and support and this can make a huge difference to children and allows them to have a safe space.

The information shared with the school is only that which is required to safeguard children and includes: the date and time of the incident; the brief circumstances; who was involved; and police action if appropriate.

What support might be provided by the school?

On receipt of the information, and on seeing the child, the school will determine the level and type of support to be provided. Support provided can be seen in terms of 'overt support' and 'silent support'.

Examples of overt support include:

- Checking out if the child has eaten breakfast and has something for lunch;
- Offering time out or the ability to work elsewhere or not working at all;
- Making changes to the school routine for the child;
- Contacting the parent and offering support;
- Offering some 1:1 support time to talk about feelings; and
- Letting the child know that a named person knows what has happened but that this information has not been shared with anyone else

Examples of silent support include:

- Establishing systems for helping with school uniform and providing food if required;
- Checking collections arrangements for the end of the school day;
- Having a staff presence as a form of support throughout the school day; and
- Having different expectations for the child, including behavior.

Key contacts and for more information?

The key contacts are:

Jude Roberts – Operational Delivery Manager
jude.roberts@leeds.gov.uk

Charlotte Jackson - Service Delivery Manager Front Door Safeguarding Hub
charlotte.jackson@leeds.gov.uk

Louise Hackett - Domestic Violence Breakthrough Programme Lead
louise.hackett@leeds.gov.uk

Duty and Advice tel: 0113 3760336

You can read more about domestic abuse on the [Leeds City Council Domestic Violence website](#) and the [Coordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse \(CAADA\)](#) website. CAADA is a national charity supporting a multi-agency and risk-led response to domestic abuse. They provide practical help to support practitioners and organisations working with victims of domestic abuse.