

Salford Domestic Abuse Guidance for Staff in Educational Settings

Aims of this Guidance

The aim of this guidance is to increase awareness among staff working with children and young people about domestic abuse and, provide support to all staff in education settings (**from Early Years through to College**) to have conversations with children, young people, and their carers about domestic abuse. This guidance will cover:

1. Identifying when someone may be experiencing domestic abuse
2. Talking to parents and responding to disclosures
3. Support with safety planning and accessing support

Please note that if you have any safeguarding concerns the reporting process remains unchanged, and you should follow your settings safeguarding procedures and **refer to your Designated Safeguarding Lead**.

Domestic Abuse is an issue of epic scale, and it exists in all strata of society, it occurs in every ethnic group, every age group, every makeup of relationship, in every part of our country and in every continent. The damage done to a child living with domestic abuse is far reaching and can last throughout their life course. This damage can be caused at each and every stage of their lives, from conception onwards and, whilst the impact may change, develop, and vary dependent upon the individual, the age of the child and the nature and duration of the domestic abuse, the damage is very real. The implications for children are well researched and serious and can impact upon health, emotional wellbeing, behaviour, academic success, physical development, creating disrupted relationships and disorganised attachments. Children are often living in a state of heightened anxiety and hyper vigilance within their homes, rather than being a place of safety and security, being a place of stress and trauma leading to feelings of insecurity and danger.

[Safe in Salford](#) is the commissioned provider of domestic abuse support services in Salford and provides a victims/survivor's helpline; 0161 793 3232.

Men's Advice Line - confidential helpline, email, and webchat service for male victims of domestic abuse. Call 0808 8010327 or visit mensadvice.org.uk

In April 2021, the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent and introduced a statutory definition for the first time.

Legal Definition

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 (Part 1) defines domestic abuse as any of the following behaviours, either as a pattern of behaviour, or as a single incident, between two people over the age of 16, who are [personally connected](#) to each other:

- (a) physical or sexual abuse
- (b) violent or threatening behaviour
- (c) controlling or coercive behaviour
- (d) economic abuse (adverse effect of the victim to acquire, use or maintain money or other property; or obtain goods or services); and
- (e) psychological, emotional, or other abuse.

People are 'personally connected' when they are, or have been:

- married to each other or civil partners; or
- have agreed to marry or become civil partners.
- two people have been in an intimate relationship with each other,
- have shared parental responsibility for the same child,
- or they are relatives.

Section 3 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 ('the 2021 Act') **recognises children as victims of domestic abuse** for the purposes of the Act if the child sees, hears, or experiences the effects of the abuse, and is related to, or falls under "parental responsibility" of, the victim and/or perpetrator of the domestic abuse. A child might therefore be considered a victim of

domestic abuse under the 2021 Act where one parent is abusing another parent, or where a parent is abusing, or being abused by, a partner or relative. Domestic abuse has a significant impact on children and young people of all ages (up to 18 years old).

Types of domestic abuse include:

- intimate partner violence
- abuse by family members
- teenage relationship abuse and
- child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse

Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home.

Domestic abuse is very common. In the majority of cases, it is experienced by women and is perpetrated by men. It is however important to be aware that men can and will experience domestic abuse.

Identifying When Someone May be Experiencing Domestic Abuse

Signs that a child or young person may be experiencing domestic abuse at home,

- Presenting as sleep deprived
- Unsettled/withdrawn
- Anxious
- Aggressive or bullying behaviours
- Focus on pleasing others
- Hypervigilance

Prolonged exposure to domestic abuse can have a serious impact on a child's safety and welfare,

- Children are at risk of physical injury during an incident.
- Children are greatly distressed by witnessing the physical and emotional suffering of a parent.
- Children can become anxious and distressed which can express itself in anti-social or criminal behaviour.

- Domestic abuse can restrict a parent's ability to parent correctly.

Signs that a young person may be experiencing intimate partner abuse:

- Sudden change to personality
- Decrease in confidence
- Falling out with friends and family resulting in isolation
- Fearful/anxious
- Unexplained bruising or other injuries

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) refer to some of the most intensive and frequently occurring sources of stress that children may suffer early in life. When children are exposed to adverse and stressful experiences, it can have a long-lasting impact on their ability to think, interact with others and on their learning. The term ACE is used to describe a wide range of stressful or traumatic experiences that children can be exposed to whilst growing up. ACEs range from experiences that directly harm a child (such as suffering physical, verbal, or sexual abuse, and physical or emotional neglect) to those that affect the environment in which a child grows up (including parental separation, domestic violence, mental illness, alcohol abuse, drug use or incarceration).

Further learning regarding ACES can be accessed here [Online training | Partners in Salford](#)

Operation Encompass

[Operation Encompass](#) ensures a notification is sent direct to the school by the Police where there are children related to either of the adult parties involved in an incident of domestic abuse. Information is shared with a school's Key Adult (usually the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead) prior to the start of the next school day after officers have attended a domestic abuse incident. Domestic abuse is an Adverse Childhood Experience that harms children, this sharing of information enables appropriate support to be given to the child/young person. All Salford maintained schools, academies and colleges participate with Operation Encompass. Early Years Operation Encompass for private/voluntary/independent nursery provisions is managed by 0-19 Health who receive the notifications from the Police.

The Key Adult (usually the DSL/Deputy DSL) must undertake the CPD accredited online Key Adult Training before receiving Operation Encompass notifications. [Online Key Adult Training Operation Encompass](#) The aim of the training is to increase knowledge of child victims of domestic abuse and assist the Key Adults in fully embedding Operation Encompass within the setting. It is good practice to have more than one DSL/DDSL trained to access the notifications for reasons of absence.

When supporting children and young people, there are a range of [Resources](#) available for the Key Adult to use including primary and secondary worksheets specifically designed by Harbour for Key Adults to use in response to an Operation Encompass notification which facilitate the child's voice and lived experience to be captured.

The Key Adult can refer the child to [Harbour](#) which supports children and young people aged **0-18** years old who have seen or heard domestic abuse.

[For young people who use harm](#) the Key Adult/Designated Safeguarding lead can refer to Harbour/TLC for support in reducing harmful behaviour in the young person's relationships.

Operation Encompass have produced a [Booklet](#) for schools which explores the role of schools/settings when supporting children. The booklet looks at settings taking a trauma informed approach. Further information and training regarding trauma informed approaches and adverse childhood experiences can be accessed by all educational staff here [Trauma Responsive Salford | Partners in Salford](#)

A [short animation](#) has been designed by Salford for schools to place on the Operation Encompass section of their websites. The animation explains to children what Operation Encompass is and how their school supports them following an incident of domestic abuse where the Police attended. It's also a useful tool for schools to use with younger children to explain why Key Adults are supporting them following an Operation Encompass notification.

Talking to Parents and Responding to Disclosures

A parent may disclose experiencing domestic abuse independently or as a result of an Operation Encompass notification to the education setting. It is important to recognise that the parent/carer is likely to have overcome many barriers (for example: shame, guilt, fear) to make a disclosure, so it is vital that this conversation is managed as sensitively as possible. In the event of a disclosure about domestic abuse from a parent or carer, the member of staff should:

- Listen, without making or showing any judgment
- Not promise confidentiality
- Not advise the parent/carer to leave the relationship, *people are most at risk of serious incident at the point of, or just after separation*
- Ask about the parent's immediate safety
- Accurately record the conversation on the child's file on the settings safeguarding system
- **Report the disclosure to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** who may refer onwards to relevant support services
- The DSL may need to refer to The Bridge Partnership and consider a referral to Adult Social Care if the adult has care and support needs.

What might domestic abuse look like?

Type of abuse	What is it?	Things to be concerned about
Emotional and Psychological	Emotional abuse is any type of abuse that involves deliberately trying to scare, humiliate, isolate, or ignore a person. This can include making threats to harm them or their children or commit suicide. It can involve telling lies about them, making them doubt themselves.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Threatening, shouting, mocking or name calling. • A change in character when a particular person is present.
Physical	It's important to remember that physical abuse is intentionally causing physical harm to a person. It can include	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unexplained injuries or regular visits to A&E or the GP • Physical injuries or marks such as bruises, burn marks, scalds.

	punching, slapping, hitting, biting, pinching, kicking, pulling hair out, pushing, shoving, burning, strangling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discomfort / wincing when someone moves • Damage to property / breakages • Noise from the property – screaming, shouting or even loud music to drown out other noises
Sexual	<p>This is when a person is forced or tricked into having sex when they don't want to or performing sexual activities.</p> <p>Some adults or younger people might not understand that what's happening is abuse or that it's wrong and they might be afraid to tell someone.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A change in character, signs of distress, • Concerns regarding pregnancy or sexually transmitted infections. • Depressed, withdrawn, anxious
Financial	<p>This can include things such as taking a persons' money, withholding money, taking out loans or credit and running up debts in another person's name.</p> <p>It can also involve doing things that can jeopardise a person's job.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unexplained lack of money to buy essential items • Someone being in control of their bank cards or money. • Unable to pay rent or other bills
Stalking / Harassment	<p>Following you, checking up on you, opening your mail, repeatedly checking to see who has telephoned you, embarrassing you in public, cyber stalking (using the internet to harass someone) antisocial behaviour sending abusive text messages sending unwanted gifts, unwanted phone calls, letters, emails, or visits.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Someone regularly being accompanied to places/ appointments
Gaslighting	<p>This is term used to describe abusive behaviour that makes the victim start to doubt their memory, judgement or even their sanity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confusion • Blaming themselves for the abuse • Feeling oversensitive or that everything they do is wrong
Love bombing	<p>This is over the top demonstrations of affection, often used at the start of a relationship or the relationship moving far too fast and may be a warning sign.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lots of or expensive gifts • Excessive compliments • Taking steps to remain in constant contact and spend increasing amounts of time together. • Dramatic reaction if you don't go along with their wishes and can

		make the person feel like they are 'walking on eggshells'
--	--	---

Initiating the conversation:

Below are some open-ended prompts that staff may want to use to support the conversation when engaging a parent/carer about a concern you have around domestic abuse:

- Is everything ok for you and the children at home?
- I am worried about how you are; would you like to come and have a chat?
- How are things with your partner?
- Are you staying in contact with friends and extended family?
- Are you able to get to the shops/take exercise? Is this on your own or always with a family member?
- Does your partner ever stop you from doing things?
- Are you ever afraid at home?
- Is someone hurting you?
- Have you ever been forced to do anything you do not want to?
- I see you have a bruise on your face/arm, what happened/ tell me about that?
- Is there anyone else you are afraid of?

Only if it's **safe to do so**, and you are able to speak to the person **without** the suspected perpetrator being there, you can **ask them** if they are experiencing domestic abuse. **Be professionally curious.**

Suggested ways to ask:

- I'm worried about you because..., tell me, have you ever felt afraid of your partner?
- What happens in your relationship when you disagree?
- Tell me about your home-life and/or relationship with your husband/partner/family?
- Has someone hurt you? Do you feel safe?
- Are you ever afraid of, humiliated or hurt by anyone?

Responding to a disclosure

If they do disclose abuse to you, listen, don't judge them and record what they've told you on your child protection system. **Refer to your Designated Safeguarding Lead.**

If you don't feel able to ask and you are worried about someone, then discuss your concerns with your Designated Safeguarding Lead.

NEVER tell someone to leave an abusive relationship. This can increase the risk of death or serious harm. If possible, you should encourage them to seek specialist help so they can put a safety plan in place.

Remember, if a parent/carer discloses domestic abuse, follow your settings safeguarding procedures and refer to your Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Responding to a Child or Young Person's Disclosure

The most important thing that you can do when a child is disclosing is ensure they know that it is not their fault, that they are believed and that there is help available. It is important to

remember that this may be the first time that the child/young person has spoken about their experience, so they need to be given the time to be heard supportively. The guidelines below will support in responding in a safe way. **If a child young person discloses domestic abuse, you must refer to your Designated Safeguarding Lead.**

Support With Safety Planning and Accessing Support

Safety planning with children and young people:

- Have they had to call 999 before? When do they think they would need to do this? How do they feel about doing this? Discuss with them what a 999 call would involve- asking for the right service, giving their name and address, describing what is happening.
- Have they ever tried to stop something happening or tried to get involved? What happened? The best way to make sure they do not get hurt is either to go to the place in the house where they feel safe or to leave the house and go somewhere else they feel safe.
- You should only give written material or resources if it is safe. **Always speak to your Designated Safeguarding Lead first.**

Further information including local pathways/procedures can be found below in Appendix A (Pages 7 -9)

It is important to remember that, as stipulated in the [Domestic Abuse Act \(2021\)](#) children witnessing domestic abuse are now classified as victims in their own right. Being exposed to domestic abuse has serious consequences for children and young people and it can affect how they feel, think, and behave in harmful ways.

Appendix A

Further support and information

Honour Based Abuse

An incident or crime involving violence, threats of violence, intimidation coercion or abuse (including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, or emotional abuse) which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of an individual, family and/ or community for alleged or perceived breaches of the family and/or community's code of behaviour.

Forced Marriage

A Forced Marriage (FM) is a marriage conducted without the valid consent of one or both parties and where duress is a factor. Forced marriage is now a specific offence under s121 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 and which came into force on 16 June 2014, and it is a form of child abuse.

The Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Act 2022 came into force in February 2023. It means that 16- and 17-year-olds will no longer be allowed to marry or enter a civil partnership, even if they have parental consent. It is now illegal and a criminal offence to exploit vulnerable children by arranging for them to marry, under any circumstances whether

or not force is used. [Marriage and Civil Partnership \(Minimum Age\) Act 2022 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

A Forced Marriage Protection Order can be used to prevent someone being forced to marry. If you are concerned someone is being forced to marry, speak immediately to your Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or contact the [Home Office Forced Marriage Unit](#) – 0207 008 0151

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female Genital Mutilation comprises all procedures involving the removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon **teachers** along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they will not be examining pupils, but the same definition of what is meant by “to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out” is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies. Information on when and how to make a report can be found at Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation procedural information. [Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation: procedural information - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Teachers must personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out and discuss any such case with the school’s designated safeguarding lead and involve children’s social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to ‘at risk’ or suspected cases (i.e., where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers will follow local safeguarding procedures which can be found here, [Female Genital Mutilation | Salford Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

Policies and procedures

The SSCP has adopted [Greater Manchester Domestic Abuse Policy](#) and the [Greater Manchester MARAC Policy](#)

If you suspect or have evidence that a young person is at risk of domestic /violence or abuse or is harming someone then **speak with your Designated Safeguarding Lead**.

If you are a practitioner and you want to make a referral to the Bridge Partnership, please speak to your Designated Safeguarding Lead and use our [online referral form](#)

SafeLives Risk Identification Checklist (RIC) Young Peoples version (13 to 17 yrs.) for young people being harmed within a relationship. [yp-ric-guidance.docx \(live.com\)](#)

The Checklist offers an opportunity to identify the levels of risk a young person may be exposed to, and to offer appropriate services. Speak to your Designated Safeguarding Lead before you undertake this checklist. Your DSL will have the required training, knowledge, and experience in identifying risk.

If the victim is an adult the [adult DASH](#) needs to be completed.

Please follow the pathways below and refer using the [online referral form](#) and attach the completed DASH.

Downloadable documents

[Salford children's domestic abuse pathway \(PDF\)](#)

[Safety plan for young people \(salford.gov.uk\)](#)

[Home Office Information guide: domestic abuse - how to get help](#)

Information for Designated Safeguarding Leads - If you are working on a case and have completed a DASH which meets the criteria to be heard at MARAC, you should send the completed [referral form](#) to CSMARAC@salford.gov.uk This will then be picked up and uploaded onto Sharepoint where it will be listed at the next available MARAC – you will be informed of when this will be. **Please note the referral must be on the attached form** – this is a set format that is a requirement for all agencies referring into MARAC.

Safe in Salford is for all adults, children and young people living in Salford who are affected by domestic abuse. Although the DSL's primary responsibility is to support and safeguard children and young people impacted by domestic abuse, we wanted to highlight the support available for perpetrators, for further information, please see the links below.

[Men's Behaviour Change Programme - TLC: Talk, Listen, Change \(talklistenchange.org.uk\)](http://talklistenchange.org.uk)

[Women's Behaviour Change Programme - TLC: Talk, Listen, Change \(talklistenchange.org.uk\)](http://talklistenchange.org.uk)

Multi-agency training

If you require training on the DA practitioner's guidance, mandatory DA tools, internal DA processes, specialist service offer and referral pathway, please refer to the SSCP Multi Agency Training Programme here [SSCP Training Programme | Salford Safeguarding Children Partnership](#) We recommend you speak to your Designated Safeguarding Lead who can support you with further training.

Resources

Domestic abuse toolkit

This toolkit has been created for practitioners to support you to work safely and effectively with victims, children, and perpetrators of domestic abuse.

[See the domestic abuse toolkit](#)

[Children & Young People | Greater Manchester Victims' Services \(gmvictims.org.uk\)](http://gmvictims.org.uk)



[Domestic Abuse- 7 Minute Briefing](#)

[Resources | Salford Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

[Services | Salford Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

[Literature and information | Salford Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

[YP_safetyplan.pdf \(safelives.org.uk\)](#)

[Controlling or coercive behaviour - statutory guidance.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

Harmful Practices Linked to Faith or Culture, GM Procedures

[Abuse Linked to Spiritual and Religious Beliefs](#)

[Female Genital Mutilation Multi-Agency Protocol](#)

[Forced Marriage](#)

[So-Called Honour Based Abuse/Violence](#)

[Breast Ironing](#)

claire.baddley@salford.gov.uk is Salford's Domestic Abuse Lead
Amanda.jtaylor@salford.gov.uk is Salford's Schools Lead for Operation Encompass