



What is Operation Encompass?

Background:

- Operation Encompass is an initiative enhances communication between the police and schools where a child is at risk from domestic abuse
- The purpose of the information sharing is to ensure schools have more information to support safeguarding of children. By knowing that the child has had this experience, the school is in a better position to understand and be supportive of the child's needs and possible behaviours
- Operation Encompass will complement existing safeguarding procedures

Q. What is Operation Encompass?

A. This is a process used to inform schools when the police have attended an incident of domestic violence or abuse, where domestic abuse incidents have occurred in the homes of their pupils since the previous school day.

Q. How will it work?

A. Police will share information with First Response who will phone the school between 8 and 8.30am and ask to speak with the Head teacher or a Designated Safeguarding Lead. The school will be informed simply that there was an incident and the name of the child. The First Response Children's Duty (FRCD) Officer making the phone call will not be in a position to give more information at that point.

Q. What is the school meant to do with this knowledge?

A. By knowing that the child has had this experience, the school is in a better position to be supportive and understanding of the child's needs and possible behaviours. The Head teacher or DSL will share this information on a need to know basis e.g. the form teacher.

The initial approach is that the sharing of information should not, in itself, provoke a proactive response to individual children by the school, but informs the schools' response to any presenting behaviour. Some schools will have the staff and

resources to reassure the child that they know. This can be a real relief to a child as it can give them a tacit permission to talk about how they feel and what has been happening to them. The key aim of this process, however, is to ensure that the child is offered sensitivity and understanding following a distressing incident.

Q. What if the Head/DSL misses the call?

A. Should the DSL or Head be unavailable to take the Operation Encompass call, First Response will ask the school to organise a swift return call. They will also ask for an email address for the DSL/Head. The DSL/Head will then be emailed an alert with instructions for a return call. No information about the child or incident will be supplied via this email. The responsibility lies with the school to call First Response to access the information.

Q. How frequently will schools receive this type of call?

A. Research indicates that around 8 calls will be made across the County each morning. There may well be a long period between calls; however larger schools may receive calls more frequently.

Q. Will parents be aware of this new process?

A. Schools will need to let all parents know, via newsletter or other appropriate means, that when Police attend an incident of domestic violence/abuse, the school will be informed first thing the next morning. By sharing this information the parents affected by domestic abuse will know that they can approach the school.

Q. What should Schools do to ensure effective participation?

A. There are a number of activities which will support the process:

- Alert those who may pick up the phone between 8.00 and 8.30 about this scheme and that if possible a DSL or Head Teacher is available to take the call.
- DSL/Head should ensure that every effort is made to return Operation Encompass calls where an alert email is received.
- Increase awareness amongst staff and parents by sharing/organising a viewing of the following [BBC video clip](#)
- Schools can reference Operation Encompass in their safeguarding policies to ensure that schools staff and parents are aware of the process. Schools can make use of **template letters for parents** about the scheme.

Q. What is the review/evaluation process?

A. The scheme will be evaluated and reviewed as it evolves. In other areas it has been found to be a very effective way of supporting children at a most difficult time.

Q. Where can I find out more about the background to Operation Encompass?

A. <http://www.operationencompass.org/>

Here is how Operation Encompass worked in one school....

Police attended a case of domestic abuse at the home of a reception-aged child.

The next morning, when the child arrived at school with his mum he had his teddy bear tightly clutched in his arms.

Normally, he would have been asked to leave the toy with mum or in the classroom. The teacher did neither – understanding his teddy had been brought in for a reason.

The boy hugged his teddy all day while the teacher quietly supported him, occasionally letting him know she was there.

The Head Teacher said: "The most important thing she did was not to ask him to let mum take his teddy home, not to put his teddy out of the way in the classroom and not to even make any comment about him hugging his teddy all day."



"It was nothing – but to that little boy it was everything."

(Evening Herald, July 2011)