

Berkswich CE Primary School			
Reference Number S25g	Shared with Staff February 2021	Ratified by Governing Board February 2021	Review Date February 2023
Policy Title	Operation Encompass Policy		

Rationale

Protecting All God's Children, the Church of England's Policy for Safeguarding Children in the Church of England, states that every person has a value and dignity which comes directly from the creation of people in God's own image and likeness. Berkswich CE Primary School values all children. As a Church of England School, the safeguarding of all within our care is of the utmost importance, as all who step through our doors are loved and cherished as a child of God.

Children experiencing domestic abuse are negatively impacted by this exposure and this can lead to emotional, physical and psychological harm. Involvement in Operation Encompass is an important part of supporting children whose lives are impacted in these ways.

Legal basis

This policy operates within Section 11 of the Children's Act 2004, which provides the legal framework for the sharing of such information. In England and Wales the Adoption of the Children Act 2002 amended the definition of significant harm provided by the Children Act 1989, adding a new category of: 'Impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another.' This policy operates within the school's Safeguarding policies and the Keeping Children Safe in Education document. These can be viewed on our school website: <https://www.berkswichceprimary.co.uk/policies/>

Domestic abuse definitions

The Government has adopted the following definitions in relation to Domestic Abuse:

- **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 sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional abuse".

- **Controlling behaviour**

“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**

“an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish or frighten their victim”.

Domestic abuse may include abuse through the use of technology such as, but is not limited to, the sharing of images, abusive texts, tracking apps or spyware.

What is Operation Encompass?

Operation Encompass is a charitable organisation set up in 2011, which has since enabled effective interventions to many thousands of children who have experienced domestic abuse. The creators of Operation Encompass work to ensure that police and schools throughout the country are able to address those impacted by domestic abuse consistently and coherently.

Operation Encompass directly connects the police with schools to ensure support for children living with domestic abuse in their homes when there has been a police attended incident of Domestic Abuse. Rapid provision of support within the school environment means children are better safeguarded against the short-, medium- and long-term effects of domestic abuse. By providing the school with the knowledge that a domestic incident has taken place in the child's home the previous day, it allows the school to put support in place for the child before they arrive at school.

What happens between the police and the school?

When an officer attends the incident and completes the risk assessment on their handheld device, the name(s) of the children who form part of the household (whether present or not) are included. Alongside the details of the child, the officer will select the school that the child attends from the dropdown list. By completing this section of the risk assessment, the officer generates an automatic referral to the school via an email in real time.

1. The information is passed by the police to the school prior to the start of the next school day.
2. A nominated lead called the Key Adult is the only person with whom the police will share the information. This is the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Deputy Safeguarding Lead in school who have both received Operation Encompass training.

3. The school's Key Adult will decide how to best support the child involved in the domestic incident.
4. The police will record that information has been passed and to which Key Adult (recorded on the crime/non-crime log or incident log).

The Key Adult will record the details given by the police on the operation encompass call log and within the schools child protection records.

First Response are not contacted automatically by the school following the notification from the police. The police will have already referred the matter if deemed necessary following the incident. School will continue to follow their safeguarding procedures after receipt of the information.

Impact on the child and family

All families will have received a letter (see Appendix A) informing them of the school's participation in Operation Encompass; the policy and letter can be found on the school website: <https://www.berkswichceprimary.co.uk/policies/>

Neither the family nor the child will be approached directly about the incident by school, unless this is deemed necessary in relation to safeguarding the child. Teachers will be made aware and will offer discrete, rather than overt support to ensure that a secure and sympathetic environment is provided and the broader effects of abuse are addressed.

Advice may be sought from external agencies, including through the Teachers' Operation Encompass National Helpline (0204 513 9990 - 8am to 1pm, Mon-Fri).

For further information or if you have questions about Operation Encompass, then please contact the school office or speak to your child's teacher.

Appendix A – Letter to parents and carers

Dear Parents and Carers,

The school has been given the opportunity to take part in a project that will run jointly between schools and Staffordshire Police.

Operation Encompass is the police reporting to schools, prior to the start of the next school day, when a child or young person has experienced any domestic abuse.

Mrs Joint and I have received training in our capacity of Designated (and deputy) Safeguarding Leads and are named as the known 'Key Adults'. We have been trained to enable us to liaise with the police and to use the information that has been shared to ensure that the school is able to make provision for possible difficulties experienced by children, or their families, who have experienced a domestic abuse incident. Any information is shared with the school in confidence.

We are keen to offer the best support possible to all our children and we believe that this will be extremely beneficial for all those involved should the need for this support arise. Teachers have been trained and understand the need for sensitivity and a caring and supportive approach in such situations; any subsequent actions will be in line with our safeguarding policy.

We appreciate that this is a difficult subject for a parent and carer letter, but felt that it is important to inform parents and carers and be transparent about our involvement with Operation Encompass.

Please do ask if you have any further queries.