



## Operation Encompass Ireland

### **What is Operation Encompass?**

Operation Encompass is a police led, school based early intervention safeguarding scheme which supports children and young people who experience Domestic Abuse.

Operation Encompass was created to ensure that by the start of the next school day a child's school will be informed that there has been a police attended incident of domestic abuse incident at the home of the child. This knowledge, given to the school's trained Key Adult allows the provision of immediate early intervention through overt or silent support, dependent upon the needs and wishes of the child.

This information is shared by the police directly with the school, it involves all incidents of Domestic Abuse and is shared prior to the start of the next school day.

Key Adults, (Designated Safeguarding Leads) have been identified within schools and specific training is provided in how to deal with the 'raw, sensitive and dynamic information' given by Operation Encompass. This training refers to the identification of the signs and symptoms of a child or young person suffering from Domestic Abuse, the implications of this trauma and how best to support these children and young people.

### **What does it cost?**

Operation Encompass does not cost anything, it merely requires a commitment from schools and the Police to safeguard vulnerable children at



the earliest possible opportunity and a change in protocols.

Free online training for schools is available from Operation Encompass.

### **Why Operation Encompass?**

There is a wide-ranging body of research which has evidenced the damage done to children who live in homes where there is Domestic Abuse.

Experiencing Domestic Abuse is classed as an Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE). Research has shown that for those children reporting ACE scores of 1 or more, experience of domestic violence was the best predictor for higher ACE scores, with 86.0 per cent reporting a score of 4 or more.'

We know that the higher your ACE score the higher the risk for later physical and emotional health problems and risk-taking behaviours.

Operation Encompass is the one scheme that supports these children in an immediate manner and by adopting this scheme any Police Force and it's schools is demonstrating it's commitment to these vulnerable children and also joining a community of like-minded forces and schools.

Operation Encompass is established in 40 police forces in England and Wales and in Police Scotland.

Operation Encompass is described as 'early intervention at its best'

The scheme is supported by HM Government, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary Fire and Rescue Services, Department for Education and the College of Policing.



Operation Encompass is cited in several UK Government reports.

Operation Encompass features within the non-legislative section of the England and Wales new Domestic Abuse Bill.

Operation Encompass forms part of the government document ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’.

Operation Encompass is the Winner of inaugural World Class Policing Awards 2019/2020

## **Research**

There are several research documents concerning Operation Encompass:

### **Winchester University September 2019**

‘All in all Operation Encompass is a fantastic process and has brought a wide variety of issues relating to domestic abuse to the forefront of contemporary society. It has not only supported a large number of children so far, it has also began to implement changes within the school curriculum to help children to understand the differences between healthy and unhealthy relationships. In time Operation Encompass should be come a mandatory law within all schools and police services around the country in order to support every child who falls victim to domestic abuse.’

### **Southampton University 2019**

#### **Awareness of DVA and identification of children**

‘The Operation Encompass (OE) scheme was often discussed as a successful means of increasing awareness and understanding. For police, the process of being trained in OE increased awareness of the importance of their role in supporting DVA, as well as better understanding of the parameters of

secure data sharing. For schools, OE alerts were vital in bringing families and children to light who might not have been on their radar without an OE notification.’



# OPERATION ENCOMPASS

*Well overwhelmingly all of the schools have said that they're now more aware of more families, who they weren't aware of before. So as part of the review, I asked them 66 responses from 250 schools, which is a really good response. And I asked them about what was the value of Operation Encompass. And .... overwhelmingly they just said they were now more aware of domestic abuse, they were now more aware of the prevalence, they were more aware of those families that they didn't think, if you like, were involved in domestic abuse. P3, Police OE Lead*

*'While schools discussed how they could often spot children who were struggling, due to changes in presentation or behaviour, OE notifications added context to these changes, and also brought to light the children who did not present differently following an incident of DVA. In some cases, school DSLs also highlighted the usefulness of OE notifications for challenging their assumptions and stereotypes about different families and children.'*

*Yes, the first one, because you do, you realise your own prejudices, you open this, you see 'Operation Encompass and the first one, you might not have completely nailed down, but you've got a vague idea of who you think, the children who you're not going to be surprised if it's them. And there's children you're going to think, 'What the heck?' and that was my first one. Do you know, when I've no idea at all. So that's when you thought 'this is a good thing', because, actually, I think I would have put her on the list of the top ten most likely to ever have not raised an Encompass alert, so that shows you your own prejudices if you like. S2, Headteacher, DSL*

*'As part of building a bigger picture, the OE scheme also provided useful data on prevalence of DVA cases where police had been present, as well as demographic information and information on repeat cases. Schools who received repeated OE notifications for one child, could use this information to support the escalation of safeguarding provision of that child and their family.'*

*[OE] is a really good lens to understand, the level of children suffering from domestic abuse, but also the links between the repeat victims as well. So, I think schools are seeing that now. So, there are some people who have been witnessing 5, 6, 7, and then there's questions then, which ties it up really nicely, is that, through the data education will be thinking 'oh hang on a minute I'll just check. Are they part of a care and support plan?'*

## **Newman University May 2019**

*'Operation Encompass signifies changes to the way DA is going to be reported, and for whom schools will be expected to deliver support and intervention.*

*With the introduction of Operation Encompass, agencies such as police have indicated that education is a universal agency that children and young people have access to. Schools can address a direct consequence of an incident of DA (for example lack of breakfast or sleep) but now need to consider how to address any resulting psychological trauma.'*



## **Teesside University 2017**

'Overall, the evaluation of Operation Encompass in Hartlepool has found a consensus view that there is a clear role for the sharing of information relating to children exposed to or experiencing domestic violence, between police and providers of primary, secondary and further education. Operation Encompass offers a positive opportunity for those providers to support children and young people in ways that are pro-active, non-stigmatising, and underpinned by appropriate child and adult safeguards.

Operation Encompass represents an expansion of remit and responsibility for schools and colleges, into potentially new areas of engagement with families. Many schools and colleges noted that prior to Operation Encompass, even in situations where schools may have an existing social care involvement with a family, domestic violence was often the 'elephant in the room'. As a front line, universal service, with close relationships with children and families, this expanded remit and the commitment to a pro-active involvement with families experiencing domestic violence is to be welcomed. The research has identified multiple strengths of Operation Encompass, not least a genuine shared purpose across educational and social care organisations to utilise this information to support and safeguard children.'

## **Covid-19 Response**

Geographical areas that are part of Operation Encompass can have access to the Operation Encompass National Teachers' Helpline; a unique service which allows teachers immediate and free access to Educational Psychologists who are able to provide advice in how best to support children who are experiencing Domestic Abuse.

## **Summary**

Operation Encompass now forms a significant community of police forces and school who have all used the scheme to provide greater support and nurture to those children experiencing DA in their homes.



It has raised the level of awareness about the impact living with DAS has upon children within our communities.

It has also enabled teachers to become more aware of the impact of DA on children and the ways in which they can mitigate this harm.

Operation Encompass has a proven track record of success in delivery in terms of both police and schools and in terms of the positive impact for children.

Operation Encompass has achieved great success through the commitment of its founders who still work on a voluntary and mainly self-funding basis.

**Operation Encompass must be in every force, in every school, for every child, no matter where they live. No child deserves any less.**

[www.operationencompass.org](http://www.operationencompass.org)