



DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY

Policy taken from the LCC Domestic Abuse Policy and Resource Pack for Educational Settings at

<https://professionals.lincolnshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/2141/domestic-abuse-resource-pack-for-schools-and-educational-settings>.

See <https://professionals.lincolnshire.gov.uk/downloads/download/209/domestic-abuse-resources> for latest documents, forms etc.

Responsible: Governing Body

Agreed: May 2022

To be reviewed: Every 2 years or in the event of LCC policy change (or earlier if legislation changes)

Reviewed (and notes if applicable): January 2024 (checked against current LCC policy, updated contacts and resources)

Policy Statement

"We share the vision for people in Lincolnshire to live free from domestic abuse."

This Policy is a point of reference for all employees who are involved in reports of domestic abuse in a work capacity. Employees can refer to this Policy for guidance purposes.

Introduction

This policy is to support schools and educational settings work towards a safer community. Schools and educational settings have a responsibility to respond to the safety and welfare of children they are working with and a duty to recognise that their employees may also be affected by domestic abuse.

Aims of this policy

- a. To send out a strong message that domestic abuse will not be tolerated and that schools and educational settings will promote healthy and respectful relationships.
- b. To develop an effective and supportive response for all those affected by domestic abuse.
- c. To optimise the opportunity for disclosure of domestic abuse in a safe environment.
- d. To offer practical suggestions of further support available.
- e. To offer the Head Teacher guidance on how to support employees affected by domestic abuse

Definition of domestic abuse

The Home Office (2021) definition of domestic violence and abuse is:

Behaviour of a person ("A") towards another person ("B") is "domestic abuse" if A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other, and the behaviour is abusive.

Behaviour is "abusive" if it consists of any of the following:

- (a) *physical or sexual abuse;*
- (b) *violent or threatening behaviour;*

- (c) *controlling or coercive behaviour;*
- (d) *economic abuse;*
- (e) *psychological, emotional or other abuse;*

It does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.

Raising of domestic abuse with Parent / member of staff

The member of staff who has the best working relationship with the parent/carer or member of staff should be the one who asks the questions about their concerns. This should occur in a safe and suitable environment, where the abuser or another inappropriate person is not expected to interrupt or overhear and respect given to that persons privacy and dignity.

These conversations should never happen in the presence of the abusive person and/or any children involved

OR any family member unless the individual states that it is safe to do so while the family member is not with them.

More helpful information on asking the question is available on page 23 of the Domestic Abuse Resource Pack for Schools and Educational Settings [link at the end of this Policy].

Response following disclosure or concern

When responding to domestic abuse employees are expected to adhere to the Referral Pathway in the Domestic Abuse Resource Pack for Schools and Educational Settings [Appendix 1] page 27 onwards for appropriate processes of referral for all age ranges of those affected by domestic abuse.

In those circumstances where the victim is under 18 years and the perpetrator is 18 years or above, or if both victim and perpetrator are under 18 years this should also be treated as a child safeguarding concern. A referral/signposting can also be made to specialist domestic abuse services if aged 16/17 years. In the event that a child is known to be involved in a violent relationship, the member of staff should consider undertaking an Early Help Assessment. Should they subsequently decide they would like a consultation with an Early Help Advisor regarding their next steps this should be arranged. During the course of any such discussions the member of staff may find it helpful to consider with the Early Help Advisor whether the matter meets the threshold for social care intervention.

If the member of staff believes the child is at immediate risk then they should contact the police and initiate child protection procedures by contacting the Children's Services Customer Services Centre (CSC) on 01522 782111 and reporting a safeguarding concern; e.g. a child involved in a relationship with a violent girlfriend / boyfriend. Outside of normal working hours contact should be made to the Emergency Duty Team on 01522 782333.

Professional Curiosity

The Domestic Abuse Resource Pack stresses the importance of professional curiosity. Employees must demonstrate a non-discriminatory approach and explore the issues and formulate judgements that translate into effective actions in their dealings with children, adults and families. This should be matched by an organisational culture which supports its employees in openness, constructive challenge and confidence to practice sensitive and challenging circumstances at the front line.

It is vital that employees understand the complexity of domestic abuse and are curious about what is happening in the child, adult and perpetrators life.

Professional curiosity is the capacity and communication skill to explore and understand what is happening within a family rather than making assumptions or accepting things at face value.

Employees should never avoid asking the difficult questions, sharing concerns with your Designated Safeguarding Lead [DSL] as a "fresh pair of eyes" looking at a case can really help to maintain good practice standards and develop a critical mind-set.

Inform the individual who has disclosed to you or of whom you have concerns for of the local support services in your area, so they can contact them either with you or either directly at their convenience.

Support to staff who may be affected by domestic abuse could be offered additional leave for appointments with solicitors or doctors or support services for example, the school/educational setting should be as flexible as possible to be able to accommodate the employee's requests. Extra security could be offered for example if the employee is being stalked or harassed, you could offer a different parking space and way of entering the work place, start or finish time to enable a change in work pattern. Maybe allow no mention of that employee's name or picture in publicity at the school/educational setting, all of which reduce the risk to that individual while at work.

Recording of information

Information recorded on any individual either studying or working at the school or educational setting should be stored in a safe manner, so not to heighten the risk to that individual, i.e. the abusive partner/family member may see the note and increase the abuse.

For further information on how to manage the recording of information see page 26 of the Domestic Abuse Resource Pack for Schools and Educational Settings, link available at the end of this policy.

Staff Safety and Well Being

Employees are potentially at risk whenever they work with a family where one or more family members are violent. Employees should:

- Be aware that domestic abuse is present but undisclosed or not known in many of the families they work with.

Schools should ensure that employees have the appropriate training and skills for working with people experiencing Domestic Abuse; and use supervision sessions both to allow employees to voice fears about abuse in a family being directed at them; and also to check that safe practice is being followed in all cases where Domestic Abuse is known or suspected.

Employees and managers should also be aware of the emotional impact of working with victims and/or perpetrators of domestic abuse and information and procedures for reducing the risk of vicarious trauma.

Training

All school / educational setting employees are advised to complete domestic abuse training at some level.

Full details are available on page 36 of the Domestic Abuse Resource Pack for Schools and Educational Settings, Training Section:

- Domestic Abuse Awareness – Short Course, E-learning.

- More in-depth Awareness of Domestic Violence and Abuse E-learning.
- Full days face to face Domestic Abuse, Risk assessment & MARAC Training.

Name/Title of Staff	Training
<i>DSLs</i>	<i>E-learning and face to face domestic abuse training in line with LSCP DSL training pathway</i>
<i>All staff</i>	<i>E-Learning in line with the LSCP training pathway.</i>
<i>All staff</i>	<i>DA Awareness delivered via the DSL as part of INSET days/twilight training.</i>

These can be completed as part of the Safeguarding Training Pathway for all employees and there is also the expectation that employees will complete refresher training every 3 years.

Key Contacts

Specialist Domestic Abuse Services:

The Lincolnshire domestic abuse service provide support for female and male victims aged over 16 years and their children affected by domestic abuse.

LDASS

www.ldass.org.uk, 01522 510041 Mon-Fri 9am-5pm

email – info@ldass.org.uk

SARC [Sexual Assault Referral Centre]:

Provides a safe environment where victims of Rape, Sexual Assault or Sexual Abuse can get support and advice. They also provide the possibility of making a report to the police and undertaking a forensic examination. They are open to all victims, regardless of whether they want to report a crime to the police or not. info@springlodge.org, www.springlodge.org 01522 524402 - Mon - Fri 9am till 5pm 01371 812686 - at any other time

National Services:

24-hour National Domestic Abuse Helpline www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk 0808 2000 247	Shelter www.shelter.org.uk 0808 800 4444
Forced Marriage Unit www.foc.gov.uk/forcedmarriage 020 7008 0151 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mon – Fri	Samaritans www.samaritans.org.uk 113 123
Men's Advice Line www.mensadvice.org.uk 0808 801 0327	Women's Aid https://www.womensaid.org.uk/
Mankind www.mankind.org.uk 01823 334244	National Stalking Helpline https://www.suzylamplugh.org/page/s/category/national-stalkinghelpline 0808 802 0300
Galop Support helpline for LGBT+ victims of domestic abuse www.galop.org.uk , 0300 999 5428	Information for children and young people: www.thehideout.org.uk www.nspcc.org.uk www.disrespectnobody.co.uk

Key Resources

The Domestic Abuse Resource Pack for Schools and Educational Settings is available via the [Lincolnshire Domestic Abuse Website](#)

[Keeping Children Safe in Education; Statutory guidance for schools and colleges](#)

There are many resources available for schools to use regarding domestic abuse, covering all age ranges from Reception to Sixth Form.

National Workshop Packages:

'Expect Respect' – pre-planned workshops aimed at reception to sixth form.

'Can You See Me' and **'Disrespect Nobody'** – both aimed at Secondary schools to sixth form and both come with DVDs and pre-planned workshops.

Making Sense of Relationships – pre-planned workshops aimed at Secondary schools/settings, produced by the NSPCC in partnership with PSHE Association

All available from the [Stay Safe Partnership Website](#)

It is hoped that with the use of these packages within schools and educational settings that students will learn what is a healthy relationship and unhealthy relationship at an earlier age, and thusly enable them to make educated choices at an earlier stage in their life.