

Operation Encompass: Briefing Note

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Operation Encompass is an information sharing initiative between the Cumbria Constabulary and education establishments in Cumbria. Its main aim is to inform designated safeguarding leads (DSL) in education establishments at the earliest opportunity, about their children who have been exposed to domestic abuse and hate crime. This enables the DSL to respond appropriately to the particular situation and ensure rapid safeguarding and support for children. This reduces the risk of cases reaching crisis level before interventions are made.

Cumbria County Council and the Police Crime Commissioner have agreed a joint funding package for Operation Encompass for the next three academic years – September 2020 until July 2023.

Why is it important?

The negative impact of children being exposed to domestic abuse is significant. Domestic abuse has been identified as an Adverse Childhood Experience (ACEs) and can lead to emotional, physical and/or psychological harm for the child.

Operation Encompass is a national initiative that has been recognised by HMICFRS, OFSTED and the Home Office who all support it. The initiative enables education establishments to bring domestic abuse and other issues out into the open. This enables support to be provided to vulnerable children and their families and risks can be mitigated at an early opportunity.

It has been identified that Operation Encompass works. It has been in operation as a countywide initiative since September 2018. Disclosures about domestic abuse are made by phone from the Operation Encompass team at Cumbria Constabulary HQ to the relevant DSL. Records are kept of what is disclosed. The DSL has to respond effectively and swiftly to support their vulnerable children. It is only police information that is shared and those disclosures are recorded by the Operation Encompass team.

In Cumbria, current disclosures are made the next weekday after the day domestic abuse incident has been reported to the constabulary. There is no provision for weekends, so disclosures about domestic abuse incidents reported at weekends are made on Mondays.

How is Operation Encompass expanding from September 2020?

1. Information about children who are victims of hate crime will be shared. Hate crime is where a victim is specifically targeted by someone else due to the victim's age, race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, disability and faith. Thankfully, we do not experience much of this type of crime in Cumbria, but it can be very harmful to the victim as they comprehend that they have been targeted due to someone else prejudices.
2. All colleges in Cumbria are now included.
3. All registered nurseries in Cumbria are now included.
4. All schools and PRUs remain included.
5. Information regarding domestic abuse and hate crime will now be collated for all three half term holidays and the Christmas holiday. This information will then be passed appropriately on the first day back after the holiday or the day after that if it is really busy. Information relating to higher risk cases will be prioritised.

Education settings are being asked to:

- Ensure that you have a nominated DSL or equivalent at your establishment and send contact details of the DSL and you to:
Operation.encompass@cumbria.police.uk This need to be:
 - Names
 - Contact numbers
 - Email addresses.
 - During the covid-19 situation having works mobile numbers has really helped as useful backup method to communicate. If you are happy to do so, please share these too.
These contact details will not be shared further than the Op Encompass team.
- Operation Encompass training will be offered via 4 online training sessions to nurseries and colleges on the following dates. The training will be delivered via Microsoft Teams. Please indicate which training session you would like to attend when you supply DSL contact details back to OperationEncompass@cumbria.police.uk .This will enable police to send a Microsoft Teams invite to enable you to participate in the training.
- Schools already participating in Operation Encompass are welcome to attend the training if they wish to do so and can email OperationEncompass@cumbria.police.uk to indicate their preferred training session”.
 - Monday 24th August between 2-3pm
 - Tuesday 8th September between 10-11am
 - Thursday 10th September between 1-2pm
 - Monday 14th September between 1-2pm
- You must ensure that you handle the data you are passed in line with GDPR guidelines. I am sure you are aware of these, but this will be a topic covered in the training above.
- Please ensure you return any questionnaires promptly and thorough when they get sent out throughout the year. This will really help us to identify what works and share best practice

If you have any queries with the Operation Encompass, please drop the team an email and we will get back to.

Thanks very much for your anticipated support or continued support with Operation Encompass. It is an excellent initiative, it works well in Cumbria. It enables very early interventions to be provided and it enables a real difference to be made to the lives of some of our most vulnerable children.

ENDS