

# Operation Encompass

Supporting children through key adults

## In every Force, in every school, for every child Background Information 2017



Sgt, David Carney-Haworth Rtd  
Elisabeth Carney-Haworth  
[www.operationencompass.org](http://www.operationencompass.org)





The benefits to young people and families of the Operation Encompass approach is proven from my perspective and I do not believe that you would find any frontline officer or staff member from generalist to specialist who would disagree

**Shaun Sawyer Chief Constable of Devon and Cornwall Police**



A brilliantly simple idea

Patron, Operation Encompass

**Dame Esther Rantzen**



Operation Encompass inverts the assumption that people need to get information to the police when in fact it needs to get to the people who can make a difference

**Professor David Gadd Manchester University**



Operation Encompass is a fantastic scheme and I am delighted to be an ambassador for the programme.

Patron, Operation Encompass

**Dame Vera Baird QC and PCC**



This is just the kind of intervention these children need

**Dr Eamon McCrory UCL** (asked on live radio to comment upon Operation Encompass following his research into the effects of domestic abuse upon children's brains)



Operation Encompass, which seeks to tackle domestic violence, is a ground breaking initiative that should be rolled out across the country. Ministers need to understand the impact that domestic violence can have on children's education and how Operation Encompass can give them a better chance in life.

**Oliver Colvile MP**



The implementation of Operation Encompass is an exciting time for partnership working and will significantly enhance the relationship between all organisations involved in the safeguarding of children.

**Dave Picard Chair, Local Safeguarding Children's Board**



Children are often the hidden victims when it comes to Domestic Abuse in the home. The launch of Operation Encompass is a key milestone in supporting and protecting children who have witnessed or been in the home when an incident has occurred.

**Barry Copping PCC Cleveland**

Perhaps this is a  
world in which children suffer  
but we can lessen the number  
of suffering children  
and if you do not do this  
then who will do this

Robert F Kennedy

Imagine arriving at school the morning after you have heard and, or seen your parents arguing and one being beaten. You have not slept and have had no breakfast. Your home is in disarray. You don't have all your school uniform or your PE kit and now you have to sit in class and learn about adverbs. You are worried about your parents and want to be with them but you are also very worried about what will happen when you do go home at the end of the day.

You can't tell anyone what has happened or how you feel.

This happens in our schools every day and there are no current procedures for the early reporting on of Domestic Abuse incidents to schools and this means that our children, the often inaudible and invisible victims of Domestic Abuse, are left without the support and nurture that they need when they need it most.

**The solution to this is the pioneering project,  
Operation Encompass.**

Operation Encompass was created to ensure that by 9.00am on the next day the school will be informed that a child or young person has been involved in a domestic abuse incident. 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

**Key Adults** have been identified within schools and specific training<sup>1</sup> has been provided in how to deal with '**raw sensitive and dynamic information**' given by Operation Encompass. Additional training has been given to the schools in relation to the identification of the signs and symptoms of a child or young person suffering from Domestic Abuse. The training also covered how best to support these children including the use of safety planning. Parents and carers have been notified that the school is part of Operation Encompass by letter and the school website.

In England and Wales the Adoption and 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"

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<sup>1</sup> Abigail Sterne and Catherine Lawler, co-authors of Domestic Violence and Children



# Operation Encompass

Our Vision for Operation Encompass is:

**That Operation Encompass is in Force, in every school for every child**

We will achieve this by:

- Lobbying Local and Central Government
- Raising awareness with Police and Crime Commissioners
- Providing information and advice about Operation Encompass to all police forces in the UK
- Developing and sharing Key Adult training
- Hosting an Operation Encompass resource based website
- Using media outlets to publicise and promote Operation Encompass
- Sharing research
- Acting as a conduit and broker for information exchange between agencies



## C4EO

The centre for Excellence and Outcomes in Children's and Young Peoples Services have 'Fully Validated' Operation Encompass and cites it as 'Effective Local Practice' on their website.

C4EO is part of the National Children's Bureau (NCB)

I remember lying in bed one night, listening to him getting hit and hit and hit, screaming no, no, no

## Elisabeth Carney-Haworth



Operation Encompass is one of the best things that has happened in terms of safeguarding in schools for a long time. It is such a simple concept but it can and does have so much impact: a phone call to school prior to 9am on the morning after a domestic incident has happened in the child's home, brilliant simplicity. Having that knowledge allows us to put support in place for the child.

But there have been unforeseen positive spinoffs; as a direct result of Operation Encompass, domestic abuse is no longer a closed subject in my school. Parents who have been involved in a domestic incident the previous evening will come in to see me, telling me that they have had an "Encompass" even when the police have not been involved. This all means that we are able to support our families even more and this has a very positive impact for the children.

The website that we have created contains support materials and anecdotal evidence of how successful Operation Encompass is, but there is still a lot more to do. We cannot rest until Operation Encompass is in place in every police force.

An ongoing theme in Serious Case Reviews is Domestic Abuse as a risk factor and the lack of information sharing between the police, social care, health professionals and others.

Operation Encompass breaks down this information sharing barrier and is early intervention at its best; quite simply it could not be any better or simpler to achieve.

In recent correspondence between Professor Gadd, Manchester University, and I he said, "Such a cleverly simple intervention that inverts the common assumption that the solution is to get information to the police, rather than get it back to those in a position to make a difference to young people's lives. Remarkable work"

I have contacted every Police and Crime Commissioner and every Local Safeguarding Board Chair in the country to highlight Operation Encompass.

Operation Encompass has been cited as an action for all police forces in the Home Office report "Call to End Violence against Women and Girls".

I would ask that you please support its implementation across the country in whatever way you can because Operation Encompass is , quite simply, **every child's right**.

## Sergeant David Carney-Haworth (Retired)



Operation Encompass is an initiative I created as a result of a conversation with my wife, a Head Teacher.

I launched Operation Encompass in Devonport, Plymouth in February 2011 to address an identified shortcoming in the early sharing of information with schools to enable the provision of timely care and support for the innocent and often silent victims of domestic abuse - the children.

The concept was simple but yet unthought-of:

If a domestic incident occurred on the previous evening and a child was in the house, the police would contact the nominated Key Adult at the school the child attends prior to the start of the school day. Appropriate support would then be available for that child. This support could be overt or silent dependent upon the circumstances.

Operation Encompass was trialled in fourteen schools in the Devonport area of Plymouth and one in Torpoint. Each school identified a Key Adult (usually the Head Teacher and designated Safeguarding Lead) who undertook specific and bespoke training so that there could be an appropriate response to the information being given to them through the project.

All Plymouth schools were then part of Operation Encompass as are the Early Years' Settings. Awareness training for Key Adults was further developed and delivered together with the Plymouth's Educational Psychologists.

Plymouth's Educational Psychologists as to the impact of Operation Encompass undertook research. The researchers concluded *'It is clear from this research the potential Operation Encompass has with regards to supporting those children and young people who are faced with witnessing the distressing scenes of domestic violence'*

This project is a simple yet highly effective solution to a problem that has existed for many years without even being acknowledged as an issue - that of how to support the silent victims of Domestic Abuse.



## Northumbria Police launch Operation Encompass



Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner, Vera Baird, said: " It's so important that we give vulnerable young people across South Tyneside a voice and Operation Encompass is about doing just that, offering early intervention and support when children need it most."

"Many children suffer the effects of domestic abuse, often in silence, and by working together we really can make a difference and improve their lives."

Councillor Joan Atkinson, lead member for Children, Young People and Families, said: "It is crucial that staff in our schools and academies have the right level of training to enable them to provide appropriate support to our young people who have been affected by domestic abuse.

"We are aware that similar schemes across the country have proved to be very popular and resulted in better outcomes for children, so it is only right that we offer this service for our young people."

School should be a kind of freedom

## Cleveland Police launch Operation Encompass

Cleveland Police's Chief Constable Jacqui Cheer, former National Policing Lead for Children and Young Persons, said the initiative was extremely important and she fully supported the roll out of the scheme across the Cleveland area.



Chief Constable Cheer said:

"I don't understand why we weren't doing this earlier. It's one of the most poignant examples of the good we can do when we all work together and cut through the bureaucracy. People need to stop listening to the naysayers and just get on and do it. In my previous role as National Policing Lead for Children and Young Persons I was acutely aware of the

success following the launch of Operation Encompass in Devon and Cornwall.

This initiative is extremely important and schools will be able to identify the early signs of the effects of domestic abuse on children and ensure that the appropriate interventions are available."

Barry Coppinger Cleveland's Crime Commissioner said:

"Children are often the hidden victims when it comes to domestic abuse in the home. The launch of Operation Encompass is a key milestone in supporting and protecting children who have witnessed or been in the home when an incident has occurred. Without such an initiative young people would become stuck in that devastating cycle that domestic abuse can create"

I still recall hearing my mum's screams.

# Cheshire Police Launch Operation Encompass



Chief Constable of Cheshire Police Simon Byrne, who opened the official launch event, said: "It is vital that that we invest in the long-term welfare of the most vulnerable children in Cheshire. Only by protecting young people from the impact of domestic abuse in the home can we hope to break the cycle of this devastating and destructive crime.

Operation Encompass builds on the work that we already do and allows officers to take action to ensure that children, who find themselves in these challenging and upsetting situations, have a brighter future."

"As a Force we continually invest in training for our officers - as part of the operation they share information with key members of staff in local schools to ensure young people affected by domestic abuse get the help and support they need - at home and at school."

"This knowledge will ensure that schools are made aware early enough to support children and young people in a way that means they feel safe, supported and listen to."

Ali Stathers Tracey, Director of the Complex Dependency Model, said:

"Operation Encompass is a prime example of partners working together to not only support children who may not have anyone to talk to about what they are experiencing at home but to really raise the issue of domestic violence in a social arena and on a local level."

"Tackling the root causes of domestic violence is no one agency's responsibility and raising awareness amongst pupils, their parents, and the wider community is the first step is bringing what has been effectively something which goes on behind closed doors, out in to the open."

Cheshire Police currently receive more than 1,000 calls a month relating to alleged domestic violence and abuse.

Headteacher of Ditton Primary School in Widnes, Andrew Buckley, said: "Operation Encompass is proving invaluable to our school community, we've already received ten calls relating to seven families and as a result staff have been able to offer targeted support and understanding."

## Carl Eve Plymouth Herald Crime Reporter



Sgt Carney-Haworth has created something quite remarkable in terms of joined-up, common sense thinking. Operation Encompass is a ground-up scheme - it was built at the bottom, by an agreement by regular police officers and regular teachers, not imposed by senior managers who no longer deal with the daily issues that teachers, police officers and social workers face. That's one of the main reasons it works so well. The other reason it works is because it keeps it simple. It does not promise to eradicate domestic abuse. It merely focuses on one area - the child's day at school. The vast majority of domestic abuse schemes and initiatives focus on the adults, particularly the women. This is understandable. But rarely do the children who often live slap-bang in the middle of this awful environment get noticed or helped. It is assumed they will "bounce" back, because that's what kids do. They don't. The legacy of domestic abuse is traumatised children, who become traumatised teens, who become traumatised adults. Some will continue the cycle, repeating what they have seen all their young lives, either as potential perpetrators or as potential victims. They may have issues with authority, issues with their own relationships, issues with conflict and confrontation.

Operation Encompass, by the simple act of contacting a school before 9am the following day after response officers have been called to the home, ensures there will be some kind of attention on the child, some kind of support, some kind of understanding. To a child, believing they left are entirely on their own to deal with the issue of what happened at home, this is a wonderful safety net. Someone at the place where they spend a big part of their lives knows, understands and will try to help them. This is not to say schools have to sort the problem. The problem is 'at home' and beyond the school or children's control. But any fall-out, particularly emotional, such as depression, anger, confused feelings, fear, isolation - can be properly contextualised. A child who has witnessed or heard such events at home may manifest a number of emotional responses at school. As the scheme has found, some children will behave 'out of character' the following day. By knowing what's gone on at home, the school can be prepared, act accordingly. The other reason I like this scheme is because the originator, Sgt Carney Haworth, continued his learning curve. He drew in academic information and up-to-the minute medical research from a number of sources, which bolstered the argument for the need for such a scheme and cemented its importance and aims. He looked to Government's own investigations and recognised where Operation Encompass could supply a need to protect children, allow vital sensitive information to be shared between organisations quickly and in accordance to current legislation. Having been there, having come out the other side, I cannot stress how good this scheme is, how it should be in every school in the country. While some have highlighted that 'it could save lives', I will say that such grand statements are unnecessary. What it can do is make a child's day better.

**And when you are that child, believe me, that's all you really want.**



## Increasingly everyone's business: A progress report on the police response to domestic abuse states:



Merseyside Police runs Operation Encompass under which, when a domestic abuse incident is attended by a police officer and children are present, a member of staff from the Vulnerable Persons Unit (VPU) or Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) makes immediate contact with the child's school to make them aware. This informs the school of the incident and provides for additional safeguarding. It was described by partners in education as **"The best thing the police have given to education"**.



Cheshire Constabulary has designated schools liaison officers, who work in and with schools.

The schools involved in the scheme identify a member of staff to act as the single point of contact or **key adult**. Under the scheme the key adult in school is informed if and when one of their pupils is involved in or affected by a domestic abuse incident. This allows them to monitor the pupil's behaviour and ensure appropriate support is in place if required.

To date Operation Encompass has supported over 1200 children and young people in Knowsley

In the first 5 months of Operation Encompass in Merseyside - over 2000 children and young people have been supported - there are now plans to expand Operation Encompass to early years across Liverpool and Knowsley.



Within a recent Ofsted Inspection of a **Cheshire** school, Inspectors cited Operation Encompass as having a direct impact on how safe children say that they feel, and that they trust teachers and other adults to help them if they have a problem

## **Torpoint Nursery and Infant School**

Operation Encompass gave us the information that there had been an incident of Domestic Abuse at the address of one of our Reception children who had only started at our school three weeks prior to the incident.

Having spoken to his class teacher she was prepared for him to behave differently from his usual very happy self.

He arrived at the classroom with his mother and his teddy bear. His class teacher would normally have either asked him to put the teddy in a safe place in the classroom or asked him if he wanted mum to take teddy home so that he would be safe. She did neither- understanding that his teddy had been brought for a reason.

He hugged his teddy all day and even took him with him when he went for his speech therapy in school.

His class teacher quietly supported him all day, working next to him and just letting him know that she was there.

But 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.**

# Operation Encompass



Children are very much the silent victims of domestic violence. Whilst they are exposed to it or be subject to it, their voice is often not heard

Prior to the implementation of Operation Encompass there was no procedure for the next day reporting to schools that a child or young person had been exposed to a domestic incident the night before.

Studies and research conducted over the years show that domestic abuse and child abuse are intrinsically linked.

## The principle of Operation Encompass:

Children who have been involved in a domestic abuse incident where the police have attended will have that information passed to a "Key-Adult" in the school that the child attends prior to the start of the next school day.

'Silent' or 'Overt' support is given dependent on the child's needs.

When designing Operation Encompass it was recognised that the handling of such confidential, sensitive, dynamic and often raw information needed to be dealt with in a way that was proportionate and appropriate to the needs of the child or young person. To address this, "Key Adults" were identified in each school

The Key Adult would be the person available each day to receive the details of the incident and assess what type of support, overt or silent, would be needed for the child.

Key Adults should be the Designated Safeguarding Leads in the schools  
Key Adult training was developed alongside two child psychologists

Detailed guidance was given to the Key Adults and the related checklist is available on the Operation Encompass website: [www.operationencompass.org](http://www.operationencompass.org)

"She'd cry out, begging him to stop. I'd lie there, feeling sick"

I have no doubt at all that the children of Cheshire are much safer and better looked after than they were before.

PCC Cheshire

The children's Act 2004 (section 11) provides the legal basis for the information exchange

After the high profile murder of Victoria Climbe, the Lord Lamming report and the later high profile murders of Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman in August 2002 with the resulting Bichard enquiry In July 2005, the Home Office issued a **statutory code of practice** on the Management of Police Information (MOPI).

The MOPI Code of Practice *requires* the police to obtain specific information when attending at domestic incidents.

It includes information about any child or young person who is:

**A victim or witness to a crime**

Concerned in child abuse or neglect

**Suffering or suffered emotional or physical harm**

Involved in anti social behaviour

Involved in or has been involved in substance abuse

Details collected about the child or young person include their name, age, date of birth school details name of general practitioner etc.

There are now legal obligations and policing priorities for the police service when attending domestic abuse incidents.

The number one priority for the police service is:

**To protect the lives of both adults and children who are at risk as a result of a domestic abuse.**

In a recent review of Operation Encompass by Knowsley it highlighted that:

'Overwhelmingly, the majority of both the incidents and the children and young people involved were defined as Bronze or Silver cases. This is an interesting point given that prior to the implementation of Operation Encompass schools **would not** have been made aware of these cases at all. Gold cases would have been reported to schools as part of the MARAC arrangements'

The dread you feel on your way home from school, dawdling so you  
Don't get home early, hoping he'll come home in a good mood

## Alan Fuller

### Principal Educational Psychologist. Plymouth City Council

Operation Encompass is a rare phenomenon, a simple idea that is relatively easy to implement yet has very real impact on the lives of children and their families. At this early stage our evidence about the difference it is making comes from feedback from the key adults involved and case studies. As an educational psychologist working with colleagues in schools I hear almost daily about children and young people whose needs are being viewed in a new context. Head teachers report that their understanding of the potential impact of domestic violence has enabled them to respond to children's emotional and behavioural needs more effectively.

Operation Encompass training is jointly run by educational psychologists, police and head teachers who have had experience of the pilot. A police commissioned video shows the reality for victims and their families and head teachers outline the role of key adults. The educational psychologists present evidence from research and theory about the psychological and emotional effects of domestic violence.

Feedback has been extremely positive and evidence from the self ratings of participants suggests that although they had a general awareness of domestic violence before the training most head teachers had not appreciated the scale of the incidents or immediate impact on children in their schools. One head teacher who wrote in her initial comments before the training "I don't think we have any issues of domestic violence in our school" wrote after the training: **"Massive impact - I have a much better understanding and empathy towards victims. We have a very supportive team but will need to up skill everyone with today's training"**.

Some of the main benefits schools have identified so far are:

- Improved information sharing with the Police. Where information came from unnamed sources or wasn't shared because of concerns about confidentiality this has provided a more transparent process. As one PC said to a head teacher " we can have a proper conversation about our concerns knowing that you have been officially informed.
- Earlier intervention to reduce the impact of the trauma. Knowing about an incident before the child comes to school enables the key adult to keep a close eye on their emotional state, make adjustments and proactively offer support. This also reduces the risk of a multiple effect that might occur if the child exhibits an anger reaction to events.
- Improved multi-agency responses to the child and family with quicker and better informed assessments of risk and the need for intervention.
- Reduced stigma and secrecy that may lead eventually to more open discussion of domestic violence.
- Better understanding of the context within which children's social behaviour and emotional reactions are understood leading to more effective adult responses and therapeutic input where necessary.
- Provides an opportunity to raise awareness amongst children of what domestic violence is and enables them to feel secure in talking about it to a trusted adult in school. A head teacher told me that within three days of the training she had received two calls about incidents involving families in her school. In one case the boy was able to talk about what had happened exhibiting a sense of relief and emotional release not previously seen.

The single most critical factor in how children weather exposure to domestic violence is the presence of at least one loving and supportive adult in their life. Children without any support, who are isolated or lack nurturing adults in their lives, are more negatively affected by their exposure to domestic abuse. (Osofsky J.D.)



There is evidence from the schools involved across the country that the process of early reporting has a meaningful impact on learning as well as emotional health and well-being and the often silent victims, the children, are receiving support they would not have previously had.

There is further evidence to support that the early information given from Operation Encompass allows the Key Adult to access appropriate services the first time and prevents re-referring.

Operation Encompass has also enabled domestic abuse to become an issue, which can be discussed. Parents are acknowledging the impact that domestic abuse has upon their children. Schools have found that parents will now come in to talk about what is happening at home as they know the police will have already informed the school of an incident. Parents will also come in and report incidents that have occurred which may not have led to the police being called, but will still have caused distress to the children.

Teachers are much more aware of the impact of domestic abuse upon children and are developing their own awareness of what constitutes domestic abuse.

Children will now enter school and tell their teachers that there has been an incident at home; Operation Encompass has shown them that this is not something, which needs to be hidden, and that the staff in their school will help.

**This type of early intervention and support should be every child's right.**

To conclude; it is clear from this research the potential Operation Encompass has with regards to supporting those children and young people who are faced with being exposed to the distressing scenes of domestic violence.



## Feedback:

- This will make a tremendous amount of difference to our school. When a parent called to say her child wasn't coming due to having head lice we were already aware of the domestic abuse through Operation Encompass. We collected the child brought her into school and supported both mother and child. This is fantastic. Thank you"
- Good step forward in terms of information sharing and clear structure on how to implement. I have already set up procedures in school\_
- I think it's a fantastic idea and I am very keen to support it. I have just completed some analysis of the factors common to primary children referred to our service-it appears 86% have witnessed domestic violence.
- Our findings have been that Operation Encompass has had a huge impact on our KS4 students who have often felt that because they are becoming young adults they were able to cope better with domestic abuse in their violent homes when the truth is the opposite leaving them feeling angry, scared and as confused especially at a important stage of their lives when they are having to cope with exams and often providing emotional support to their younger siblings.

And also reminds me to call my mum and tell her that I love her because she took a lot of punches for me.  
So bloody brave ( Carl Eve)

# A selection of media that Operation Encompass has featured on or in:

The Victoria Derbyshire Show May 2016

BBC's Radio 4's iPM programme

BBC ONE Spotlight

BBC News Northwest

BBC Local Live Merseyside

BBC Local Live North East

BBC Live Teeside

ITV West Country

BBC Radio Devon

Pirate FM

Plymouth Sound radio

Plymouth Herald

Liverpool Echo

Shields Gazette

The Northern Echo

TFM Radio

Pontefract and Castleford Express

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