

Operation Encompass

What is Operation Encompass?

Operation Encompass is a new initiative with Merseyside Police. It follows in the footsteps of an extremely successful initiative in Plymouth and Knowsley to safeguard and support children and young people following a domestic abuse incident.

Children will often arrive to school the next morning shell shocked and unprepared following a domestic abuse incident. Wirral Operation Encompass aims to ensure that appropriate school staff are made aware early enough to support children and young people in a way that means they feel safe and included.

How does it work?

Each morning Merseyside Police interrogate the Police system. An area specific search is made, highlighting any violent or abusive incidents that would indicate domestic abuse. This highlights all domestic incidents, be they criminal or non-criminal.

If there are children listed on the incident log as living at the home and aged between 4 and 18 years old then the details are taken. Each school has one or more Key Adult that will be contacted by the officer if there is an incident highlighted on the system for any of their pupils. The incident log is then updated to reflect the communication made.

The staff in contact with those pupils will then be in an informed position to support them in a way that is right for that particular child or young person, either with silent or overt support.

In preparation for the wider launch of Operation Encompass, Knowsley evaluated their initiative. The evaluation highlighted that:

- *100% of schools were signed up to Operation Encompass.*
- *100% of schools had disseminated the domestic abuse briefings to the whole school via inset sessions.*
- *Over a year schools were able to support over 1000 children and young people. Previously 89% of these children would not have been known to be living with domestic abuse.*

Training sessions to develop Key Adults within all schools across Merseyside have been delivered. At Great Meols Primary School the school SENCO, Mrs Ainslie, is the Key Adult and has been trained accordingly, with the Deputy Key Adult being Mrs Joyce, Headteacher.

Conclusion

The Merseyside wide roll out of Operation Encompass will ensure a seamless approach to how partnerships work to safeguard children and young people. This valuable initiative will increasingly support schools to safeguard children and young people.

Operation Encompass was launched in Merseyside on the 6th October 2014.