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Quality Assurance Policies & Procedures
SAFEGUARDING AND PREVENT POLICY
CHILD AND VULNERABLE ADULT PROTECTION

Appendix Q

Domestic violence

Protecting children from domestic abuse

Introduction

Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between people who are, or who have been in a relationship, regardless of gender or sexuality. It can include physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or financial abuse.

Each UK nation has its own definition of domestic abuse for professionals who are working to prevent domestic abuse and protect those who have experienced it (Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, 2016; Home Office, 2013)

Domestic abuse can include:

- sexual abuse and rape (including within a relationship)
- punching, kicking, cutting, hitting with an object
- withholding money or preventing someone from earning money
- taking control over aspects of someone's everyday life, which can include where they go and what they wear
- not letting someone leave the house
- reading emails, text messages or letters
- threatening to kill or harm them, a partner, another family member or pet.

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Witnessing and experiencing domestic abuse

Children never just 'witness' domestic abuse; it always has an impact on them. Exposure to domestic abuse or violence in childhood is child abuse.

Children may experience domestic abuse directly, but they can also experience it indirectly by:

- hearing the abuse from another room
- seeing a parent's injuries or distress afterwards

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- finding disarray like broken furniture
- being hurt from being nearby or trying to stop the abuse

How domestic violence impacts on children and young people

- Poor concentration.
- Aggression, hyperactivity, disobedience.
- Disturbed sleep, nightmares.
- Withdrawal, low self-esteem.
- Showing no emotion ('spaced out')

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/victims-of-domestic-violence>

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/domestic-abuse>

Operation Encompass is an initiative led by Cleveland Police, launched on 1st October 2015. It is a process by which Key adults (Safeguard Leads) in colleges, schools, academies and nurseries are informed that a child/young person may have been affected by domestic abuse within 24 hours of the event taking place

<https://www.operationencompass.org/>