

Resilience makes brilliance!

**Hearing the voice of children as
victims of domestic abuse**

Norfolk Multi-agency Practice Week

Monday 24 November 2025 – Friday 28 November

Liam Bannon and Claire Farrelly



Welcome

We want people to participate but please use the 'raise hand' facility to ask questions and contribute when others are talking.

Please be considerate to others - together we want to create a safe, open and reflective space to learn.

You can turn on live captions on by clicking on the 3 dots at the top of your screen if you need this.

The link to the feedback form will be put in the chat.

Please do take the time to complete it after the session.

Thank you!



Today's session

Liam Bannon – Community Safety Manager – Children as victims of DA

- Children and victims of DA
- Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews
- Video – Voice of a child affected by domestic homicide
- Discussion and next steps

Claire Farrelly - Adviser – Safeguarding, Operation Encompass, Children's Services

- Overview of Operation Encompass (schools & colleges)
- Operation Encompass data
- The role of the Key Adult DSL and their response to Operation Encompass notifications

In this session, we will talk about difficult subjects related to domestic abuse and serious violence. We advise caution for those that may be affected by this content and encourage you to seek support.



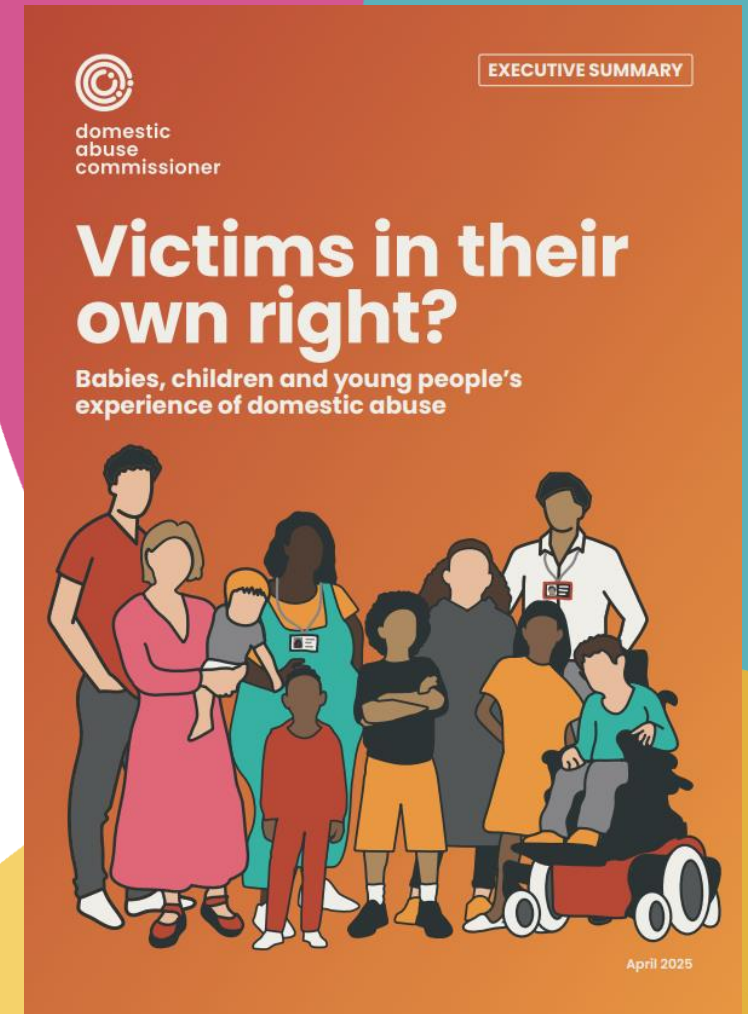
Children as victims of DA

Less than a third of victims and survivors who wanted support for their children were actually able to get it.

The Domestic Abuse Commissioner has made transforming the support available to child victims – as well as preventing many more experiencing domestic abuse in the first place – a key priority.

“The Domestic Abuse Act recognises children as victims of domestic abuse in their own right for the very first time. However,... today it remains unclear how this legal recognition is being implemented to ensure children get the support they deserve.”

Among the 66 recommendations are themes of needing to include the voice of the child in risk assessment and decision making, need for specialist support, and specialist training for the frontline.



DARDRs

Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews (DARDRs) are a multi-agency review of the circumstances in which the death of a person aged 16 or over has, or appears to have, resulted from violence, abuse or neglect by a person to whom they were related or with whom they were, or had been, in an intimate personal relationship, or a member of the same household as themselves.

The focus of these reviews is always on the learning that can be gleaned and shared. Throughout the process, family members are key stakeholders and influence understanding of the case and support creation of recommendations.

You can find local DARDR reports here: [Published Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews for Norfolk](#)



DARDR Gosia interview

Wellbeing warning: The video we will shortly share contains distressing information. If anyone will be affected by this and does not wish to watch the video, please step out now.

DARDR Gosia

- Mental health.
- Identifying risk.
- Hearing the voices of children.

Gosia's daughter

“Listen to the victims, put yourself in their shoes, understand where they are coming from and understand what they are asking for”



Zuzanna's story: listening to the voice of the child

An interview with the daughter of one of our DARDR victims discussing her experiences growing up and subsequent interaction with services.

As practitioners it is vital that we ensure children's voices are heard in domestic abuse cases and Zuzanna's story is a powerful reminder of this.

This film must not be shared and the content must remain confidential

[> Voices in Focus: Zuzanna's story](#)

The password for the film is: FINALVIF1!



Discussion

Please tell what you think of this video, and what it tells us about the support we need to provide to children who are victims of domestic abuse.



Operation Encompass (schools & colleges) overview

November 2025

Claire Farrelly, Adviser Safeguarding



Operation Encompass (schools & colleges)

Operation Encompass began in 2011 as an early intervention safeguarding partnership between education and police forces which supports children who may have been exposed to domestic abuse.

The scheme began in Norfolk in 2016 following a recommendation from a Serious Case Review (Case Q 2016; NSCB Serious Case Reviews) and was extended in 2019 to include missing from home or care episodes.

It is a system which provides an early notification to Key Adult Designated Safeguarding Leads within a school or college when a pupil may have been affected by domestic abuse or a missing episode. In response to this notification, schools & colleges can ensure the appropriate support is available for that child and help multi-agency partners to locate missing children.

There are currently 99% of schools and colleges signed up to take part in Operation Encompass in Norfolk. Nationally the scheme is now active in all 43 police forces across England and Wales and received Royal Assent in May 2024 through The Victims and Prisoners Act enacting a statutory obligation on police forces to share Operation Encompass notifications with schools.

Norfolk process

7am Police send daily spreadsheets of DA related incidents and child missing episodes in last 24 hours (Friday weekly report sent to capture any incidents missed in daily reporting).

Police attend domestic abuse related incident or receive a missing report for a child.

Details of the incident are taken, including all present and witnesses.

Police undertake they take whatever immediate action is required including if a DARA is required; an incident report and risk assessment is generated.

CADS Education Representative matches child information to Synergy record to identify which education setting the child attends.

A notification is created from police information and sent securely to the appropriate setting's Key Adult DSL via AnyComms.

Before 9am, where possible, notifications are sent to identified setting's Key Adult DSL via AnyComms (secure file sharing system).
If a notification is sensitive, CADS Education Representative will telephone the Key Adult DSL prior to sending notification.
Notification forms provide signposting for Key Adult DSLs to support decision making for next steps.

Key Adult DSL receives the notification and decides on appropriate action, if any, to take in response.

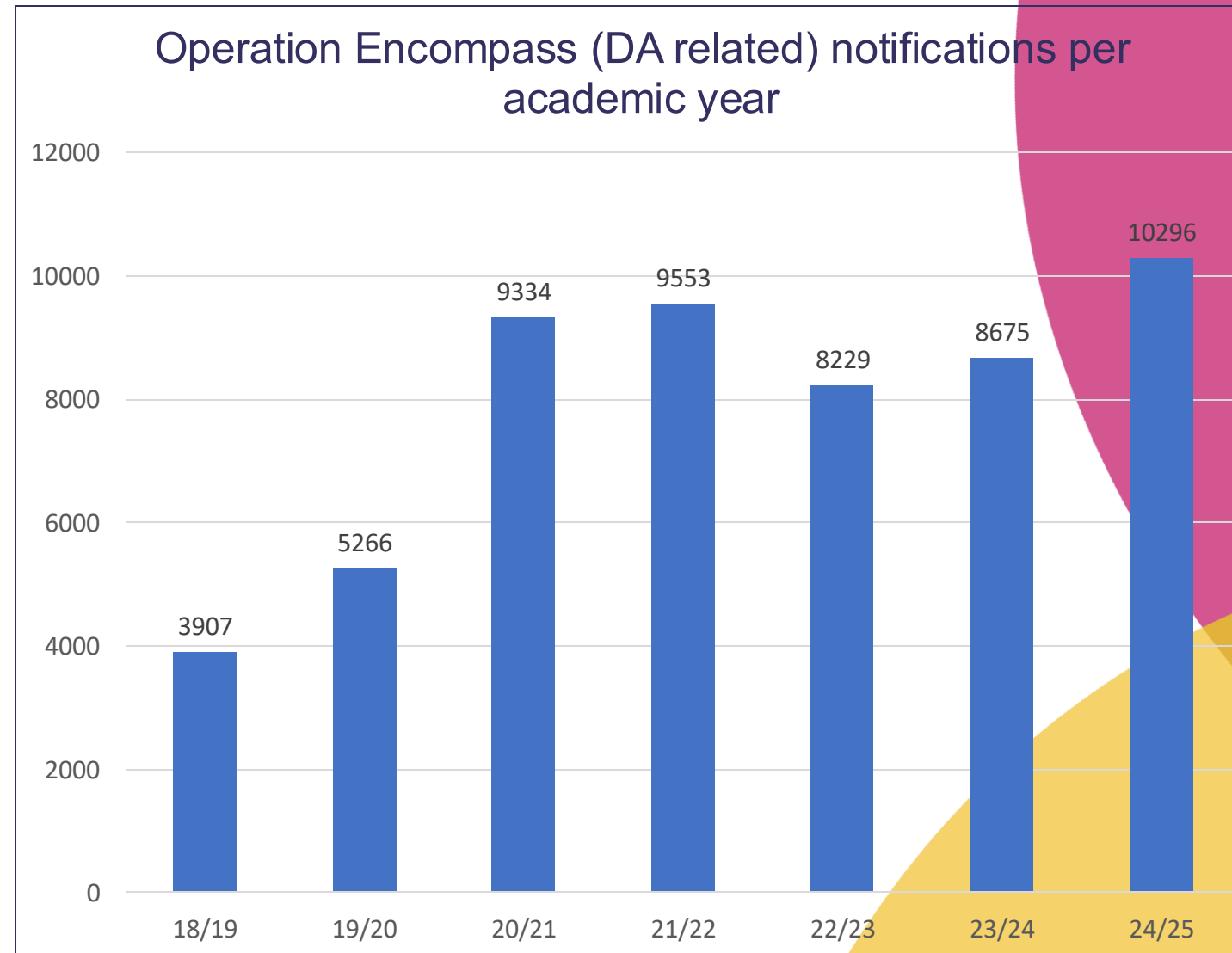
Where children are identified as electively home educated or children missing education, the notification is shared with the relevant NCC education team.

Where education settings cannot be established for children, referral is made to CME team to establish the education arrangements.

Where matching is not possible from initial police data, further information is provided by the police.

Operation Encompass Data

- Notifications are per child, per incident reported to police.
- The data shows a marked increase in notifications of domestic abuse related incidents since April 2020. This is a nationally-recognised increase linked to Covid-19 pandemic. Notification levels have remained largely consistent since that time.
- Monthly trend data indicates increased notifications during public holidays, especially Christmas and New Year.

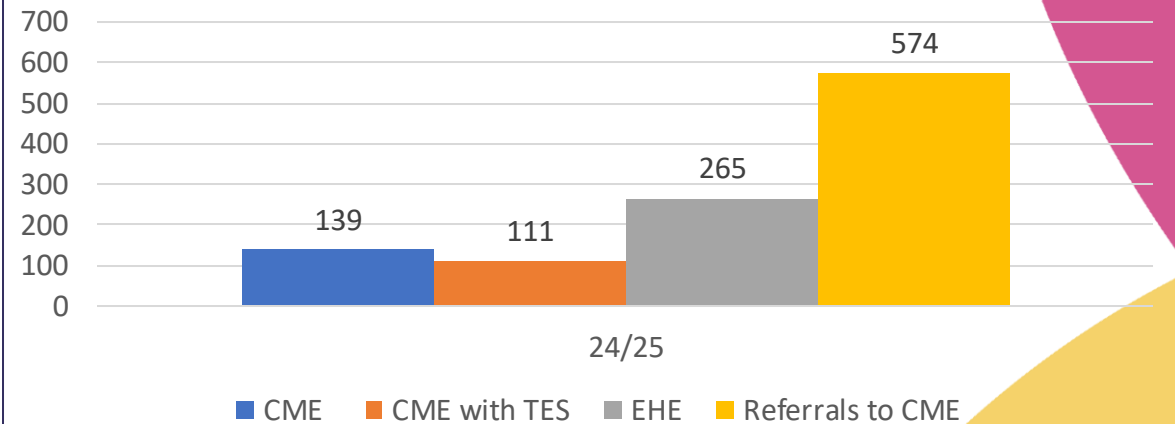


Operation Encompass (domestic abuse related) data for children not on a school roll

This data relates to children who are:

- On Children Missing Education (CME) register
- On CME register and in receipt of education via Transitional Education Service
- Known to be Electively Home Educated by their parents
- Referred to CME Team to establish education arrangements

Monthly Operation Encompass (children not on school roll Rec-Yr11) 2024/25



Increases in referrals to CME Team are linked to school holiday periods due to increases in domestic abuse related incidents for children suspected to be in Norfolk for a holiday.

Role of the Key Adult Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Those signing up as Key Adult DSLs must:

- Be a trained Designated Safeguarding Lead in line with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and NSCP training expectations.
- Have accessed a Norfolk Key Adult briefing via Norfolk DSL training or bespoke offer from Education Safeguarding Team.
- Agree and adhere to the Information Sharing Agreement.
- Ensure parents and carers are aware of the school/colleges participation in Operation Encompass via letter and safeguarding policy.
- Ensure the Key Adult is available to receive the notification from AnyComms+ each morning during term time.
- Ensure they keep an accurate record of each notification and any responsive actions taken in the child's safeguarding record.
- Provide silent or overt support to child, following a notification, as appropriate.
- Keep CADS Education Representative up to date with any changes e.g., email address etc.

Key Adult DSLs can access support from the CADS Education Representative.

Key Adult Register

CADS Education Representative maintains a register of all Key Adult DSLs which is regularly reviewed to ensure information is up to date.

There are 1297 current Key Adult DSLs across 460 schools and colleges. There is an average of 5 Key Adult DSLs for each school or college. As of November 2024, there were 227 education domestic abuse champions across 177 education settings.

Types of support a school or college may offer

Silent support examples in response to domestic abuse related incidents	Overt support examples to domestic abuse related incidents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informing child's key staff in school • Flexible application of rules for example uniform, homework etc. • Understanding and flexibility in expectations in terms of behaviour and work through a trauma informed approach • Opportunities for one-to-one time with teacher to provide opportunities to talk for example helping with a task • Review lesson plans to ensure appropriate for the child on the day • Ensuring the child knows who they can talk to in school • Safe spaces available in school • Use of comforters, cuddly toys etc • Checking collection/transport arrangements at end of day • Consider the child's lived experience in context and over time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical needs such as systems for spare uniform, lunch, equipment, dropping off and collection arrangements at the start and end of school day etc. • Providing 1:1 or buddy support • Time out of class/lessons or working elsewhere • Using tools to understand a child's lived experiences such as wishes and feelings work • Talking to parents/carers to offer support • Using Early Help processes to offer and access additional support • Healthy Relationships sessions • Ongoing school support • Share information with other agencies if additional information raises concerns
Silent support examples in response to a missing from home or care episode	Overt support examples in response to a missing from home or care episode
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informing child's key staff in school • Flexible application of rules for example uniform, homework etc. • Understanding and flexibility in expectations of behaviour and work through a trauma informed approach • Opportunities for one-to-one time with trusted adult to provide opportunities to talk, for example helping with a task • Review lesson plans to ensure they appropriate for the child on the day • Ensuring the child knows who they can talk to in school • Safe spaces available in school and use of comforters, cuddly toys etc • Checking collection/ transport arrangements at end of school/college day to avoid future potential missing episodes • Consider the child's lived experience in context and over time • Consideration of push, pull and risk factors that may indicate the child is at risk of exploitation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical needs such as systems for spare uniform, lunch, equipment, etc. • Providing 1:1 or buddy support • Time out of class/lessons or working elsewhere • Using tools to understand a child's lived experiences such as wishes and feelings work • Talking to parents to offer support • Develop a safety plan with the child • Healthy Relationships sessions • Ongoing school pastoral support • Talk to the child to see if they would like the trusted adult to be in the return home interview • Share information with other agencies such as Missing Practitioners

2024/25 audit of responses to Operation Encompass Notifications (domestic abuse related)

CADS Education Representative contacted Key Adult DSLs to explore responses to 244 individual notifications.

By school type:

13 further education
75 secondary
137 primary
19 special

By SEND type:

153 No SEND
57 SEND support
34 EHCP

By gender:

115 female
129 male

By ethnicity:

189 white British
21 unknown
11 white eastern European
6 white other
4 Asian/Asian British
3 other ethnic group
2 mixed or multiple ethnic group

82% undertook a welfare check in with child
46% of children supported with wishes and feelings work

89% of children had pastoral support and 30% had time out of class/lessons

76% made contact with parent or carer

37% of Key Adult DSLs contacted other agencies and **18%** made a referral to another agency

Additional support was offered for 98% of children

27% of settings had a Domestic Abuse Champion

74% of Key Adults felt well supported by their school, Trust and Education Safeguarding Team
31% asked about DA Champion training or were signposted to it
4% were signposted to NIDAS website



Any questions and reflections?



Sources of support

National Domestic Abuse Helpline 0808 2000247

NIDAS (Norfolk Integrated Domestic Abuse Service) <https://nidasnorfolk.co.uk>

Norfolk Operation Encompass (schools & colleges)

<https://www.schools.norfolk.gov.uk/article/29562/Operation-Encompass>

Norfolk County Council Information for professionals working with victims of domestic abuse

<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/article/43691/Information-for-professionals-working-with-victims-of-domestic-abuse>

Office for Police & Crime Commissioner for Norfolk: Resources for Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence professionals:

<https://norfolk-pcc.gov.uk/who-we-are/community-safety-partnership/our-priorities/domestic-abuse-and-sexual-violence/domestic-abuse-and-sexual-violence/>



**Please provide
some feedback**

