



Domestic Abuse Guidance Version 2.2

<p>Important: This document can only be considered valid when viewed on the TEAL website. If this document has been printed or saved to another location, you must check that the version number on your copy matches that of the document online.</p> <p>Name and Title of Author:</p>	<p>Lisa Longstaff, Director of People</p>
<p>Name of Responsible Committee/Individual:</p>	<p>Executive Board</p>
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<p>Review Date:</p>	<p>Summer Term 2027</p>
<p>Monitoring:</p>	<p>This guidance will be monitored and reviewed via TEAL’s Trade Union Forum.</p>
<p>Target Audience:</p>	<p>All staff</p>
<p>Related Documents:</p> <p>All TEAL policies and procedures referred to are located on the TEAL website, www.theeducationalliance.org.uk.</p> <p>If English is not your first language, and you require assistance/translation, please contact the HR Department.</p> <p>This guidance has been equality impact assessed, as detailed in section 4.</p>	<p>Health and Wellbeing Policy and Procedure Special Leave Policy Expectations and Code of Conduct Bullying and Harassment Policy Grievance Procedure Flexible Working Policy Women at Work Policy Induction Guide Disciplinary Policy and Procedure NASUWT ‘Tackling domestic abuse – policy guidance’ NEU ‘School and College Workplace Domestic Abuse Policy’</p>

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1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

We are here to make great schools and happier, stronger communities so that people have better lives. We do this by:

- Always doing what is right
- Trusting in each other and standing shoulder to shoulder
- Doing what we know makes the difference

Doing what is right means always acting with integrity, in the interests of others and being honest, open and transparent.

The health, wellbeing and safety of our staff is important to us, and we recognise that whilst we have a high level of influence at work, we can also provide support to staff who are experiencing difficulties at home. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background. The Crime Survey for England and Wales (www.ons.gov.uk) year ending March 2022 estimated that 6.9% of women (1.7 million) and 3.0% of men (699,000) experienced domestic abuse that year. In the year ending March 2022, the victim was female in 74.1% of domestic abuse-related crimes. While both men and women suffer domestic abuse, the statistics show that women are considerably more likely to experience it.¹ Between June and November 2020, the Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) launched a review into the support available in the workplace for individuals suffering from domestic abuse. In developing this guidance, we have considered the review's findings, their view of best practice for organisations and the positive role employers can play in supporting employees.

The UK Government currently uses a non-statutory definition of domestic abuse which recognises this and defines domestic abuse as:

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. It can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse: psychological; physical; sexual; financial; emotional.²

We are committed to ensuring that our staff are provided with a safe working environment and we understand that for some staff, work provides them with a safe haven away from the challenges they may face at home. We want to provide a safe working environment that supports those experiencing domestic abuse and survivors of domestic abuse, and we encourage staff to reach out if they are experiencing domestic abuse. We also wish to equip managers and staff with the knowledge to enable them to respond to issues relating to domestic abuse with sensitivity, support and care. This guidance includes information regarding the potential signs of domestic abuse and supportive mechanisms available to staff.

ACAS advises that: "Employers have a legal duty of care to their employees and should: look out for signs of domestic abuse; respond appropriately; support someone who is experiencing domestic abuse; and keep a record of incidents at work and when employees report domestic abuse, and any actions taken." Awareness, knowledge and support from employers is critical, not only in helping to provide a safe space for employees, but also in ensuring they can give their best when working

¹ How businesses can support staff affected by domestic abuse
9 Mar 2021 By Katherine McInnes and Abbie Harley

² Managing and supporting employees experiencing domestic abuse by CIPD and the Equality and Human Rights Commission Sept 2020

(whether at home or in the office). We aim to ensure that we raise awareness, share supportive information and resources, including contact details for organisations that can offer help and support, and provide managers, staff and HR colleagues with the tools and guidance to enable them to effectively support colleagues experiencing domestic abuse.

This guidance aims to:

- Educate and inform
- Promote understanding
- Raise awareness
- Provide appropriate support and reasonable adjustments for those experiencing domestic abuse
- Create an environment where staff feel confident enough to raise an issue of domestic abuse and seek additional support at work

2. DEFINITION

Domestic abuse includes controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial, or emotional abuse. Domestic abuse also includes culturally specific forms of abuse including, but not limited to, forced marriage, honour-based violence, dowry-related abuse and transnational marriage abandonment.

Domestic abuse can take many forms, including:

- abandonment - where a husband, in England and Wales, deliberately abandons or “strands” his foreign national wife abroad, usually without financial resources, in order to prevent her from asserting matrimonial and/or residence rights in England and Wales. It may involve children who are either abandoned with, or separated from, their mother.
- coercive behaviour - an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten the victim
- controlling behaviour - an act or pattern of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour;
- coercive control (intimidation, degradation, isolation and threats of physical or sexual violence)
- psychological and/or emotional abuse
- physical or sexual abuse (including any form of violence, rape, touching/groping)
- financial or economic abuse (taking control of someone’s finances and denying their independence)
- harassment and stalking (persistent and unwanted attention)
- online or digital abuse (threats of sharing images and unwanted and persistent attention)
- forced marriage
- female genital mutilation
- honour crimes
- verbal abuse (demeaning, belittling, insulting)

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- gaslighting (persistently undermining/manipulating to the point where someone can doubt their own sanity and believe they are the problem)

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The **Executive Board** is responsible for ensuring this guidance is reviewed and approved.

The **CEO** is responsible for ensuring that the organisation effectively supports those experiencing domestic abuse, providing them with information, resources, support and space.

Headteachers are responsible for monitoring the application of this guidance within their respective schools. They should ensure information is shared to raise awareness and enable staff to seek support, feel safe in raising concerns and trust their concerns will be responded to quickly, appropriately and discreetly.

The **HR Department** is responsible for overseeing the introduction, implementation, monitoring and review of this guidance. The HR Department will provide advice, guidance and support in the implementation of this guidance and will share information across TEAL to raise awareness and encourage staff to reach out to each other and seek advice and support.

Managers must ensure that employees are effectively supported, seeking advice and guidance from the HR Department as appropriate.

Employees are encouraged to seek support, whether they are experiencing domestic abuse or are concerned that a colleague might. Any reports of domestic abuse will be treated sensitively, discreetly and supportively.

4. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

The Education Alliance is committed to:

- Promoting equality and diversity in its policies, procedures and guidelines
- Ensuring staff are protected from unlawful direct or indirect discrimination resulting from a protected characteristic (e.g. age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation)

As part of this guidance's review, equality information will be shared with the executive team and trade unions (via the joint consultation and negotiation committee).

Whilst we acknowledge that domestic abuse can affect anyone, we are mindful that it disproportionately affects women and children. Evidence also indicates that domestic abuse can worsen during pregnancy and disabled women are at a higher risk of domestic abuse. We also recognise that men can be victims of domestic abuse, and this guidance aims to support all staff affected by issues of domestic abuse.

5. PRINCIPLES

We will ensure employees feel they can seek support by creating a supportive atmosphere and embedding it into our culture and across the organisation through leadership and raising awareness. We understand that employees experiencing domestic abuse may require support outside of work for financial, legal or childcare issues, and the employee assistance programme we have purchased provides staff with 24/7 access to confidential support and helplines which include financial information, legal support and information relating to domestic/family issues. We are mindful that staff may require time off during working hours for court appearances, counselling or seeking legal advice. Information for staff will include matters such as how to recognise the signs of domestic abuse and how to support colleagues who make a disclosure, and disclosures will be treated as strictly confidential and, as far as possible, on a need-to-know basis.

Information available to staff will include services and organisations that specialise in this area, particularly locally, and employees will be signposted to these.

If an employee is concerned that a colleague may be experiencing domestic abuse they may wish to seek advice regarding how to approach their concern. They may feel confident in reaching out to their colleague, and they may find it helpful to read this guidance beforehand. They may prefer to contact either their HR team, a senior leader or their Headteacher for advice first and can be assured that they will be supported discreetly and sensitively. We are mindful that employees who are worried that a colleague might be experiencing domestic abuse may require additional support and we remind all employees that they can access confidential support via TEAL's employee assistance programme 24/7.

6. SUPPORTIVE ACTION

Employees experiencing domestic abuse can seek time off via the Special Leave Policy and the Flexible Working Policy can be used to request and agree changes to working arrangements. Managers can explore a range of measures and reasonable adjustments, which may be temporary or permanent (e.g. changes to the working pattern/hours of work). Time off with pay should be considered if there are circumstances where an employee is attending court and is seeking an injunction or order in cases of violence or harassment.

If the employee has disclosed that their partner has access to their finances or is exerting financial pressure upon them, the individual should contact the HR Department, as they can enable a change to their salary bank account, and the HR Department can also share details of organisations that may be able to provide additional financial information and guidance, such as the employee assistance programme.

As part of the induction process, this guidance will be shared with new staff, ensuring they are aware of the support available, encouraging staff to reach out and assisting colleagues and managers to respond appropriately. We also need to be aware of our use of social media, as there may be occasions where staff request they are not included in social media posts/illustrations, for their own safety.

Other supportive measures may include the following:

- Early/late start and finish times
- Temporary or permanent flexible working arrangements

- Time off for counselling/medical appointments
- A safe space for their mental health and wellbeing
- An agreed person the individual can approach for additional support during difficult periods

Managers should seek support from HR colleagues to ensure they have considered the individual's safety and security at work, and considerations may include:

- Site safety
- Classroom/workspace changes
- Messages to other staff where necessary (to ensure colleagues can support the safety of the individual)
- Recognition that for staff who are or have suffered domestic abuse, they may react differently to aggressive/angry behaviour, and risk assessments may be required to ensure they feel safe at work
- Additional information/training/signposting

Managers should reassure staff that any disclosure made will be treated in the strictest confidence and that every effort will be made to support the employee in the workplace. Where staff work remotely, managers should ensure that risk assessments include any measures necessary to mitigate against the risk of domestic abuse (e.g. checking that the home is a safe and secure working environment for colleagues).

If an employee is at risk of domestic abuse, managers should work with HR colleagues to consider whether regular checks should be made on the employee by a specific member of staff, and they may agree with the employee a safe word that the employee can use to communicate impending risk or danger. Managers, HR colleagues and staff should also agree a safety plan to avoid dangerous situations (e.g. escape routes for staff working at home and communication plans to reduce the risk of perpetrators accessing staff at work).

It is essential that staff feel able to disclose experiences of domestic abuse and support will be available, and access to support will be employee-led. The right of the employee to make their own decisions about the course of action they wish to take will be respected. The employee may need some time and space to consider their options and decide on a way forward, and the role of TEAL is not to deal with the abuse, but to support staff and help them to access the help, advice and guidance they may need. Safety plans will include consideration of how we can help staff attend work. Supportive actions may include:

- Offering confidential, non-judgemental, easily accessible meetings with a support person
- Ensuring the employee can safely travel to and from work
- Provision of a secure entry system and secure car parking
- Alerting reception to the issue and providing them with a photo/details of the perpetrator
- Reviewing the security of the employee's personal information, reminding others not to share information
- Agreeing and sharing a response in readiness for potential contact from the perpetrator
- Screening calls and blocking emails from the perpetrator
- Considering the potential to temporarily, or permanently changing the employee's workplace
- Reasonable adjustments such as changes to some duties
- Approval of requests for special leave for house moves, legal appointments and other related appointments
- Advising colleagues on an agreed need-to-know basis
- Signposting to supportive organisations, including the employee assistance programme

If the abuse takes place on a school site, the Headteacher will take all reasonable steps to protect staff and pupils, including calling 999 and informing other appropriate agencies. If there is a risk of the perpetrator coming on site, the Headteacher should ensure there is a safety plan in place, which is effectively communicated.

7. SUPPORTIVE ORGANISATIONS

There are several specialist organisations who can offer support to victims of domestic abuse, including the following:

- Refuge's National Domestic Abuse Helpline - 0808 2000 247 and <https://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/Chat-to-us-online>
- The Men's Advice Line run by Respect is a confidential helpline specifically for male victims - 0808 801 0327, info@mensadvice.org.uk
- Bright Sky app is a mobile app and website for anyone experiencing domestic abuse, or who is worried about someone else. The app can be downloaded for free from the app stores. <https://www.hestia.org/brightsky>
- Women's Aid have a directory of domestic abuse support services across the UK. Those experiencing domestic abuse or are worried about friends or family can access the Women's Aid live chat service 7 days a week, 10am to 6pm - helpline@womensaid.org.uk
- Victim Support run services for victims and survivors of any abuse or crime, regardless of when it occurred or if the crime was reported to the police: <https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/help-and-support/get-help/support-near-you/live-chat/> <https://www.mysupportspace.org.uk/>
They have a free, independent and confidential 24/7 support line - 08 08 16 89 111. To find your nearest participating provider, search using the postcode checker on the [Ask for Ani page on the Enough website](#).
- Safe spaces are also available in Boots, Morrisons, Superdrug and Well pharmacies, TSB banks and independent pharmacies across the UK - <https://uksaysnomore.org/safespaces/>
- If you are concerned that a new, former or existing partner has an abusive past you can ask the police to check under the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (also known as 'Clare's Law'). This is your 'right to ask'. If records show that you may be at risk of domestic abuse, the police will consider disclosing the information. A disclosure can be made if it is legal, proportionate and necessary to do so. If you are concerned about a friend or family member, you can apply for a disclosure on behalf of someone you know. You can make a request to the police for information about a person's previous violent offending in person at the police station or elsewhere, by telephone, by email, online or as part of a police investigation. Support agencies and services can also help you ask the police about this.
- If you're a victim of domestic abuse you can apply for a court order or injunction to protect yourself or your child from: your current or previous partner; a family member; someone you currently or previously lived with. This is called a non-molestation or occupation order and you can apply online, by email or by post.
- National Domestic Abuse Helpline (Freephone, 24 hour) – 0808 2000 247. The helpline is run by Refuge and a live online chat is also available.
- Rape Crisis have a network of independent Rape Crisis centres that provide specialist support and services for victims and survivors of sexual violence. They have a National Rape Crisis Helpline – 0808 802 9999 and a live chat.
- If you identify as LGBT+ you can call Galop on 0800 999 5428 for emotional and practical support.

- Anyone can call Karma Nirvana on 0800 5999 247 (Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm) for forced marriage and honour crimes. You can also call 020 7008 0151 to speak to the <https://www.gov.uk/stop-forced-marriage>
- Perpetrators of domestic abuse can access the Respect phone line: 0808 802 4040, which is an anonymous and confidential helpline for men and women who are harming their partners and families. Concerned friends or family members and front-line workers assisting abusers can also call for information and support.
- ManKind Initiative - 01823 334 244, is a national charity that provides help and support for male survivors of domestic abuse and domestic violence.

Support and information can be provided by the HR Department, the employee assistance programme and Trade Unions.

Where it is alleged that a member of staff is a perpetrator of domestic abuse, such allegations will be treated with care, on a 'need-to-know' basis, and may result in further disclosures, depending on the information disclosed and any evidence presented. There may be occasions where we are required to inform external bodies, such as the police or the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Allegations of harassment or intimidation against an employee will be viewed seriously and whilst support will be offered to staff who are perpetrators of domestic abuse, there may be occasions where disclosures result in the use of TEAL's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure. Should any manager become aware of child protection concerns when informed that of a domestic abuse allegation against an employee, there is a duty to make a child protection referral or a vulnerable adult's referral. The manager should seek advice from Designated Safeguarding Lead in school, and they may contact the LADO, who can advise on the process required to make a referral, should it be appropriate.

8. MONITORING COMPLIANCE WITH AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE GUIDANCE

The HR Department, Designated Safeguarding Leads and Headteachers will monitor effectiveness and compliance of this guidance.

9. REVIEW

This guidance will be reviewed within three years of the date of implementation via TEAL's JCNC.

Guide for Supporting Staff Experiencing Domestic Abuse

This guide is based on the CIPD guide, 'Managing and supporting employees experiencing domestic abuse: a guide for employers', published in September 2020, and domestic abuse information on the Women's Aid website. They advise that research shows that 75% of those enduring domestic abuse are targeted at work, and examples include harassing phone calls, abusive partners arriving at the office unannounced and physical assaults. Research by the TUC has highlighted that of those who had experienced domestic abuse, over 40% were prevented from getting to work by their abuser, most commonly through physical abuse or restraint (72%) followed by threats (68%).

We aim to help staff recognise the signs that domestic abuse may be taking place and to respond appropriately to concerns.

We encourage staff to:

- Recognise the problem
- Respond appropriately to disclosure
- Provide support
- Refer to the appropriate help

Recognise the problem

- Notice changes in behaviour, performance and/or appearance
- Ask open and empathetic questions, such as:
 - How are you doing at the moment?
 - How are things at home?
 - Are there any issues you'd like to discuss with me?
 - I have noticed recently that you are not yourself. Is anything the matter?
- Treat everyone as an individual as everyone's situation will be different. It's important not to make assumptions about what someone is experiencing or what they need.
- Be careful when raising things with people working from home, as the abuser might be monitoring the employee's email or other methods of communication

Respond appropriately to disclosure

- Show empathy and compassion and that you believe them, providing a non-judgemental, supportive environment
- Don't make assumptions about what someone is experiencing or what they need
- Reassure the employee that the organisation understands how domestic abuse may affect their work performance and outline the support that can be offered.
- If the survivor and perpetrator work in the same business, the perpetrator could have access to personal information, depending on their role
- Listen, try to understand and acknowledge that it takes strength to trust someone enough to talk to them about experiencing abuse. Give your colleague time to talk.
- Acknowledge that your colleague is in a frightening and very difficult situation and advise them that no one deserves to be threatened or beaten, despite what their abuser has told them.
- Ask if your colleague has suffered physical harm. Your colleague may need support to seek medical advice and your colleague may also need support to report the assault to the police if they choose to do so.
- Look after yourself while you are supporting someone through such a difficult and emotional time. Ensure that you do not put yourself into a dangerous situation; for example, do not offer to talk to the abuser about your colleague or let yourself be seen by the abuser as a threat to their relationship.

Provide support

- Regularly check in with staff/colleagues
- Ask the individual about what support they need and regularly check in with that question, as the support they need may change over time as the individual's circumstances change. Let the individual take the lead in what they want to talk about and what they think the problem is.
- Ask the individual about the best way to keep in contact with them, for example which communication methods are private and which they have easy access to.
- We may be able to offer flexibility in working hours/paid leave to enable an employee to sort out financial, housing, legal and childcare issues. The flexibility required may differ in the short and longer term.
- Divert phone calls and email messages and look to change a phone extension if an employee is receiving harassing calls.
- Look at how non-employees access the building to ensure people can't just walk in.
- Agree with the employee what to tell colleagues and how they should respond if their ex/partner telephones or visits the workplace or is present during a virtual meeting.
- Ensure the employee does not work alone or in an isolated area and check that staff have arrangements for getting safely to and from home.
- Support an individual's request to get advice on where and how to obtain a protection/barring order that covers the workplace.
- Think about specific areas of the work environment where the survivor's physical safety may be at risk, for example the workplace car park.
- With the consent of the employee, you could agree code words, or hand signals in video calls, so if they don't come into the office, or if they are in a threatening situation while working at home, there are set phrases both parties can say to enable them to flag if they are in danger. Also agree what action a signal requires, for example if to call the police, or if to provide information about available support.
- Keep a record of any incidents of abuse in the workplace, including persistent telephone calls, emails or visits to the workplace or any concerns that the employee reports, as well as anything that occurs around the workplace, such as during travel to and from work or to meetings not held in the usual place of work. Also record the support offered.
- Provide your colleague with information regarding the employee assistance programme and Salary Finance

Refer to the appropriate help

- Managers, colleagues and HR should not adopt the role of counsellor, but rather they should signpost employees to specialist help, and this guidance includes a list of support services we can signpost colleagues to.