

Introduction

Steam Mills Primary shares a purpose with parents and is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its students, their families and the wider community.

All staff and Governors believe that our school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment for all.

We are committed to working with parents positively, openly and honestly. We respect parents' rights to privacy and confidentiality and will not share sensitive information unless we have permission or it is necessary to do so in order to protect a child.

Early Help

Steam Mills Primary understands that anyone can need help from time to time and, if handled effectively, helps to safeguard children. Our offer of **Early Help** is designed to support all of our children and families.

The school recognises that early identification of risk is key to safeguarding all children, young people and adults.

All staff are available in a pastoral capacity. Whilst we may not have the answer straight away, we will endeavour to find a solution or signpost to other support.

What is Domestic Abuse?

The Government define Domestic Abuse as:

'any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, 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'.

The abuse can include, but is not limited to:

- Psychological
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial
- Emotional

Controlling behaviour

Controlling behaviour is a range 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 behaviour

Coercive behaviour is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.

(NB This is not a legal definition)

The Facts

Domestic abuse is a largely hidden crime, occurring mainly in homes behind closed doors. However, it is known that:

- 1 in 4 women and 1 in 10 men will experience domestic abuse in their adult life.
- 4.6 million women in England and Wales will have experienced domestic abuse.
- 2 women are killed each week by a partner/ex-partner. Separation is the most difficult time - half of homicides happen at the point of or within 3 months of separation.
- A woman will receive an average of 35 assaults before reporting the abuse.
- 16-24 year olds are more at risk.
- 140,000 children live in high risk families.
- 6% of children report seeing severe violence at home.
- 52% of children living in a home where domestic abuse is happening will have behavioural issues (this can include being withdrawn, passive as well as disruptive).
- Almost one third of domestic abuse starts during pregnancy and, if it has started prior to this, it can get worse over the 9 months.
- On average, the Police receive an emergency call relating to domestic abuse every 30 seconds.

The Signs

The chances are high that someone you know is experiencing domestic abuse behind closed doors. However, unless you are trying to help someone who has been very open about their experiences it may be very difficult for you to be aware of and acknowledge the abuse directly.

Some of the following may be signs that you or someone you know may be a victim of domestic abuse:

- Physical unexplained injuries such as bruises or scratches
- Isolation
- Withdrawn/quieter than usual
- Irritable/angry when asked how things are
- Making excuses for a partner
- Sudden unexplained personality changes
- Self-harm
- Dependant on partner emotionally and/or financially
- Drug/alcohol misuse

School and Support

As a school, we are here to support all pupils, their families and the wider community.

While support for vulnerable people may come from within school, there will be times when the support needed is beyond that.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL, Marcella Scoles) receives training in order to recognise the signs of domestic abuse and how to act upon them.

We encourage parents to discuss any concerns they may have. Our Safeguarding Policy is available to view via the school website, or a copy may be obtained from the school office if requested.

If you are a victim of domestic abuse or are concerned about or think someone you know is at risk please speak to the DSL.

Further Information

Further information and support regarding domestic abuse is available online at:

www.gdass.org.uk

www.gloucestershire.police.uk

www.glosfamiliesdirectory.org.uk

www.gov.uk

www.gscb.org.uk

www.holliegazzard.org

www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk

Steam Mills Primary School



Domestic Abuse

A Parents' Guide