

Date: 24<sup>th</sup> October 2023

Dear Headteacher,

### **Effective Safeguarding Communications and Stopping Domestic Abuse Together (SDAT)**

We are writing to request your support to help strengthen the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements across Derby and Derbyshire, to enable us to work better together to promote children's well-being and keep them safe from harm.

The Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Partnership ([DDSCP](#)) request that all education providers, including all independent schools, ensure they fully participate in the Stopping Domestic Abuse Together (SDAT) initiative and to take steps to ensure that essential information and notifications from partner agencies are not missed by their staff.

SDAT was first implemented in Derby and Derbyshire in 2018 and is a key local development enabling effective multi-agency work to support and protect children living in households where there is domestic abuse. The scheme, which is the local version of [Operation Encompass](#)<sup>1</sup>, enables Derbyshire Constabulary to securely communicate domestic abuse notifications to Derby and Derbyshire schools, providing an early notification system about any incidents of domestic abuse when the Police have attended a household where statutory school aged children live. The notifications are designed to:

- Provide a link between a statutory school aged child's lived home experience and their experience in school when domestic abuse is an issue.
- Help ensure that schools can effectively support and respond to children's needs in the education setting.
- Promote effective communications between the Derbyshire Constabulary, Local Authority Children's Services and Schools where there has been a domestic abuse incident.

In order for the programme to operate successfully, it is vital that your school has a dedicated school safeguarding email address, such as '[safeguarding@yourdomainname.uk](#)'. This is to ensure there is one entry point for notifications, which is not reliant on one individual member of staff but can be checked routinely for relevant safeguarding information by key individuals.

Dedicated school safeguarding email addresses also support important safeguarding communications from partner agencies. Local Authority Children's Services may use the dedicated email address to communicate about any safeguarding and child protection issues. In the future, the DDSCP will also be using school safeguarding emails to send local and national safeguarding updates to all education providers.

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<sup>1</sup> See [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (2023), Department of Education, page 147

To support effective safeguarding communications, could you please:

- Set up a secure '*safeguarding@yourdomainname*' email address which is accessible by a minimum of two staff who have responsibilities for safeguarding. This email account should be:
  - checked daily as a minimum during the school term and in school hours, and
  - have an 'out of office' message during other times and school holidays to advise partner agencies if and how often messages will be checked/responded to and when the school will reopen.
- Ensure all key staff (e.g., Designated Safeguarding Leads, their deputies and other relevant safeguarding staff) are aware of the Stopping Domestic Abuse Together initiative.
- Review your school information sharing and privacy notice to incorporate the Stopping Domestic Abuse Together initiative. You will also need to update your school website and information for parents so that they are aware of and understand your support for Stopping Domestic Abuse Together.

The DDSCP has published Stopping Domestic Abuse Together Guidance for Schools, which you can access via this [link](#) or through the multi-agency safeguarding children procedures, [document library](#). There is also a specialist course about Domestic Abuse: Impact on Children, which Designated Safeguarding Leads and their deputies can attend. For more information about the DDSCP training offer and how to apply, please see the DDSCP [training courses and events](#) webpage.

If you have any queries about the SDAT initiative and individual children, you can contact the Derbyshire County Council Starting Point Advice Line on 01629 535353.

Once an appropriate school safeguarding email address has been set up, it is essential that you please confirm with the DDSCP via [ddscp@derby.gov.uk](mailto:ddscp@derby.gov.uk), the address to be used to communicate with your setting. **Could you please ensure this is completed by 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023.**

Thank you for your support in helping to keep children safe.

Yours sincerely,



Steve Atkinson  
MA (Oxon), MBA, FIOD, FRSA  
Independent Chair  
Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding  
Children Partnership



Carol Cammiss  
Executive Director for Children's Services  
Derbyshire County Council



Darren De'Ath  
Detective Superintendent  
Head of Public Protection  
Derbyshire Constabulary