

"Not many people achieve creating legislation in their lifetime, I am in awe of what you have done"

- Deputy Chief Constable

Operation Encompass Impact Report

May 2024 Important Update

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Operation Encompass is a long standing proven police and education information sharing safeguarding partnership enabling immediate support to be given to children experiencing domestic abuse.

 **OPERATION
ENCOMPASS**



Overall Winner of Inaugural World Class Policing Awards.



Since the publication of the 2024 Operation Encompass Impact Report there have been some significant events which we believe need to be reported immediately rather than waiting for the 2025 Operation Encompass Impact Report.

On 23rd April 2024 in the House of Lords, Operation Encompass was tabled as an amendment to the Victims and Prisoners Bill. At that time there was no indication as to when the Bill would gain Royal Assent and become an Act.

With the news on Wednesday the 22nd May that the Prime Minister had set a date for a snap general election and the following proroguing of Parliament on Friday 24th May, we were concerned that the Bill may falter. However, the Victims and Prisoners Bill was included in the government 'wash-up', meaning that, time permitting, the Bill would progress through both 'Houses' and become law prior to the proroguing of Parliament.

At 8:35pm on Friday 24th May 2024 in the House of Lords Royal Assent was given to the Victims and Prisoners Act.

Operation Encompass was placed in statute and became a legal requirement for all Police Forces in England and Wales.



A woman with long brown hair is sitting on a dark grey sofa, looking towards a young boy. The boy is sitting on a white modern chair, gesturing with his hands as if explaining something. They are in a bright, modern living room with a wooden easel and potted plants in the background.

Achieving Operation Encompass as a statutory requirement builds upon our other achievements:

- children being recognised as victims of domestic abuse in their own right.
- recognition of the role that schools can play in supporting children experiencing domestic abuse and other trauma in their lives.
- changes in information sharing between agencies to better protect and support vulnerable children.

Whilst we take a moment to reflect upon all that we have achieved we recognise that there is still so much to do for the sake of our children, our future.

House of Lords 23rd April 2024:

The inclusion of Operation Encompass in the Victims and Prisoners Bill

"My Lords, I will speak on behalf of my noble and learned friend Lord Bellamy. Government Amendment 90 would require the police to notify schools as soon as possible when they have reasonable grounds to believe that a child in their police force area may be a victim of domestic abuse. That means that all children who may be a victim of domestic abuse will receive the necessary support and relevant safeguarding interventions.

Domestic abuse is an abhorrent and sometimes fatal crime, yet it is far too common. It is high volume, high harm and high cost. We fully recognise the devastating impact that it can have on children and young people, which is why we are determined to protect and support better the victims of abuse, including children, and bring perpetrators to justice. The landmark Domestic Abuse Act 2021 acknowledged, for the first time, the appalling damage that domestic abuse can inflict on children and young people and recognised the damage caused to children who see, hear or experience the effects of domestic abuse.

Recognising children as victims of domestic abuse in their own right is a very important step. It helps to ensure that children themselves remain visible in the multi-agency response to domestic abuse. This government amendment will help us take this work one step further. It will legislate that each chief officer of police across England and Wales must ensure that arrangements are in place to notify schools when they have reasonable grounds to believe that a child may be a victim of domestic abuse.

This amendment places the notification scheme, widely known as Operation Encompass, on a statutory footing. It is already in operation across all 43 police forces in England and Wales on a voluntary basis. By enshrining the scheme in law, we can ensure that it is consistently applied across all forces. This will help improve early intervention and enable the most vulnerable children to be safeguarded from the harms of domestic abuse".

Victims and Prisoners Bill becomes law

28 May 2024



The Victims and Prisoners Bill received Royal Assent and became an Act of Parliament following its final stages in the House of Lords on Thursday 23 and Friday 24 May.



EARL HOWE

In recognition of the work achieved by Operation Encompass the Government Victims and Safeguarding Minister wrote in a letter addressed to David and Elisabeth:

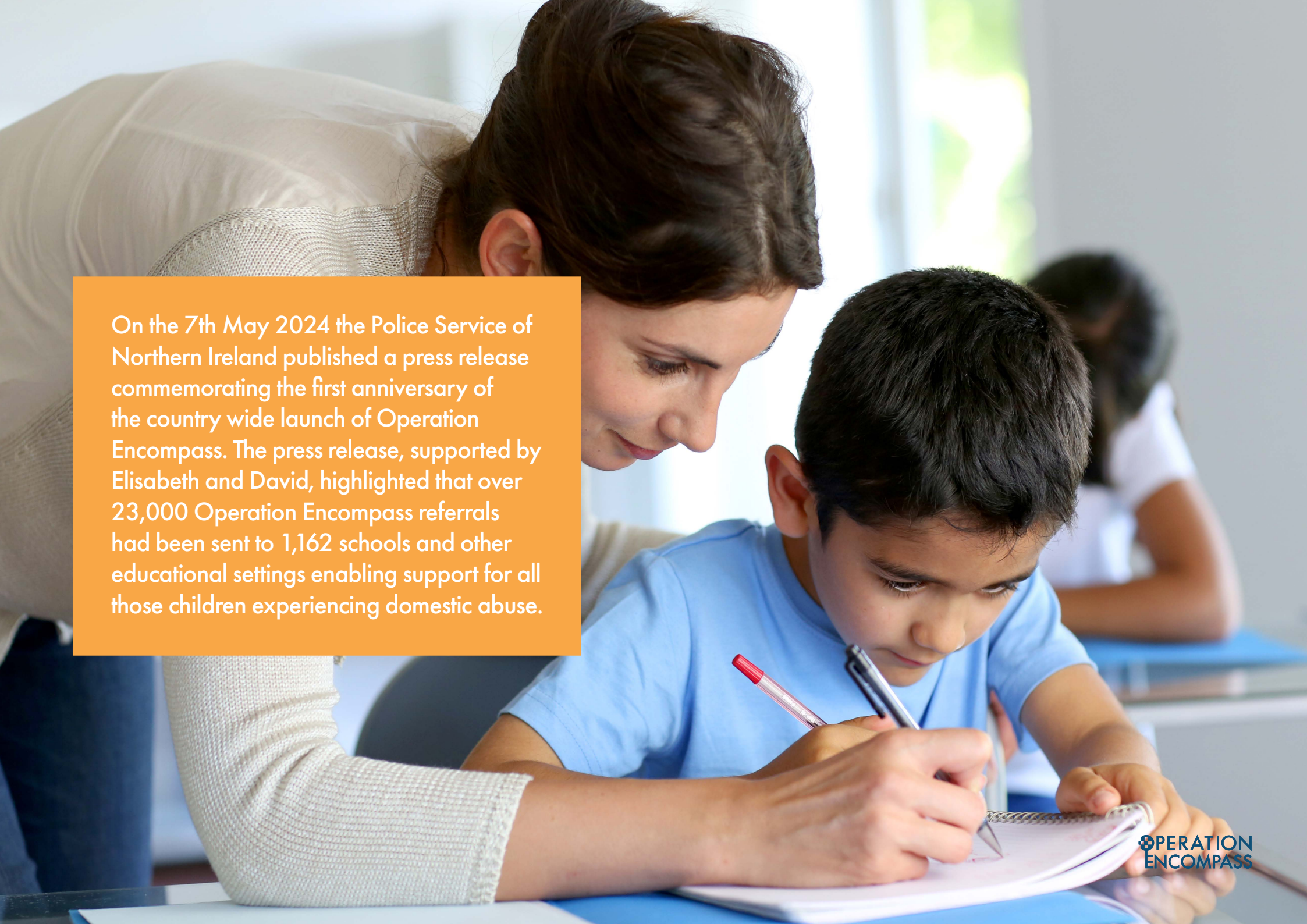
'I wanted to take the time to thank you for your tireless efforts to ensure that vulnerable children and young people are protected against the devastating consequences of domestic abuse.

I know that the helpline has provided countless instances of invaluable guidance to education staff who are supporting children affected by domestic abuse, and that it has had a tangible impact improving the lives of children impacted by this harm.

We are in a very different place from when the helpline launched. The landmark Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognised children as victims of domestic abuse in their own right; the notification scheme created by yourselves is operational across all 43 Police Forces in England and Wales; and an amendment to the Victims and Prisoners Bill has been tabled seeking to put the notification scheme on a statutory footing.

None of which would have been possible without all your work over the years to protect and support children who are victims of domestic abuse.

I am looking forward to continuing working together to better protect and support children affected by domestic abuse'.

A woman with dark hair tied back, wearing a light-colored sweater, is leaning over a desk to help a young boy with his schoolwork. The boy, wearing a light blue t-shirt, is focused on writing in a spiral notebook with a red pen. Another student is visible in the background, also working at a desk. The scene is brightly lit, likely from a window. An orange text box is overlaid on the left side of the image.

On the 7th May 2024 the Police Service of Northern Ireland published a press release commemorating the first anniversary of the country wide launch of Operation Encompass. The press release, supported by Elisabeth and David, highlighted that over 23,000 Operation Encompass referrals had been sent to 1,162 schools and other educational settings enabling support for all those children experiencing domestic abuse.

To date the Operation Encompass free online National Key Adult training has been accessed by over 28,333

This is an increase of 1,178 people accessing the training from 3rd April 2024 to 27 May 2024

Just a selection of the most recent optional reviews from participants:

"Excellent strategies to support children"

"Good understandable training"

"Excellent, clear and concise content on an easily accessible format"

"Brilliant! Very informative and helpful. Really well put together. The case study videos were really good- very emotive."

"Great resources & information provided. The videos and personal experiences helped to show how important this operation is."

"Your work has been extraordinary over the years."

"I think what you have achieved is monumental and the difference it makes to the lives of children who have to live with domestic abuse is staggering."

"Many congratulations to you both, there are and will be generations of child victims indebted to you and your work. It's an incredible legacy."

A person is seen from behind, standing in a field with their arms raised high in the air. The background is a soft, hazy sunset or sunrise sky with warm orange and yellow tones. The person is wearing a light-colored t-shirt. The overall mood is one of hope, achievement, or freedom.

OPERATION ENCOMPASS

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