



Tuesday 7th April 2020

Dear Families,

You may have seen in the news yesterday that in addition to this being a very uncertain time for the nation, there have unfortunately been **a significant rise in cases of domestic violence and abuse**. There have been many reports that since being asked to stay home, **there has been a 25% rise in reports**, and with many charities now being limited with the support they can offer, I wanted to take this opportunity to remind you that **Long Lawford Primary School is able to offer support**.

Since September 2019, our school has been part of a jointly run operation called **Operation Encompass** in partnership with **Warwickshire County Council and Warwickshire Police**. Many other schools in Warwickshire are also participating in the scheme. Operation Encompass is already operating successfully in a number of other Local Authority areas. Its objective is to help schools provide support to children who are affected by incidents of domestic violence and abuse. Long Lawford Primary also offers support to families affected by domestic abuse.

There is a great deal of research evidence that **children can suffer significant physical and/or emotional harm when they are present during, witness or are directly involved** in incidents of domestic violence and abuse.

The Operation Encompass process is simply that after any incident of domestic violence or abuse attended by the Police, the Headteacher and the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the school attended by any child in the household receive a confidential and secure Email on the morning of the next school day. The email only informs the Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead that the **Police have attended an incident**. The school are not informed about the specific details of the incident. The only exception is if/when Warwickshire County Council and Warwickshire Police deem the incident to be a child protection matter that requires further investigation.

During our current national crisis regarding COVID-19 I would like to reassure families that emails are still being received through Operation Encompass, and **schools have been instructed to continue to contact families as they would normally do**. The Designated Safeguarding Lead may do this via phone call or online video call.

If you are being abused or you are aware that another member of our community is being abused, please report it to the police on 101 (**or 999 if it is an emergency** and you or another person is in immediate danger). **Domestic abuse is a crime**.

For support with recovering from any form of domestic abuse, school can support with several useful avenues:

- Mrs McSweeney (Long Lawford Primary School 07467 330839)
- www.womensaid.org.uk (or call 0808 2000 247)
- www.talk2someone.org.uk (Warwickshire Against Domestic Abuse – 0800 408 1552)
- www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk (National Domestic Abuse Helpline – 0808 200 0247)
- www.refuge.org.uk (Refuge helpline – 0808 200 0247)
- www.mensadviceline.org.uk (Respect: Men's Advice Line – 0808 801 0327)
- www.new.mankind.org.uk (ManKind Initiative – 01823 334 244)
- www.ncdv.org.uk (National Centre for Domestic Violence – 0800 970 2070)

Further useful advice and links for support can be found through Citizens Advice at <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/family/gender-violence/domestic-violence-and-abuse-organisations-which-give-information-and-advice/>

We are keen to offer the best support possible to our pupils and families, and have had great success with providing this support since Operation Encompass started in September 2019. The school continues to believe that this is extremely beneficial for all those involved. If you have any concerns or questions then please contact me or Mrs Hetherington and we will be happy to discuss this further. Despite the school being closed to the majority of pupils, we are still here to help and support our school community as much as we can.

Yours sincerely
Mrs. Claire Stringer
Headteacher