An Roinn Oideachais
agus Óige
Department of Education
and Youth

Domestic violence and abuse policy and supports for recognised primary and post-primary schools and ETBs

Table of Contents

1. Policy statement 2

2. Definitions 2

3. Employment protections 6

4. Confidentiality 7

5. Sharing Information with Others 7

6. Child protection considerations 8

7. Domestic violence leave 9

8. School/ETB support 10

9. Safety at work following a disclosure 17

10. Training and awareness 18

11. Support for past domestic violence and abuse experiences 19

12. Domestic violence and abuse allegations against another staff member of a school/ETB 19

Appendix 1. Resources and contacts 21

Appendix 2: Workplace safety plan guide 23

1. Policy statement

This policy sets out that recognised primary and post-primary schools and ETBs should commit to supporting staff who are impacted by domestic violence and abuse by creating awareness and providing workplace supports, including statutory domestic violence leave.

Led by school leadership and management/ETB management, this will be achieved by promoting a safe and inclusive work environment in recognised primary and post-primary schools and ETBs where those impacted by domestic violence and abuse feel comfortable speaking about the issue and can be directed towards appropriate supports.

Under the terms of the Work Life Balance and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2023, all employees have a statutory entitlement to domestic violence Leave and employers are recommended to have a domestic violence policy in place. Schools/ETBs are advised to formally adopt this policy document in their school/ETB.

Content warning: This document discusses and describes domestic violence and abuse, which may be distressing for some. Contact details for supports and resources can be found in Appendix 1.

2. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, domestic violence and abuse can be defined as a pattern of controlling, coercive, threatening and/or violent behaviour occurring in a domestic context, including behaviour that has the object or effect of enabling one person to exert power and control over another.

Domestic violence and abuse occurs when a person tries to gain and maintain power and control over their current or former partner, or in some cases a family member, by using a pattern of intimidation, isolation, manipulation, coercion and assaults. Domestic abuse takes many forms. It can be physical, emotional, sexual, and economic, including coercive control. Abuse rarely takes one form; perpetrators of abuse use different tactics as part of a larger pattern of controlling and abusive behaviour. Importantly, physical abuse does not always have to be a factor in abusive relationships

In this policy, people who are experiencing, or have experienced, domestic violence and abuse are referred to as ‘victims’ or ‘survivors’. It is however recognised that people who have experienced domestic violence and abuse may not see themselves as ‘victims’ or ‘survivors’ but as strong and resilient individuals who are capable of overcoming what they

have experienced. The ‘victim’ or ‘survivor’ terminology is not intended to diminish this in any way but is used throughout this policy as it is commonly used and recognised language.

This policy also makes reference throughout to victims or survivors making a ‘disclosure’ in a work setting relating to domestic violence and abuse. For the purpose of this policy, a ‘disclosure’ is where a member of staff confides in a planned or unplanned way to a colleague, a member of the school/ETB management team, a member of a school’s Board of Management, HR representative (ETB Sector), the Employee Assistance Service or other person in the workplace about what they are or have experienced.

Domestic violence and abuse may occur between individuals who are or have been intimate partners (whether or not the perpetrator shares or has shared the same residence with the victim) or between people who are family members or cohabitants. Domestic violence and abuse victims or survivors can come from all walks of life and may experience other areas of marginalisation and vulnerability, such as age, disability, or sexual orientation, which are often targeted by the perpetrators of abuse.

Statistically, women are more likely to experience domestic violence and abuse. In Ireland, more than one in four women (26%) have experienced physical and/or sexual violence since the age of 15, many of them in domestic settings[1].

However, domestic violence and abuse can also adversely affect anyone, regardless of gender. This policy is therefore inclusive and applicable to all staff members.

Types of abuse include*:

Coercive control: A persistent pattern of controlling, coercive and/or threatening behaviour including all or some forms of domestic abuse (emotional, physical, economic, sexual, including threats) by a current or former partner. It tends to escalate over time, entrapping someone in a relationship and making it difficult or dangerous to leave. Coercive control is a crime in Ireland.

Examples include:

- Isolating a person from their friends and family.

[1] European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2014). Violence against women: an EU-wide survey. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union

- Taking control over aspects of a person's everyday life, such as where they can go, who they can see, what they wear, when they are to be home and when they can sleep.
- Stopping a person from accessing support services, such as specialist support or medical services.
- Enforcing rules and activities that humiliate, degrade or dehumanise a person.

Physical abuse: Perhaps the most recognisable form of abuse, it does not always leave visible marks or scars but has the potential to worsen overtime. Physical harm may follow, and, in some cases, it can endanger life.

Examples include:

- threatening to cause physical harm or hurt.
- slapping, shoving, scratching, punching, biting, strangling, choking, kicking, burning, spitting or pulling hair.
- throwing things.
- grabbing or restraining.
- denying an individual the right to leave somewhere.

Sexual coercion/abuse: When a person is pressurised or coerced to do something sexually that they do not want to do. Where there is a dynamic of control and abuse in an intimate relationship, the likelihood of sexual coercion and/or abuse is high. It is harder for those being coerced and/or abused by their partner to negotiate a free and equal sexual relationship with that partner.

Examples include:

- coercing someone into sexual activity under duress.
- unwanted kissing or touching.
- unwanted rough or violent sexual activity.
- refusing to use contraceptives or restricting the use of contraception.
- rape or assault.
- sexual degradation including the enforced use of pornography.

Taking, sharing or threatening to share sexually explicit images or videos without consent (also known as 'image-based sexual abuse').

Economic abuse: Where a partner and/or perpetrator restricts, exploits and/or interferes with access to money and other resources, such as food, clothing, transportation and/or a place to live.

Examples include:

- forbidding or preventing someone from being in education or employment or forcing the person to leave education or employment.
- limiting a person's working hours.
- taking a person's pay.
- oppressively monitoring what someone buys.
- controlling the use of property, e.g. A mobile phone or car.
- causing damage to someone's property.
- refusing to contribute to household costs.
- building up debt in a person's name.

Emotional / psychological abuse: This includes non-physical behaviours like threats, insults, constant checking-in, excessive messaging, humiliation, intimidation, isolation, stalking, and gas lighting (i.e. causing someone to question their own perceptions or memories).

Examples include:

- name calling or putting someone down.
- Shouting.
- demanding to know where someone is or who they are with.
- contacting someone with abusive texts, emails and calls while they are at work.
- threatening to hurt themselves or the person they are abusing.
- threatening to harm children or to deny or restrict access to children.
- constantly controlling or monitoring someone through the use of technology, e.g. Checking a person's phone log and messages, having control of their email account, installing hidden cameras in their house.
- restricting a person's ability to be alone, e.g. Following them from room to room or accompanying them to all outside activities.

Stalking and cyberstalking: Stalking can occur in or outside the workplace and can cause fear and distress to victims. Workplace stalking is a repeated behaviour and may include following someone to or from their place of work, waiting outside a workplace entrance,

displaying a pattern of repeated, obsessive, unwanted behaviour. Stalking can happen with or without fear of violence.

Taken in isolation, some of the behaviours may appear like small acts, but together they make up a consistent pattern of behaviour that is frightening and upsetting to victims.

Stalking can also be in the form of cyberstalking, involving repeated harassment or abuse of a victim through the use of digital technology.

Examples include*:

- regularly giving unwanted gifts.
- making unwanted communication.
- damaging property.
- repeatedly following or watching a person, their home or their family.
- threatening and/or repeated, unwanted phone calls, texts or messages.
- using technology to blackmail or threaten.
- posting offensive or suggestive comments online.
- releasing a person's confidential information online.
- tracking someone's online movements or location with tracking devices.
- posting or distributing real or fake photos of a victim.
- disseminating intimate images without consent or threatening to do so.

*This list is not exhaustive.

3. Employment protections

In accordance with the provisions of the Work Life Balance Act 2023, all employees are entitled to leave with pay, referred to as 'domestic violence leave'. This leave can be availed of by a staff member who has, or is, experiencing domestic violence or to a staff member or colleague who is supporting a 'relevant person' who has or is experiencing domestic violence.

Staff members who avail of statutory domestic violence leave (see section 7) or support services will not face discrimination and will be supported by their employer. Section 8 outlines the supports available.

School leadership and school Boards of Management/ETB Management should be mindful of the fact that domestic violence and abuse may have a significant and negative impact on an employee's confidence and work performance. At a practical level, this means that school

leadership and School Boards of Management/ETB Management will have to ensure the effects of abuse are taken into consideration where they are reviewing a staff member's performance and/or workload.

4. Confidentiality

All staff employed in recognised primary and post-primary schools and ETBs have a right to privacy and confidentiality.

It is important at the outset for victims and survivors to know that conversations around domestic violence and abuse will always be held in a private and confidential space. School/ETB employees including senior management/ETB Management should also keep this at the forefront of their minds when engaging in any conversations around domestic violence and abuse.

5. Sharing Information with Others

The Boards of Management or recognised primary and post-primary schools and ETB management have a duty of care in respect of safety in the workplace and at what point to disclose potential safety risks to other employees of the school/ETB.

All information regarding domestic violence and abuse will be kept confidential and shared only with staff members who have a legitimate need to know about it and with the knowledge of the staff member concerned. All such persons will be advised of the requirement to maintain confidentiality.

For example, information may be shared with colleagues so that they can document necessary safety measures or with administrative staff dealing with statutory leave. Only information necessary to carrying out these roles and tasks will be shared and only with colleagues who have a requirement to have this information to allow those roles and tasks to be carried out.

- retaining records following a disclosure:

Under this policy, recognised primary and post–primary schools and ETBs may retain confidentially records which relate to:

- administrative data such as the request for, and approval of, statutory leave.

- details of agreed safety measures, (if any).

- details of abuse occurring in or near the workplace or using workplace equipment (example work phone or work emails) where those details have been reported to the school/ETB.

At the request of a staff member who is subject to the abuse, the records may be provided to the staff member at their request.

These records will be stored securely, kept strictly confidential, and retained only for as long as necessary in line with organisational data retention policies.

Staff working in recognised primary and post-primary schools and ETBs also have the right to have their data erased on certain grounds under Articles 17 and 19 of GDPR. Further information is available on the website of the Data Protection Commissioner under the section “Your Data”, Your rights under the GDPR.

It is important to note that colleagues to whom a disclosure is made are required to uphold confidentiality. Improper disclosure of information is a serious matter and may be subject to disciplinary action.

For victims and survivors, fears around confidentiality being breached may prevent them from disclosing in the workplace. In circumstances where confidentiality cannot be maintained (e.g. statutory obligations regarding safeguarding concerns about children, vulnerable adults or where there is a requirement to act directly to protect the safety of members of staff of the school/ETB), the staff member will be informed of the reasons why and that the information will be shared on a need-to-know basis only.

Care will be taken to ensure that the sharing of information does not put the staff member at greater risk. Where necessary, advice will be sought from specialist support organisations with responsibility for child protection and welfare, protection of vulnerable adults and the Gardaí where appropriate. Further details on support organisations are available in Appendix 1.

6. Child protection considerations

School/ETB staff/principals/Boards of Management/ETB management must take into account the Child Protection Procedures for primary and post-primary schools on the

department's website and in particular, Chapter 3 of the document which sets out the responsibilities of all school personnel, as well as Section 2.3.6 titled "Concerns in relation to an adult who may pose a risk to children".

This document can be found on the department's website at the following link:

Child Protection Precedure for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (www.gov.ie)

Nothing in this domestic violence policy document will undermine the obligations placed on school/ETB staff as regards the relevant Child Protection Procedures.

7. Domestic violence leave

Domestic violence leave is a statutory leave which was introduced under the Work Life Balance and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2023 and entitles all employees to up to 5 days paid domestic violence leave in any 12-month period.

This leave can be availed of both by a staff member who is, or who has, experienced domestic violence or, a staff member who is supporting a 'relevant person' who has experienced in the past, or is currently experiencing, domestic violence.

As defined in the Work life Balance and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2023, a relevant person includes:

- the spouse or civil partner of the employee.
- the cohabitant of the employee.
- a person with whom the employee is in an intimate relationship.
- a child of the employee who has not attained full age; or
- a person who, in relation to the employee, is a dependent person.

As outlined in the legislation, the purpose of the leave is to enable the staff member who is a victim of domestic violence or a staff member who is assisting a relevant person to do any of the following:

- seek medical attention.
- obtain services from a victim services organisation.
- obtain psychological or other professional counselling.

- relocate residence temporarily or permanently.
- obtain an order from a court under the Domestic Violence Act 2018.
- seek advice or assistance from a legal practitioner; or
- seek assistance from the Garda Síochána; or
- seek or obtain any other relevant services.

Domestic violence leave can be availed of for the reasons above for up to a maximum of 5 days in any period of 12 consecutive months and can be taken as individual days or a block/blocks of days. An absence for part of a day is counted as one day for the purposes of domestic violence leave. There is no service requirement for an employee to avail of this leave.

The provisions for Domestic Violence Leave for teachers are set out in Department of Education Circular 0059/23.

The provisions for Domestic Violence Leave for SNA's are set out in Department of Education Circular 0060/23.

The provisions for Domestic Violence Leave for school secretaries are set out in Department of Education Circular 0015/24.

Other school/ETB staff not covered by the above circulars should apply to their school in accordance with the relevant policy in place in the school/ETB.

8. School/ETB support

8.1 Victims and survivors of domestic violence and abuse

This policy is first and foremost to outline the supports available for victims and survivors of domestic violence and abuse and to outline how that support can be accessed, and the assistance that schools/ETBs can provide to their staff in that context.

A staff member may not recognise or see themselves as a victim or survivor or yet realise that their circumstances could be considered as one of domestic violence or abuse. This policy may be the first step in recognising this and will encourage them to seek guidance and support.

Staff members are encouraged to read and be assured by the processes outlined in this policy, particularly regarding who they might speak to in the school/ETB regarding issues of domestic violence and abuse.

An employee who may benefit from employer support under this policy is encouraged to raise the issue with an appropriate person. The appropriate person can be the principal, a trusted colleague or a designated named contact person, where the school/ETB has appointed a person in this role. Details of how these individuals can support a person who is experiencing, or has experienced, domestic violence, are outlined in sections 8.3, 8.8 and 8.9 below.

The Department of Education provides for an Employee Assistance Service (EAS) which is an important support for staff. Details of how the EAS can provide guidance, support and direction to specialist services in a domestic violence or abuse situation are outlined in section 8.2.

Contacting the EAS may be a good first step to seeking guidance in order to protect a staff member's own safety and in some instances, that of colleagues in the workplace. A staff member will never be forced to share any information that they do not want to, but if and when they do, there is a safe and supportive space in which to do so.

It is important to note that in the context of this policy, there is never any obligation on a staff member to confide in anyone in the workplace that they are currently, or have in the past been, subjected to domestic violence. For staff members who do not wish to do so, they are encouraged to utilise the services of the EAS or refer to the contact details for expert support services in Appendix 1.

"Recognise, Respond, Refer" Approach

Under this policy, principals, deputy principals, holders of leadership and management posts, Boards of Management, colleagues and named contact persons (see section 8.10) play a vital role in signposting the way to appropriate supports.

Their role is facilitated through the framework of the 'Recognise, Respond and Refer' Approach and mirrors the framework set out in the Civil Service.

The aim of this approach is to guide principals, deputy principals, holders of leadership and management posts, Boards of Management/ETB Management and/or colleagues on how to recognise and respond to domestic violence and abuse in a school/ETB context and to refer colleagues to appropriate supports, such as specialist domestic violence and abuse

services. This will assist a victim or survivor in accessing information, counselling, legal support or accommodation options. Further details of this approach are outlined in sections 8.4 to 8.7.

8.2 The Employee Assistance Service (EAS)

The EAS is a nationwide Employee Assistance service available to staff in all recognised primary and post-primary schools/ETBs and is currently provided by Spectrum Life. ETBs may also have an EAS available for staff outside of schools and information is available through the HR departments in ETBs.

The EAS plays a multi-functional role in minimising the impact of domestic violence and abuse in a workplace context by providing:

- immediate and ongoing support to victim and survivors
- assistance with safety planning, practical information and signposting to local community resources
- support around making a disclosure to a trusted person in their workplace
- consultative support to managers and HR on approaching a potential issue, key considerations, supports and resources
- consultative support to school/ETB leaders and HR (ETB Sector) on approaching a potential issue, key considerations, supports and resources
- emotional and practical support to alleged perpetrators who wish to change their behaviour by signposting them to resources, counselling or therapy
- Support is available through self-referral by calling 1800 411057 which is a 24/7 support line.

8.3 Role of school leadership and management/ETB management (including Boards of Management, principals, deputy principals and assistant principals and HR unit in the case of ETBs)

Those in leadership and management roles are often in a prime position to notice changes in performance, attendance and behaviour. These changes may not always be indicators of domestic violence and abuse. However, becoming familiar with this policy and the 'Recognise, Respond, Refer' approach allows those in leadership and management roles to become more attuned to the issue and gauge when to start a conversation with a view to

providing supports. The role of those in leadership and management positions in the context of this domestic violence policy includes:

- Becoming familiar with this policy document and any supporting guidelines, keeping the policy to hand so it is accessible when required.
- Having an open mind when there are changes in performance and attendance, for example, having particular regard to the signs outlined in 6.4.
- Starting a conversation in a sensitive and non – judgemental manner at an appropriate place and time.
- Be familiar with the supports that are available, such as domestic violence leave and support from the EAS.
- Consider and approve applications for domestic violence leave as soon as practicable, having regard to confidentiality.
- Seek advice from the EAS, in collaboration with relevant members of the school leadership/HR department (in the ETB sector) if additional information on specialist services or guidance on having a sensitive conversation is required.
- Keep information on domestic violence disclosures, including leave applications, confidential and have a designated and secure location in which to store information.
- Where agreed with the staff member, take note of the safety measures that have been put in place by the school/ETB. Make sure this note is accessible in the event of the staff member, or their colleague(s) being put at risk in the school. Further information on safety measures is available at 7 below.

Schools/ETBs/employers should be aware that a school principal, or other members of a school/ETB's leadership and management team, may themselves experience, or have experienced, domestic violence and the supports set out in this document are available to all staff, including those in a leadership and management role.

The HR unit in an ETB also plays an important role in ensuring that there is an open and inclusive workplace culture that supports staff who are impacted by domestic violence in the workplace.

HR cannot only direct staff members towards appropriate supports where required; they also play a key role in creating organisational awareness and facilitating training. HR also has a role in reminding managers and colleagues to maintain clear boundaries and not assume the role of counsellor or problem solver. HR should clearly signal the correct pathways to access information so that staff members can avail of appropriate supports and guidance when required.

HR will identify a clear point of contact within the HR function (who may be a named contact person) who will provide direction to staff members, colleagues and managers on workplace supports and potential adjustments. This point of contact may also be a person to whom a victim or survivor may wish to make a disclosure.

8.4 Recognise the signs

Outside of a staff member making a decision to confide in somebody in the school/ETB, the principal or colleagues who work with the staff member on a daily basis may be in a position to recognise the signs that someone is experiencing domestic violence and abuse, even where no disclosure has been made. Recognising the signs opens up opportunities to start a conversation and signpost someone to resources and supports. Signs to be aware of include, but are not limited to:

- Changes in attendance patterns.
- Unexplained absences, being later for classes or other scheduled activities; an increase in sick leave; spending an unusual amount of time at work for no reason.
- Requesting a change in work hours without explanation.
- Changes in productivity and/or work performance.
- Decrease in quality of work, targets and deadlines missed, mistakes made where this was previously not the case.
- Work is impacted as someone is distracted by texts, emails, or visits to the workplace by a partner or are distressed when communications are received.
- Changes in behaviour, disposition or mood.
- Becomes anxious, distracted, defensive and/or depressed. Isolates themselves or avoids colleagues at tea break or lunch; stops discussing home-life or relationships.
- Changes in physical appearance.
- Bruises or injuries with implausible explanations; changes in clothing choices to hide injuries; appears unusually tired, apparent increase in reliance on substances (e.g. Alcohol).
- Changes in a blended working environment, where this is provided for.
- Is consistently on mute or off video, is interrupted frequently; does not participate fully in calls or meetings; the quality of work produced has decreased.

It should be kept in mind that people may display signs such as those referenced above for many other reasons and these signs may not, in and off themselves, mean a person is experiencing, or has experienced, domestic violence or abuse.

8.5 Working from home/remote working

Working from home can increase the intensity of domestic violence and abuse that a victim or survivor is subjected to, as perpetrators may have more opportunities to abuse. Staff members subjected to domestic violence and abuse may not have any respite from the abuse, be unable to access a safe space, and often experience barriers to seeking help and communicating about the abuse with managers and colleagues.

Where this facility is provided, for example in the case of administrative staff that have working from home arrangements in place, managers, in particular, should stay attuned to the wellbeing of staff members when they work remotely, keeping in regular contact with the staff members reporting to them and facilitating in-office work locations where required.

8.6 Responding where there are concerns

Where there are signs which may raise concerns a staff member is experiencing, or has experienced, domestic violence, but this is not clear, the relevant member of the school/ETB leadership/management team/HR department may:

• Consider asking sensitive questions in a private setting.

• Provide, where appropriate, the staff member with details of internal and external supports, such as the EAS service, should they wish to discuss the issue in the future.

8.7 Responding to a domestic violence and abuse disclosure

If a staff member confides in a principal or another member of staff of the school/board of management/ETB Management, the person who the staff member has confided in will endeavour to respond in a sensitive, compassionate and non-judgemental manner and provide the staff member with assurances of confidentiality. This response applies equally if a staff member confides in someone who is not the principal. In responding, the staff member should be directed towards information on supports (both internally, such as the EAS and external support networks).

8.8 Refer to workplace supports and accommodations

The principal can advise the staff member of potential workplace support options, such as the confidential EAS, statutory domestic violence leave, temporary change of work patterns or adjustments to workload where practicable, and any other additional supports that the school/ETB may be able to provide. The staff member can consider these options in light of their own circumstances. Further information on workplace supports is available in the section 'Safety at Work following a disclosure' and a list of contacts for specialist services is available in Appendix 1.

8.9 The role of a 'trusted colleague'

A 'trusted colleague' is not a formal role, but for the purpose of this policy, it is a term that acknowledges that staff members spend a considerable amount of time in the school/ETB and can develop friendships and positive relationships with their colleagues. As a consequence, a victim of domestic violence or abuse may feel comfortable confiding in someone they trust in the school/ETB.

A trusted colleague may also be in a position to recognise some of the signs of domestic violence and abuse set out in section 8.4.

Members of a school's/ETB's leadership and management team, and of the HR team in an ETB, should be mindful that there may be circumstances where a staff member is not comfortable making a disclosure to them and may share a confidence about domestic violence or abuse with a colleague who they trust.

Where a staff member confides in another colleague, that colleague should be supportive, non-judgmental and treat information in confidence. Trusted colleagues may wish to bring this policy to the attention of the staff member. All staff need to be mindful that they should be fully respectful of the need for confidentiality and should not pass on information to others – this includes members of the school/ETB's leadership and management team, HR, named contact persons, or other colleagues - without the consent of the person themselves (except in very limited cases as outlined in section 4 – 'confidentiality')

Where someone confides in a member of staff as a trusted colleague, the trusted colleague should signpost their colleague towards appropriate internal and external supports as outlined and bring this Policy to their attention.

8.10 The role of a named contact person

In addition to the principals and other members of a school/ETB's leadership and management team, BOMs, ETB Management, HR and trusted colleagues, schools/ETBs may wish to put in place additional access routes for victims towards information and supports. This can be facilitated by naming and publicising 'contact persons' within their school/ETB.

The need for an additional named contact person may vary depending on the type and size of the school/ETB. Where schools/ETBs determine that additional contact persons add value to the process, they should ensure that named contact persons are familiar with this policy, the documented pathways to support available to victims and undertake available training.

Schools/ETBs should also ensure that any named contact person(s) is aware of the requirement to maintain clear boundaries, that they do not assume the role of counsellor or problem solver and understand the importance of confidentiality. The provision of a named contact person(s), where this is introduced by a school/ETB, can be tailored to the structure and size of each individual school/ETB.

9. Safety at work following a disclosure

The impacts and risks of domestic violence and abuse necessitate a safety conscious response at all times. Following a disclosure, a manager or other designated person, where there is one in the workplace, will consult with the employee on their safety needs in and around the workplace.

In responding to a disclosure and in considering the risks and impacts of domestic violence and abuse, it is important to understand and plan for the safety needs of a victim or survivor in or around the workplace. It should be agreed with the staff member that a note of planned safety measures should be documented and stored confidentially in the event that it needs to be referred to at any stage.

School/ETB safety measures can include, but are not limited to:

- Change of contact details (work phone, email).
- Agreeing a future response in the event that a perpetrator attends the staff member's school/ETB and/or communicates (calls, emails or texts) with the workplace.

- Improving or reviewing security measures on premises or other work locations and discussing how the staff member can take appropriate steps to protect their own safety when traveling to or from work.
- Consideration of existing barring, safety or protection orders protecting the staff member.
- Ensuring, insofar as possible that any work-provided communication devices are not externally monitored.
- Encourage the staff member that any threats that warrant it, such as threats to physically harm or kill, should be reported to An Garda Síochána and relevant management in consultation with the staff member.
- Offering information on specialist support services to the affected employee (See Appendix 1).
- Any other steps that can be agreed and put in place between the school/ETB and the staff member.

Workplace safety measures agreed between the school/ETB and the employee can be set out in a Workplace Safety Plan. A draft Workplace Safety Plan Guide is provided at Appendix 2. This workplace safety plan will be treated as confidential and shared on a need-to-know basis only.

10. Training and awareness

The website www.dvatwork.ie contains support materials and services for employers. Included on the website is a link that provides information on supports for employers, including the provision of training by Women's Aid to employees who may be in a position to facilitate or respond to disclosures of domestic abuse in their workplace.

Schools/ETBs should, where possible, facilitate staff to attend available training to help them develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to respond sensitively to staff who may have experienced or are experiencing domestic violence and abuse**.** Schools/ETBs can arrange for the provision of training for their staff directly with the training providers, such as Women's Aid referenced above, or other providers of domestic violence and abuse awareness training as appropriate. Such training can be facilitated through the use of Croke Park hours.

There is no expectation, nor is it appropriate, that a staff member, colleague, principal, member of a BOM, named contact person or ETB HR representative adopt the role of

counsellor or adviser on matters that are more appropriate to professionals or expert support networks.

However, all staff members in a school/ETB have a role to play in fostering a workplace that does not tolerate domestic violence and abuse or the attitudes which underpin it. Staff in schools/ETBs should be mindful that, as colleagues, school/ETB leaders and staff in a school/ETB may be the ones to first suspect or become aware that another staff member has, or is, experiencing domestic violence and can be prepared by familiarising themselves with this policy and undertaking available training and awareness sessions.

Information on support services and information resources available for those who are experiencing, or who have experienced, domestic violence and abuse, such as Women's Aid and AlwaysHere.ie is provided at Appendix 1.

11. Support for past domestic violence and abuse experiences

It is recognised that a staff member may have experienced domestic violence and abuse in the past, and even though it is not ongoing, it may still impact a person emotionally and psychologically. In these circumstances, emotional support will be offered through the EAS and/or referral to appropriate specialist organisations. It is acknowledged that survivors do move on and heal from domestic violence and abuse and quite possibly do not need any further support, but if needed, the support of the EAS and other specialist services are available.

12. Domestic violence and abuse allegations against another staff member of a school/ETB

It is acknowledged that staff members in a school/ETB can also be alleged perpetrators of domestic violence and abuse. Schools/ETBs will hold alleged perpetrators accountable for domestic violence and abuse committed in the workplace, during work hours or through work equipment. In such cases, disciplinary procedures may be invoked with potential sanctions up to and including dismissal, in accordance with the school/ETB's Disciplinary Code and the relevant departmental circulars, where applicable.

Staff members who knowingly facilitate abuse, for example, by providing the alleged perpetrator with access to equipment or information on the victim or survivor such as contact details, location or work patterns, will also be subject to disciplinary procedures.

Domestic abuse may be reported to have occurred, or be occurring, where both parties are employees of the same school/ETB, or employees of different entities but sharing a work location. In such cases, particular arrangements need to be put in place. The principal/BOM will consult with the survivor-victim in consideration of their safety and wellbeing needs while recognising that all individuals have a right to fair process and procedure.

There may be instances where a staff member who is a perpetrator requires signposting to resources, counselling or therapy. This may happen when an alleged perpetrator wishes to change their own behaviour. In these circumstances, the staff member should be advised to contact the EAS for guidance. Any direction towards supports does not preclude disciplinary action being taken where this is appropriate or warranted.

Appendix 1. Resources and contacts

Organisation:	Contact Details:
Employee Assistance Service: Spectrum Life	Free phoneline: 1800411057 SMS: Text 'Hi' to 087 145 2056 WhatsApp: Text 'Hi' to 087 369 0010
Women's Aid	24hr National Freephone Helpline: 1800 341 900 Email: info@womensaid.ie Website: www.womensaid.ie
AlwaysHere.ie Information resource provided by the Department of Justice on domestic and sexual violence support services from State agencies and the voluntary sector at both National and County level. Also, general information on such issues as the definition of Domestic Violence, making a safety plan and digital and online safety.	Website: www.alwayshere.ie
Men's Development Network	National Freephone Helpline (Male Advice Line): 1800 816 588 Website: www.mensnetwork.ie
LGBT Ireland	National Helpline: 1890 929 539 Transgender family support line: 01 9073707 (open Tuesday/Sundays) Website: www.lgbt.ie
TENI (Transgender Equality Network Ireland)	Gender Identity Family Support Line: 01 9073707 Website: www.teni.ie
MOVE Ireland (Men Overcoming Violence) Provides Domestic Violence Perpetrators Intervention Programmes for men where they are challenged to take responsibility for their abuse and to change their attitudes and behaviour and develop respectful, non-abusive relationships.	Website: www.moveireland.ie
BeLonG To LGBTI+ youth support organisation for young people aged between 14–23 years	Telephone: 01 670 6223 Email: info@belongto.org Website: www.belongto.org
SAFE Ireland Programme for creating safety for women and children with a focus on research, public policy and awareness and provision of training.	Website: www.safeireland.ie
Dublin Rape Crisis Centre	24-hour helpline: 1800 77 8888 Webchat support service (Mon – Fri, 10.00am to 5.00pm (excl. bank holidays) Counselling & therapy services: www.drcc.ie

Tusla The State Child and Family Agency	Telephone: 01 7718500 Email: info@tusla.ie Website: www.tusla.ie
Cuan Statutory agency under the remit of the Department of Justice dedicated to tackling and reducing domestic, sexual and gender-based violence	Email: info@cuanagency.ie Website: www.gov.ie/cuan
HSE Sexual Assault Treatment Units Information on care options if a person has been raped or sexually assaulted.	https://www2.hse.ie/services/satu/
An Garda Síochána	Emergency Phone: 112 or 999. Local Garda Station Website: www.garda.ie
The Courts Service of Ireland	Website: www.courts.ie
Citizens Information	Website: www.citizensinformation.ie
Legal Aid Board	Website: www.legalaidboard.ie

Appendix 2: Workplace safety plan guide

A workplace safety plan can be drawn up in conjunction with the employee giving an overview of potential steps that might be taken when supporting an employee subjected to domestic violence and abuse in order that they will be safe at work.

An example of a workplace safety guide is provided below. Please note that the support options listed are optional and are not exhaustive and can be amended to reflect the specific circumstances of each case.

How to prepare a workplace safety plan:

A.

- Arrange for a private, in-person meeting with the impacted employee in a safe location.

- Explain the objective of the workplace safety plan: To determine what the employer can do to help the employee be safe at work.

B.

- Reassure the affected employee that the contents of the workplace safety plan will be based on their own needs and wishes.

C.

- Discuss each section of the plan outlined below, asking the employee to identify any relevant concerns they have around their safety as a result of the abuse.

D.

- Outline any actions the workplace can take to support the affected employee for each concern raised, being sure to explain any limits to confidentiality that may result from certain actions being adopted.

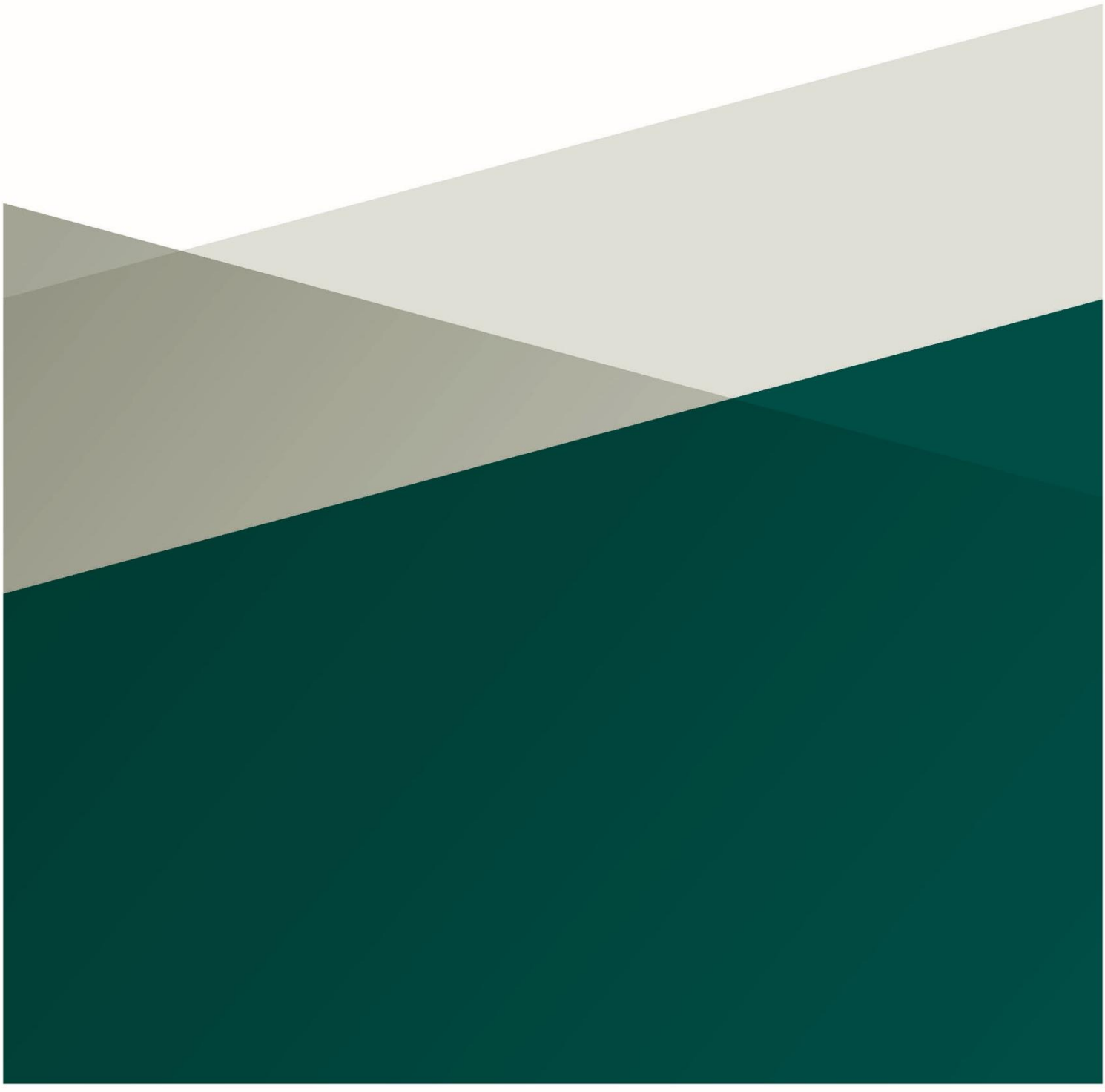
- Record any actions that the impacted employee agrees to include in the workplace safety plan.

- Store the workplace plan securely.

- Implement the actions on the workplace plan.

Example of steps that can be outlined in a workplace safety plan, where such steps can be facilitated by the employer:

Area of Consideration	Examples of potential support options
Travelling to/from work	Establish safety measures around employee's journey to/from work. Examples: • Provide parking space, well – lit and close to main entrance. • Monitor parking space by camera. • Escort to/from means of transport.
Safety at the school/ETB or away from the school/ETB	Establish safety measures to support employee while working at the school/ETB or away from the school/ETB. Examples: • Provide locked entries/exits. • Install personal or fixed alarms/panic buttons. • Maintain confidentiality around the employee such as contact details. • Remind staff of safe workplace access procedures and how to respond if they encounter strangers in the workplace. • Ensure employee does not work alone, especially when working in a public facing role. • Consideration of existing Protection, Safety or Barring Orders protecting the employee.
Workplace communication	Establish safety measures around workplace communications to prevent or lessen the impacts of abuse, harassment or stalking. Examples: • Change employees contact details (such as mobile phone number) where applicable. • Update emergency contact number if currently set to perpetrator (without alerting them to the change).
Performance and behaviour	Establish whether the employee requires employment protection measures if their

	work performance and behaviour are impacted by the abuse. Examples: • Temporary protection from dismissal and other disciplinary actions. • Reduced workload.
Employee absence	Establish how to respond to the employee being unexpectedly absent from work. Examples: • Develop response system if employee unexpectedly does not show up for work. • Ask for permission to check in with employee while on domestic violence leave (including establishing frequency and method).
Perpetrator presence/contact	Establish a process for safely responding to the perpetrator's presence or contact attempts. Examples: • Develop response system if perpetrator shows up at workplace or contacts workplace. • Review workplace security measures and procedures.
Specialist support	Connect employee to specialist support services for sustained and expert support> Examples: • Offer information to access additional, specialist support (see 'Referrals' section of the domestic violence policy). • Provide safe location and device to contact specialist support services.
Ongoing workplace support	Determine employee's preferred approach to ongoing workplace support following a disclosure. Examples:

	• Approve applications for domestic violence leave as soon as possible. • Establish preferred frequency/approach to follow-up conversations about the issues. • Provide safe location and device to contact specialist support services.
Sharing information	Depending on the outcome of each section of the workplace safety plan, information about the employee's disclosure may need to be shared with others. Examples: • Determine which information relating to the employee may need to be shared and who it may be shared with to implement workplace safety plan. Request the consent of the employee to do so. • Establish a secondary contact for the safety plan in case the primary contact is unavailable.