
THE PREVENTION PROGRAMME FOR SCHOOLS:

Domestic Violence
and Anti-bullying
2016/2017

What impact does it have
on the school
community?

Heather Vacciana

THE HOME SAFE: DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAMME & ANTI-BULLYING PREVENTION PROGRAMME FOR SCHOOLS

1. INTRODUCTION:

The Home Safe: Domestic Violence & Abuse (DVA) Prevention Education Programme for Schools was introduced as a pilot project in the London Borough of Islington in 2004. The Programme was initially funded through the Safer Islington Partnership, steered by the Islington Domestic Violence Partnership Team and Cambridge Education @ Islington (2004 – 2010). Cambridge Education mainstreamed the Programme into its core business in April 2011 and in April 2012 the programme transferred to Islington, where it is currently based within the Safeguarding & Quality Assurance Service (S & Q A). The Programme Manager post was merged with the DVA Prevention Officer role so that one Officer has responsibility for both the Home Safe Programme and the Anti-Bullying (AB) Coordinator role.

The programme was set up to meet the aims of the Islington Domestic Violence Strategy, which included recognising the needs of and giving support to children and young people affected by domestic violence/abuse. We know that 1 in 4 women in the UK are affected by DVA and that 1 in 6 men experience DVA per year and school staff will not be immune to this statistic. Indeed, the impact of the prevention programme has also enabled staff to disclose either historic or current abuse as well as to seek advice on behalf of friends / family. This clearly demonstrates the importance of this programme not only in relation to staff CPD and networking opportunities, but also to empower staff to seek help around their own personal trauma of inter-personal violence and abuse. In addition to this the programme aims to promote a culture of human rights and non-violence within the school setting based on the principles of gender-equality, as outlined in the Government's current Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) prevention strategy 2016-2020. Although the key focus is on DVA prevention, the programme also addresses wider, interconnected gender-based violence in order to contextualise the extent and prevalence of DVA in our community and the intersectionality of ethnicity, class, disability, sexual orientation etc. In Islington DVA (first quarter of 2017) was recorded as the top risk factor for families who have children with child protection plans for the month of January (32 per cent)¹ and between July 2016 – July 2017 there were 3053 DVA contacts to Children Services Contact Team, which was the highest reason that the team were contacted about children.

- 1.1 The Domestic Violence Prevention Programme has been evaluated by an independent consultant, who endorsed the content of the programme.
- 1.2 This report will refer to both areas of work as the 'Prevention Programme'. The prevention programme is available to early years' settings (staff training/parent workshops only), primary, secondary and special schools, Pupil Referral Units

¹ Islington Safeguarding Children Board newsletter, Volume 8, issue 1, p7, April 2017

(PRU's), youth hubs, Alternative Provision (AP) settings and colleges in the borough (staff training and student workshops). The offer includes:

- Consultation with relevant safeguarding staff
- Staff training
- Universal pupil lessons
- Parent workshops
- Targeted work with children and young people at risk of /experiencing abuse
- Resources and materials
- Advice, sign-posting and support

Although a significant part of the prevention programme focuses on operational work, there is a strategic element to the role, which will also be outlined in this report.

- 1.3 It is widely acknowledged that preventative work is difficult to measure because it is based on long-term outcomes, which inhibits the ability to monitor or track findings within a school population that is not 'static'. This is further hindered by the fact that the PSHE curriculum, which is where the prevention lessons are delivered, is not yet mandatory and therefore schools can choose to opt in or out of this part of the curriculum. The government is in the process of reviewing this and it is hoped that the recommendation will be to make PSHE a mandatory part of the curriculum by September 2019. Schools that do include PSHE as a meaningful aspect of the wider curriculum feedback the positive impact of the work on students' retention of information and learning outcomes:

“Last week I asked my PSHCE students to complete some questionnaires on their perception of PSHCE this year (what they enjoyed, what worked well and what could be done better.) The responses were very positive and they highlighted the sessions that you delivered as being particularly interesting and beneficial to their PSHCE education. I also set KS3 PSHCE exams this year and it was clear that they had retained much of the knowledge regarding healthy relationships, domestic violence and FGM. Without a doubt using specialists in their field to impart such information is invaluable and makes a huge difference to our students' learning”.

PROGRAMME OUTREACH & DELIVERY 2016-2017

Table 1: work delivered across this academic year

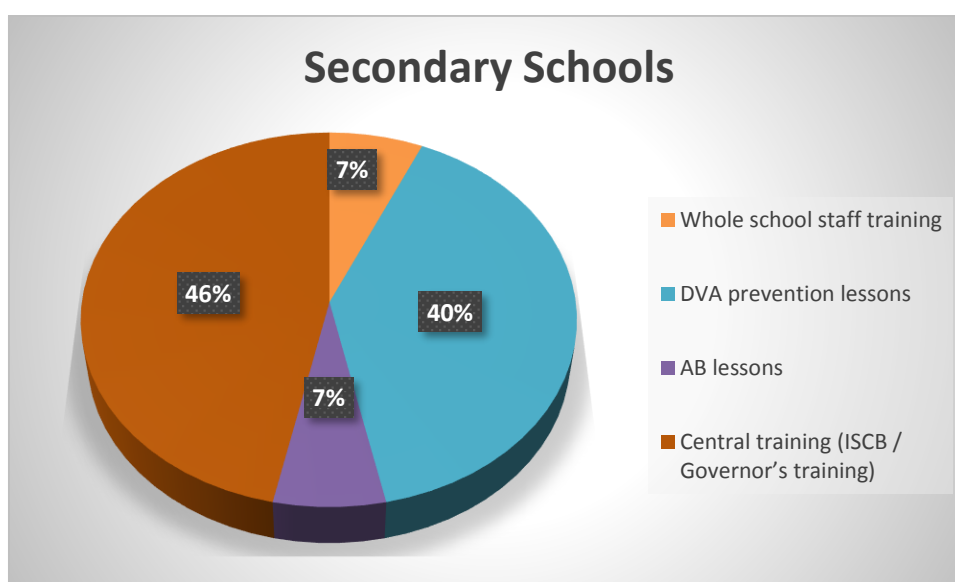
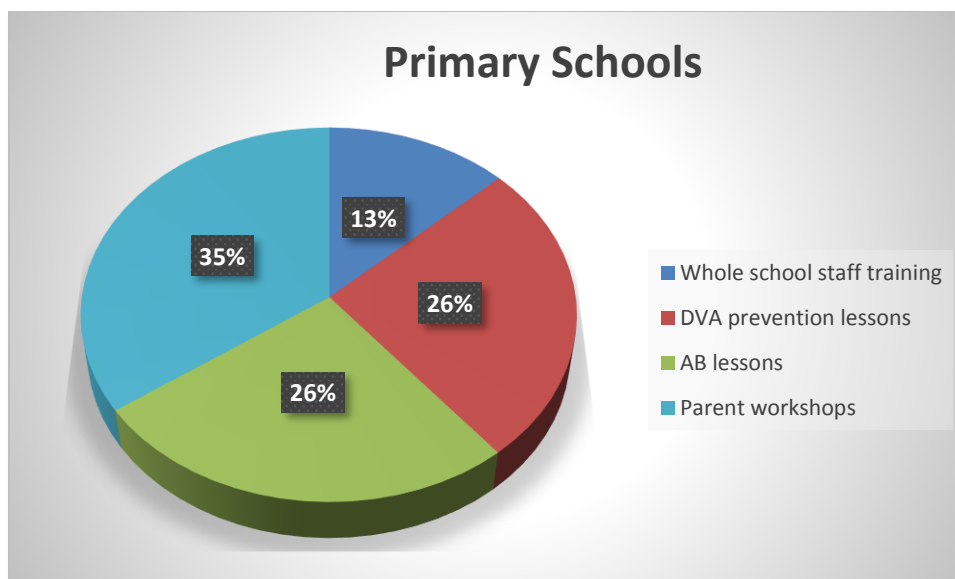
NUMBER	SECTOR	NAME OF SCHOOL / SETTING	TYPE OF PROVISION	GROUP
1.	Secondary	Holloway	FGM briefing; DVA Awareness session	Whole school staff members
2.	Secondary	EGA	DVA prevention Gender equality series	Y10 & Y11 cohort; 4 lessons per group. X 5 groups.

			(within the Sociology curriculum)	
3.	secondary	Highbury Grove	DVA prevention / healthy relationships lesson	Y10 cohort; X1 session with X 8 classes
4.	Primary (Wandsworth LA)	Our Lady Queen of Heaven	FGM awareness staff training	X 3 sessions with X3 groups (TA's x 2 groups & Teaching staff)
5.	Governor's training	Primary schools represented	FGM slot as part of the Governors safeguarding training with CT	Governor's from primary schools: x2 sessions delivered over the academic year.
6.	Multi-agency	ISCB	Central training: safeguarding refresher: specialist FGM slot	DSL's: x 4 amount delivered in academic year.
7.	Primary	Prior Western	AB lessons	Y6 cohort: X2 classes
8.	Primary	Prior Western	AB Parent workshop	10 parents
9.	primary	Highbury Quadrant	AB staff training	Whole staff
10.	Secondary	Holloway	AB pupil lesson	Y7 targeted group
11.	primary	Highbury Quadrant	AB workshop	Parent workshop
12.	Multi-agency	ISCB	Central training. All-day DVA Prevention / CP training	Multi-agency
13.	primary	St Mary's	AB lessons	Y5 & Y6 cohort x2 classes
14.	Primary	Ambler	DVA prevention parent workshop	parents
15.	secondary	Mount Carmel	DVA lesson: Y8 cohort =	x4 classes - 1 session per class

			Y7 cohort = Y9 cohort = Y10 cohort =	x3 classes - 1 session per class; x3 classes - 4 sessions per class; x3 classes - 4 sessions per class
16.	primary	Tufnell Park	AB lessons	Y5 & Y6 cohort. (x3 classes)
17.	Primary	Montem	AB lessons	Y4 class
18.	Primary	Pooles Park	DVA prevention staff training	Whole staff session
19.	secondary	Highbury Fields	VAWG Prevention lessons	Y12 (x3 sessions)
20.	Primary	St. Luke's CoE	DVA prevention lessons	Y5 Cohort (x2 classes)
21.	Primary	St. Anselm's Catholic (Wandsworth)	FGM Awareness staff training	Whole staff training session
22.	primary	Highbury Quadrant	AB lessons	Y6 cohort (x2 classes)
23.	secondary	St. Aloysius College	DVA prevention session	Y13 group
24.	primary	Hungerford	DVA prevention lessons	Y5 cohort (x2 classes)
25.	primary	Southmead (Wandsworth)	FGM awareness training	Whole staff training
26.	primary	Tufnell Park	DVA prevention lessons	Y5 & Y6 cohort (x3 classes)
27.	primary	Gillespie	DVA prevention workshop	Parent workshop
28.	Primary	Ambler	DVA prevention workshop	Parent workshop
29.	Primary	Ashmount	AB lesson	Y5 & Y6 cohort (x4 classes)
	Primary	Ashmount	AB Workshop	Parent workshop

30.	Primary	St. Jude's & St. Paul's	FGM Awareness training	Whole staff training
31.	Secondary	Holloway	DVA/healthy relationships workshops	Targeted group work Y8, Y9 & Y10 (x6 sessions) Single-sex sessions
32.	primary	St. Jude's & St. Paul's	DVA prevention lesson	Y6 cohort (x1 class)
33.	primary	Tufnell Park	AB Workshop	Parent workshop
34.	primary	Ronald Ross (Wandsworth)	FGM awareness training	Whole staff training
35.	primary	Ambler	AB workshop	Parents
36.	primary	Gillespie	DVA prevention lesson	Y6 cohort (x1 class)
37.	Primary	Prior Western	AB follow-up lessons	Y5 Cohort (x2 classes)
38.	Mixed settings	Borough wide schools event	AB conference for schools	147 pupils and school staff

- 1.4 In terms of pupil lessons; these are delivered either as a one-off session, usually repeated every academic year (i.e. delivering to every Year 6 class per academic year) or as a series of lessons, usually over a term. As a result, over 1,067 pupils received specialist AB and/or DVA prevention lessons in this academic year. 85 parents accessed the DVA/AB parent workshop and 300 staff had DVA awareness/AB training. These figures do not include the schools that attended the AB conference for schools or school staff that attended the ISCB training or Governor's safeguarding training. What is evident is that schools continue to seek the support that the prevention programme offers, either to the whole-school community (parents, staff and pupils) or to sections of the community (e.g. via staff training only). However, as the table above and the pie chartsⁱ below illustrate, take-up is still not standardised across all schools, and where there is take-up, pupil interventions tend to be prioritised, as opposed to adoption of the holistic approach, which is what is really required if bullying and interpersonal violence and abuse are to be reduced.



- 1.5 The lessons help children and young people understand the spectrum of DVA, bullying and healthy relationships / appropriate conduct, as well as sign-posting to specialist agencies for further advice and support, if required. As a result of these lessons, children and young people are more informed about very sensitive, complex issues, are able to access details of specialist services, are empowered regarding equality issues, and direct disclosures often take place, especially, but not exclusively, amongst primary pupils due to the creation of a safe space to explore these concerns:

“Your lessons were very powerful and had a profound impact upon our students. They were all actively engaged in your lessons and the lessons enabled them to explore wider issues within our society that are very important and relevant. Students felt at ease speaking about their experiences

and feelings towards the content due to your personal delivery of the sessions. Your manner really encouraged them to open up and was warmly welcomed by students. They thoroughly enjoyed the lessons and learnt about topics many teachers would find difficult to cover. Your work here this year has been invaluable and as a school we are extremely grateful for the hard work you put into each session for our pupils”.

Head of Sociology, EGA secondary school

- 1.6 In addition to staff awareness, pupil welfare and empowerment, the parent workshops allow parents / carers to have a greater insight into how the local authority works with their children and young people on sensitive, complex CP safeguarding issues, through the PSHE curriculum. It provides valid information for parents about anti-bullying initiatives and support for those that have experienced DVA or are at risk of abuse, or to assist those in the family or community who may be at risk. It also enables parents to challenge schools around equality, diversity, behaviour and safeguarding strategies.

2. ADVICE AND SUPPORT:

As mentioned in previous reports, Head-teachers (HTs), safeguarding leads and other relevant professionals continue to utilise the support of the Anti-Bullying Coordinator / DV Prevention Officer to discuss any DVA / bullying concerns or questions they may have, alongside the appropriate steps to take in order to safeguard children and young people within their school. This is particularly pertinent in the summer term with the increased awareness amongst school staff of FGM and the heightened risk to girls in this period.

- 2.1 This advisory element helps the Prevention Programme to remain dynamic in nature, as it always seeks to respond to and incorporate into the programme new and emerging areas of concern, such as trans-gender/gender-fluidity issues and adolescent to parent violence and abuse (APVA).
- 2.2 Regarding concerns about bullying; parents of both the victim and those accused of bullying seek advice when they feel unsupported by the school. At this stage of contact, parents have often either withdrawn their child / young person from school, or are on the verge of doing so. By providing advice and support to families to remain engaged with the school, parents have sought to resolve the problem with school, whereas otherwise they may have been less likely to do so and resorted to more drastic measures (e.g. transfer to another school).

3. SIGNIFICANT DATES:

National and international dates are used to promote the work of the prevention programme and raise awareness of support and advice available. This will entail the management and coordination of borough-wide events, such as the Anti-Bullying Conference for Schools, as part of national anti-bullying week, which also reflects the

advice from the Department for Education (DfE) for head-teachers, staff and governing bodies, regarding pupil consultation and engagement.²

- 3.1 The anti-bullying conference for 2016, which was supported by colleagues within the local authority, alongside representatives from charities such as Diversity Role Models, Tender, Solace Women's Aid and Race on the Agenda (ROTA), hosted over 147 pupils and school staff from 9 primaries and 7 secondary schools within the borough. The conference is also championed by the Islington Mayor and the Executive Member for Children and Families. Engaging directly with children and young people also enables the Anti-Bullying Steering Group to promote student recommendations to engender a culture-change in schools around anti-bullying interventions. The 2016 conference was co-facilitated by the Shadow Anti-Bullying Steering Group (also referred to as "Paperclip"), which gave greater authenticity to this conference as an event for children and young people. See below the proposals made by students at the conference to reduce bullying in school:

Selection of the student's recommendations from the 2016 anti-bullying conference for Islington schools:

- **More anti-bullying awareness lessons**
- **School advisors**
- **More lessons on LGBT+ issues, islamophobia, racism and sexism**
- **The establishment of Paperclip groups in every school**
- **Quicker response from staff when a bullying incident occurs**
- **Older students to be 'buddies' to the younger students**
- **Talking therapies – individual or groups**
- **reflection or 'chill' room**

4. POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND PARTNERSHIP WORK:

As stated earlier, the role of the Prevention Programme Manager does not operate in isolation, but works within the broader anti-bullying / VAWG / CP / Safeguarding framework. This includes supporting strategic development and policy initiatives across various steering and sub-group meetings in the borough, to ensure a joined up approach that is consistent with national policy on eliminating VAWG and the reduction of bullying in schools.

² Department for Education, Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for Head teachers, Staff and Governing Bodies, p.10 July 2017

4.1 For example:

- **Contributing to the Youth Violence in Schools steering group:**

Multi-agency group promoting specialist early intervention services to schools through the development of a directory for schools and facilitating a networking event for schools to explore gaps in provision/requirements around youth violence;

- **Co-management of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for schools group supervision Programme:**

Development of the first group supervision programme in the borough for school DSL's;

- **Contributing to the VAWG Business Group meeting:**

Multi-agency group working supporting Islington's VAWG strategy via the VAWG action plan. Seeking to ensure a joined up approach to addressing the various strands of VAWG and providing a proactive response to addressing VAWG across agencies, inclusive of the needs of children and young people;

- **Contributing to the borough-wide CSE audit:**

Auditing named schools around their case management of young people that were at risk of / experienced CSE in order to improve outcomes for those that may be at risk of CSE;

- **Managing the Safeguarding in Education Training Officer**

Provision of support and guidance to ensure that the Officer is confident in meeting the requirements of the role;

- **Contributing to Manor Gardens FGM Steering Group & Forum:**

Attending multi-agency meetings to address FGM in the borough with the focus on the development of toolkits to assist in the increase of identification, disclosure and referrals;

- **Chair of Islington's Anti-Bullying Steering Group:**

Multi-agency group focused on supporting schools with various strategies and interventions to minimise the extent of bullying in schools and initiatives to empower victims / deter those exhibiting bullying behaviour.


- 4.2 Some of the other key highlights also include working in partnership with the Shadow Anti-Bullying Steering Group (SABSG), which is a group of secondary school students that advise the AB Steering Group on key trends around anti-bullying; working in partnership with ISCB Training Manager to deliver 1-day DVA / Safeguarding courses to multi-agency professionals and contributing to the Safeguarding Refresher training (FGM slot); providing specialist FGM awareness training as part of the Statutory Safeguarding training for school Governors, delivered by the Safeguarding in Education Training and Development Officer; working in partnership with ISCB Manager to develop, implement and sustain the DSL group supervision programme, which also includes working with colleagues

within the Education Psychology Service; and working with the PAUSE Manager to develop a unique survivor testimony presentation as part of the DVA prevention programme for secondary schools.

5. CONCLUSION:

The last academic year has seen a continuation in the trend of increased school take-up of the prevention programme, particularly amongst primary schools, as evidenced by the table included in the report. There has also been an improvement by secondary schools in engaging with the programme, with greater consistency around embedding in lessons, and for the first time, implementing a series of lessons both in the PSHE curriculum and across the wider curricula, which was well received by staff and students:

This has been an extremely productive year, building on and enhancing the



“I have learnt more about domestic abuse and how it effects the victim and people around them. I have learnt more about how girls of some cultures are forced to have things such as FGM. From this, I have been made more aware about ownership of my body as a person, and that no-one has responsibility over my body except me.”

Year 10 student

partnership work with statutory agencies, charities and school staff, with fantastic input from children and young people, all with the common aim to safeguard children and enrich their life experiences in school. Where gaps exist, the focus for the next academic year will be to target those non-engaging schools to ensure engagement with the Prevention Programme; prioritising staff training so that they are better equipped to understand the signs and symptoms that children and young people may present with and respond appropriately; and to work even more synergistically with partner agencies to ensure all children and young people in the borough have access to the anti-bullying / DVA prevention agenda and parents and school staff are better equipped to safeguard children and young people at risk of bullying / DVA. This is ever more pertinent with the confirmation by the government to make Relationships Education (primary) and Relationships and Sex Education (secondary) statutory in all schools, all of which will come into force in September 2019 and the high referral rate to CSCT for DVA. The government will consider the same for

PSHE. In light of this positive change to the national curriculum I would like to propose the following recommendations:

- *Schools to ensure they review their curriculum programme to enable the integration of RE/RSE/PSHE into the broader curriculum;*
- *Schools that have yet to engage with the prevention programme are strongly encouraged to do so;*
- *Whole school staff training made available around VAWG agenda so that staff are aware and understand the range of VAWG issues and how to address within the school setting;*
- *Schools that fail to take up the offer demonstrate how they are addressing anti-bullying and DVA prevention through the PSHE curriculum; which specialist services are being used to deliver the lessons or workshops; how staff are accessing relevant training; and demonstrate how parents are being advised / educated on the DVA prevention / anti-bullying agenda*
- *Schools that fail to demonstrate that they are addressing bullying / domestic violence / abuse / healthy relationships within the curriculum are clearly reminded of their obligation to so do as specified by Ofsted and ISCB policies.*

*******End Report*******

ⁱ Please be aware that whole school staff training denotes training delivered in individual schools and the central training refers to training delivered to Safeguarding School Governor's and training delivered on behalf of the ISCB, which will include school and college DSLs