

Tackling Domestic Abuse

a checklist for leaders

Having supportive policies in your school that maintain and promote good working practices and underpin your commitment to staff-wellbeing, have an enormously positive impact on morale, performance and attrition. Education professionals are predominantly women. Government data shows that around one in three women and one in seven men experience some form of domestic abuse in their lifetime. The NEU model policy gives you the tools you need to lead line managers in supporting staff who are at risk of, or experiencing, domestic abuse.

- ✓ **Display the NEU's "you are not alone" posters in your workplace.** Choose a place it will be seen by everyone, such as by the kettle or inside each staff toilet cubicle, as well as the usual notice board space.
- ✓ **Read and understand the NEU model policy.** Changes can be made to the policy through negotiation; for guidance, use the process set out in the trade union recognition agreement, if you have one.
- ✓ **Share the material with your SLT** and discuss the benefits of having such a policy in place: reduced sick days, improved wellbeing and better performance to name but a few. Remember to discuss your duty of care as an employer and the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- ✓ **Invest in training for all line managers.** It is vital that everyone understand what is expected of them to ensure that staff experiencing abuse are not put at further risk unintentionally.

- ✓ **Nominate at least one woman colleague as a point of contact on domestic abuse issues.** Recognise that some women will find it more difficult to disclose abuse to a male colleague.
- ✓ Insert the school/college name and **make sure the policy is included in the employee handbook or equivalent.**
- ✓ **Avoid bias,** stereotypes and preconceptions in the implementation of the policy.
- ✓ **Support requests for flexible working** from victims/survivors.
- ✓ **Allow emergency paid time-off in line with this policy;** a minimum of 10 days, taken flexibly.
- ✓ **Be aware of the risks and consequences.** Become familiar with the warning signs and understand how domestic abuse can impact the working lives of victims/ survivors. You can find further detail about this in the NEU model policy and guidance.



- ✔ **Carry out a risk assessment and Safety Care Plan** with the staff member affected. Let them lead and make the decisions on what to do and how to do it, but be prepared to give suggestions and seek advice from other specialist domestic abuse agencies.
- ✔ **Understand that abuse does not stop when the relationship ends.** Often abuse continues, and sometimes gets worse. It can be long-lasting and have a significant impact on the career and home life of a victim/survivor.

NB. Be aware that a person's vulnerability to abuse may be increased by factors including their sex, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy, ethnicity and economic and/or immigration status.

