



Ms. Miriam Reilly
Meetings Administrator,
Corporate Services Department,
South Dublin County Council,
County Hall,
Tallaght,
Dublin 24



26 May 2022

Minister's Reference: DJE-MO-04068-2022

Dear Ms. Reilly,

Thank you for your correspondence addressed to the Minister for Justice, Helen McEntee TD. The Minister has asked that I reply on her behalf.

The Minister would like to assure you that she is committed to tackling domestic, sexual and gender-based violence (DSGBV) in all its forms, and to ensuring that people, particularly women, children and vulnerable people, feel safe and are safe in our communities.

The Minister is committed to continue to work with the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, An Garda Síochána and Tusla on examining the feasibility of introducing elements of the Operation Encompass approach to this jurisdiction. The Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth is taking the lead role in examining this issue.

This will be considered further as part of the new strategy to combat domestic, sexual and gender-based violence. As this is a child protection and welfare issue primarily, the Department of Children has lead responsibility in leading policy development in this area.

There are differences between the legal and constitutional position in this jurisdiction and the UK, and we will continue to examine if elements of the Operation Encompass approach can be adapted.



In October 2020, having received correspondence from the Children's Ombudsman, Department officials consulted with An Garda Síochána in relation to the practicality of a child protection initiative along the lines of Operation Encompass, which was operating in England and Wales.

Operation Encompass involves the police service making immediate notification, within 24 hours, directly to teachers/principals after they have been called to a domestic violence incident in which children were a factor. The practice in the UK which involves police and teacher collaboration, differs from how cases are dealt with in this jurisdiction where there is contact with social services, or Tusla.

One key factor to bear in mind is that Children First does not operate in the UK and it would appear that there is limited interaction between police and social services except where a crime is disclosed.

In contrast, in this jurisdiction, Garda policy provides that Tusla are to be notified of every domestic abuse-related incident affecting or involving children, which is not the case in other jurisdictions.

I hope this information is of some assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Emma McHugh.

Emma McHugh

Private Secretary to the
Minister for Justice

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