



DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY

Ember Learning Ltd

Document Reference:	EL-DAP-001
Date Adopted:	1 September 2026
Status:	Adopted

1. POLICY STATEMENT

Ember Learning Ltd, recognises that domestic abuse and violence is a serious societal issue that has a direct impact on the children, young people, and adults we work with. Many of the students and mentees referred to us through alternative provision or mentoring have complex backgrounds, and domestic abuse — whether as a direct victim or as a witness — may be a feature of their experience.

This Policy sets out Ember Learning's approach to domestic abuse in three respects:

- Recognising indicators of domestic abuse in students and mentees and responding appropriately
- Supporting any member of our workforce who is experiencing domestic abuse
- Ensuring our operational culture does not, by omission or action, enable domestic abuse to go unaddressed

This Policy is informed by the West Midlands Domestic Violence and Abuse Standards (2015), the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government, 2023), and Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2026).

2. DEFINITION

Domestic abuse is defined in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 as behaviour by a person towards another person with whom they are personally connected, which is abusive. Abusive behaviour includes:

- Physical or sexual abuse
- Violent or threatening behaviour
- Controlling or coercive behaviour
- Economic abuse
- Psychological, emotional, or other abuse

Domestic abuse is not limited to physical violence. Coercive control, financial abuse, and emotional manipulation are all recognised forms of domestic abuse under the law.

Children who live with domestic abuse — even where they are not directly harmed — are recognised as experiencing a form of harm. Witnessing domestic abuse is a form of child abuse.

3. RECOGNISING DOMESTIC ABUSE IN STUDENTS

Teachers and mentors should be alert to indicators that a Student or Mentee may be living in a household where domestic abuse is occurring. These may include:

- References to violence, conflict, or fear at home during sessions
- A Student or Mentee appearing visibly anxious, withdrawn, or distressed in a way that relates to their home environment
- Visible injuries that cannot be easily explained
- A Student or Mentee expressing worry about a parent or carer's safety
- Significant changes in engagement, mood, or behaviour that appear linked to home circumstances (for Students or Mentees)
- A Student or Mentee disclosing, directly or indirectly, that they or a family member are being hurt or controlled

Teachers and mentors are not expected to investigate or assess domestic abuse. Their role is to notice, record, and report. Any concern — however minor or uncertain — should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy (EL-CPSP-001).

4. RESPONDING TO CONCERNS ABOUT STUDENTS

4.1 Where a teacher or mentor identifies a concern that may indicate domestic abuse affecting a Student or Mentee, they must:

- Log the concern via the Ember Learning safeguarding reporting tool within one hour of the session ending
- Notify the DSL (Jack Bradley) directly by telephone as soon as practicable
- Not investigate, question the Student or Mentee, or contact their family without authorisation from the DSL

4.2 The DSL will assess the concern and determine appropriate next steps, including whether a referral to children's social care (for individuals under 18), adult social care under the Care Act 2014 (for individuals aged 18 or over), or the police is required. The DSL will notify the referring Commissioner's Designated Safeguarding Lead within 24 hours in accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

4.3 Where domestic abuse is a known or suspected feature of a Student's or Mentee's background, the DSL will ensure that this context is taken into account in planning the student's sessions and in monitoring their welfare over time.

5. SUPPORTING TEACHERS, MENTORS AND STAFF EXPERIENCING DOMESTIC ABUSE

5.1 Ember Learning recognises that any member of its workforce — including self-employed teachers and mentors — may be affected by domestic abuse. This is a private matter, but the Company is committed to creating an environment in which individuals feel able to seek support without fear of judgment or disadvantage.

5.2 Any teacher, mentor, or associate who is experiencing domestic abuse, or who is concerned about a colleague, may speak in confidence with the Company Director. Information will only be shared with others where doing so is necessary to ensure the safety of the individual or a child.

5.3 Ember Learning will, where practicable, provide flexibility in scheduling to support a teacher or mentor experiencing domestic abuse, and will direct individuals to relevant support services including:

- National Domestic Abuse Helpline (run by Refuge): 0808 2000 247 (free, 24 hours)
- Men's Advice Line: 0808 801 0327
- Galop (LGBTQ+ domestic abuse): 0800 999 5428
- Solace Women's Aid: 0808 802 5565

5.4 Any safety plan required by a teacher experiencing domestic abuse (for example, adjustments to how they are contacted or how sessions are scheduled) will be handled sensitively and in confidence.

6. PATHWAYS AND REFERRALS

Where the DSL believes a child is at risk of harm due to domestic abuse, a referral will be made to children's social care without delay. Where a Mentee or other adult is at risk, a referral will be made to adult social care under the Care Act 2014. Where any individual is at immediate risk, the DSL will contact the police without delay.

The DSL will work with the referring Commissioner's Designated Safeguarding Lead to coordinate the response and ensure that the relevant statutory agencies are informed appropriately.

Ember Learning will not make referrals directly to domestic abuse perpetrators or attempt to mediate between the parties involved. Mediation, family therapy, and conciliation are not appropriate responses to domestic abuse and will not be used.

7. TRAINING

All teachers and mentors will receive awareness-level training on domestic abuse as part of their mandatory safeguarding training prior to commencing sessions. This training covers: recognising signs of domestic abuse in children, young people, and adults; understanding the impact of domestic abuse on child development and behaviour; and the reporting procedure.

The DSL and Deputy DSL will maintain current knowledge of domestic abuse guidance and available referral pathways, and will update their training at least every two years.

8. INFORMATION SHARING

Information about domestic abuse will be shared in accordance with the principles set out in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and the Data Processing Agreement. The welfare of the child takes precedence over data protection considerations where sharing is necessary to protect them from harm. The DSL will be guided by Information sharing: advice for practitioners (HM Government, 2024). Where the individual concerned is a Mentee aged 18 or over, the DSL will additionally apply the Care Act 2014 principle of Making Safeguarding Personal: information will generally only be shared with the Mentee's consent, unless the Mentee lacks capacity to make that decision, there is an overriding risk to the Mentee or to others, or another vital interest requires disclosure.

9. LINKED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy (EL-CPSP-001)
- Online Safety Policy (EL-OSP-001)
- Complaints Procedure (EL-CP-001)
- Teacher and Mentor Behaviour Policy (EL-TMBP-001)

10. REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed annually by the DSL and following any significant incident or change in legislation or statutory guidance.

Policy Owner:	Jack Bradley, Director & Designated Safeguarding Lead
Date Adopted:	1 September 2026
Next Review Due:	1 September 2027 (or earlier if a trigger event occurs)
Approved by:	Jack Bradley, Director, 1 September 2026