

VAWG Neighbourhoods Project Proposal – Schools, Colleges and Pupils Referral Unit

Purpose

Based on the London Borough of Waltham Forest's 15-minute neighbourhood concept, we will be working with schools, colleges, and PRUs across the borough to support educational settings to be more informed on Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) related issues and how to provide adequate trauma-informed support for their students.

Through workshops for students, training for all staff and policy support, we hope to create a safer environment for students and staff. We will provide schools a menu of sessions from which they can choose the topics that relate to the school, including peer to peer work on VAWG, overview sessions and the bystander approach.

- ❖ Inform schools to work in a trauma-informed way
- ❖ Support schools to put in preventative measure in relation to VAWG
- ❖ Co-ordinate and commission external organisations to deliver bespoke training and workshops
- ❖ Work with schools to ensure effective collaboration with external organisations
- ❖ Support from VAWG Prevention and Support worker and/or VAWG Prevention and Intervention Worker
- ❖ Visible comms around schools that VAWG is not tolerated

Project Outline

The VAWG Neighbourhoods Project within schools will incorporate different project areas. These include:

1. Policy and procedure development
2. Bespoke staff training
3. Workshops for students
4. Safe disclosure spaces
5. Roll out of the VAWG Student Forum
6. 'Safe Streets' App
7. Summer programme
8. Comms and school messaging

Project Areas

1. Policy and Procedure development

The VAWG team members will work with schools to develop a standard policy around VAWG issues. Procedures will be created on topics such as how to handle disclosures and appropriate responses to perpetrators.

- Discuss with schools whether they have existing policies/procedures around VAWG topics that can be developed or redeveloped
- A procedure on disclosure process (take to safe room, allow access to phone, record details, contact VAWG team), could be in accessible flowchart format.

2. Bespoke Staff Training

Staff at the schools will be trained in different VAWG topics and will include specific training for the Senior Leadership Team and Safeguarding Leads.

- Both initial and ongoing training (quarterly?)
- General VAWG training
- Specialist VAWG training in relation to needs of students who are from marginalised groups such as LGBTQ+, BAME and LD students
- Disclosure/referral/signposting training
 - o To support staff with how to adequately respond to young people using violence or abusive behaviour
 - o How to talk about VAWG – getting more comfortable with the language
 - o What might survivors say? Not all people experience/perpetrate VAWG in the same ways – there is no template of what a ‘real’ survivor or perpetrator looks like
 - o What to say and not to say after a disclosure
 - o Believing survivors
 - o Immediate safety checks and actions
 - o How to do an appropriate and safe signpost to the Council service/other services
 - o Recording – what to record and where; who to tell
- Getting support for staff after disclosures (offloading)
- The best process for training will be agreed with each individual school to best meet their needs and the needs of their students

3. Workshops for students

All students across the borough will have access to bespoke workshops from external agencies and members of our youth advisory group.

- Students will be offered bespoke workshops in different VAWG topic, including The Bystander Approach, healthy relationships, consent, Harmful Sexual Behaviour and more (below is a table of different sessions we can offer but not limited too).
- Student will be offered sessions in relation to self-care, self-expression, and empowerment.
- Both initial and ongoing workshops
- Be provided information on local services for support
- Be aware of safeguarding processes, who they can disclose to and what they should expect after a disclosure

4. Safe disclosure spaces

All schools in the borough should have access to a private space that can be used by survivors.

- We understand this space may have multiple purposes; it is not realistic to expect that each school will have a dedicated room for this but important that there is a designated space that can be used if necessary.
- If being used for other purposes, a 'code' that staff will understand means the space is needed for a private conversation survivors
- Private space to speak away from public view, other students, and staff

5. Roll out the 'Safe Streets' App

Waltham Forest Safe Streets App is an easy way for students to report incidents of street harassment in the borough. We will support all by;

- Creating awareness of the app
- Demo the app to students (if needed)
- Provide schools with posters and flyers with information on the app

6. VAWG Students Forum

Students should be at the heart of decision-making, and we want to create a VAWG Student Forum to ensure student voices steer the work we do.

- We will co-ordinate and organise the forum
- The forum will be overseen by our Young Advisors
- The forum will meet each term

7. Summer Programme

The Summer programme will be a series of sessions /activities on what students can do to tackle misogyny, unrealistic or negative gender stereotypes and expectations. The connect will be agreed in partnership with students and our young advisory group.

8. Comms and school messaging

Communicating the messaging around VAWG is as important as the message, the VAWG team can support schools with this.

- Posters to be placed around schools and school areas
- Information to be placed on the 'School Hub' website
- Information about VAWG to be sent to parents
- School poster competition - Students will have the opportunity to create their own posters related to a VAWG topic and the winning poster will be placed around the school.