

Investigation into Allegation of Child Sexual Abuse - Monkton Street.

1. This report has been drafted following a reading of the Report of the original Enquiry, and interviews, by [REDACTED] (ASSM/2) and [REDACTED] (Personnel Officer), with:-



- Chair of original Enquiry
- Member of original Enquiry
- R.R.A. and Member of original Enquiry
- Social Worker, St. Thomas'
- O.I.C. Monkton Street
- S.C.M.O. West Lambeth Health Authority
- C.M.O. West Lambeth Health Authority and [REDACTED] Doctor.
- Social Worker, Area [REDACTED]
- Mother of [REDACTED]
- Subject.

2. The allegation that is the subject of this present Enquiry is one of assault on the child [REDACTED] by a member of staff, [REDACTED]
3. The present panel members cannot state with certainty that a specific allegation against [REDACTED] was fully investigated by the original Panel in its entirety although two of its members maintain they had it in mind throughout all the interviews.
4. It is significant that all members of the previous panel who were interviewed agree that the second person ("another [REDACTED] member of staff") was referred to only briefly by Mrs. B., some way into the Enquiry. Mrs. B. herself confirms that she "only mentioned" [REDACTED] involvement to the original Enquiry. This is at variance with Mrs. B's current insistence that [REDACTED] had been referring to [REDACTED] specifically.
5. The original Enquiry rejected the allegation against [REDACTED] specifically in their report and further concluded "...on the evidence available there is no disciplinary case to answer by any other member of staff at Monkton Street".
6. They did so for two reasons:-
- i) because there was no conclusive medical evidence that a social assault had taken place on [REDACTED] or any other child,
  - and ii) because their assessment of the arrangements for the security of the children in the home made the particular allegations implausible.
7. The only new element in the case is the specific naming of [REDACTED] and the details of the nature of the assault.
8. Even if [REDACTED] were a witness with the reliability appropriate for a child of his age, the new details would not seem to outweigh the factors considered by the original Enquiry insofar as they relate to the possibility of [REDACTED] guilt; as it is, the balance of informed opinion about [REDACTED] mental capability make it impossible for us to recommend any action on what he may now be saying about something that happened two years ago.

9. This Enquiry reviewed the point made in 6(ii) above and considered it in specific relationship to [REDACTED]

The policy of the Home is that [REDACTED] would not have unaccompanied access to children and should not be in the vicinity of bathroom, toilets or bedrooms (the identified location of the alleged abuse).

There is no evidence of [REDACTED] ever having breached these rules.

10. Conclusion

On the basis of the original Report and our investigations- (see Appendix for details) we find in the case of [REDACTED] there are no grounds for disciplinary action.

This conclusion is based on:-

- i) The conflicting views of those with first hand experience and expert knowledge about [REDACTED] capability as a reliable witness in the absence of medical evidence acceptable as corroboration;
- ii) The absence of evidence that [REDACTED] breached the policy of the Home regarding independent access to children;
- iii) Mrs. B. had the opportunity to make these specific and detailed allegations against [REDACTED] at the time but did not do so. This is supported by Panel members and Mrs. B. herself.
- iv) The increasing behavioural problems which [REDACTED] is exhibiting are being linked by Mrs. B. entirely to this incident and no account is being taken of the changes one might expect in a child with learning difficulties at the onset of puberty.
- v) The need to take into account Mrs. B's own personal problems and how these might influence her reactions and perceptions.

Addendum.

Regardless of the findings of this Enquiry related to [REDACTED] we feel it essential that Mrs. B's view of events be seen as a fact within the family situation and therefore something which needs to be taken into account in making respite arrangements for the care of [REDACTED]



1. [REDACTED]

- i) Allegation against "another person", identified later by Panel as the [REDACTED] was made several weeks into Enquiry. He was not sure whether mother or father made it.
- ii) Because of varying medical opinions they were unable to conclude that abuse had occurred so did not pursue this further allegation in detail.
- iii) However, they did examine the procedures and lay-out of the Home and decided that whilst it was conceivable that Care staff might be alone with the children there could be no privacy because of listening in device and no guarantee of uninterrupted contact.
- iv) He said Panel were not convinced that [REDACTED] could recall accurately.

2. [REDACTED]

- i) "Another [REDACTED] man" was included in the allegations some way into the Enquiry by Mrs. B. Allegation was vague - "someone else involved" ... "had been up to [REDACTED] bedroom and been involved..." There were no details, and the whole reference was brief on Mrs. B's part.
- ii) Panel deduced that the "other [REDACTED] man" must be [REDACTED] and tailored their questions to staff to determine whether [REDACTED] was likely to be in vicinity of bedrooms at 9.00 p.m.
- iii) Panel decided not to separate out allegation against [REDACTED]; they found that answers concerning the care role, and opportunities of access to children by the [REDACTED] from other staff consistently indicated it was a non-starter.
- iv) [REDACTED] never mentioned another person being involved.
- v) [REDACTED] questioned the extent to which Mrs. B's statements were influenced by racist elements and also queried the extent to which [REDACTED] accounts could be relied on.

3. [REDACTED]

- i) She queried [REDACTED] capability of recall even at the time of the original Enquiry
- ii) Reference to "another [REDACTED] man" occurred some way into Enquiry.
- iii) Questions asked subsequently of staff to determine [REDACTED] access to children convinced her that the allegations against him could not be substantiated.
- iv) She felt there was a greater racist element in Mrs. B's evidence than appears in report.

4. [REDACTED]

- i) "Unsatisfactory level of communication" between Mrs. B. and [REDACTED]
- ii) Questioned Mrs. B's ability to report clearly and without bias; nevertheless recognised the allegations as serious and requiring investigation.
- iii) The phrases [REDACTED] used appeared too sophisticated for his level of understanding.
- iv) Location of the incidents not referred to specifically but the impression he got was that they took place in either bathrooms or bedrooms.

5. [REDACTED]

- i) [REDACTED] as an ancillary worker, is never left alone with children. He is encouraged to make good relationships but has no individual contact.
- ii) [REDACTED] job as [REDACTED] would take him into bathroom, bedrooms etc. but he would only be alone there when there were no children around because of the danger of them playing with tools, etc.
- iii) When driving children [REDACTED] would always be accompanied by a member of Care staff.
- iv) A lot of [REDACTED] speech was "parrot-like"; he has stock phrases he repeats; he remembers events but not always accurately because his memory is coloured by his level of understanding.
- v) There is a minimum cover of 3 Care staff at all times.

6. [REDACTED]

- i) Assessed [REDACTED] ability to communicate, so limited as to require interpretation through an adult. She described him as a "confused young boy" with severe limitations in expression; he can memorise words and phrases which may be used out of context and short or infrequent contact could lead to an over-estimation of his ability.  
She felt he would need to have shown a remarkable improvement in his mental faculties to recall in accurate detail specific events from two years ago.
- ii) She doubted mother's evidence because the latter's account of what the Doctor had said "just couldn't be!".
- iii) It was at mother's prompting that [REDACTED] claimed other staff were involved and no name or description were given.
- iv) The police Doctor was neither a paediatrician nor someone with any experience of mental handicap.
- v) Would expect a marked change in behaviour, and increasing problems, as a child with learning difficulties encountered puberty.

7. [REDACTED]

- i) Felt she wouldn't have given credence to [REDACTED] contemporary evidence two years ago and certainly not now to events of that occurred two years ago.
- ii) She queried his ability to remember names, illustrating this with the fact that he often confuses her with a teacher from his previous school.

8. [REDACTED]

- i) Felt Mrs. B's own problems over sex may colour her perception of what she believes happened.
- ii) He was not sure whether parents or [REDACTED] recognised [REDACTED] first.
- iii) No detail of [REDACTED] involvement beyond "he's the other man", given until over a month later.
- iv) He felt [REDACTED] quite capable of recalling incidents from 2 years back, but agrees his knowledge of [REDACTED] is only recent and limited.
- v) He believes there is "no smoke without fire...".

- vi) He doesn't feel Mrs. B. is motivated by racism but that racism may be a product of what she believes happened.



9.            (accompanied by NUPE rep).

- i) Had been asked by            to            for Wareham Road and had just got back from           . He was waiting alone in hall and had T.V. on when he heard the doorbell. The door opened and he saw            his mother ("I knew her") and two men. "Their faces changed. They never said a word to me. They sat down looking around the place.            said "Hello            I didn't answer because I saw Mrs. B's expression".            said            worked at Monkton Street". About ½ hour later I left.
- ii) They (           family) didn't say a word; they were too serious. He was not aware of them speaking to anyone whilst he was there.
- iii) When returning from            he'd asked what            was doing there. The staff explained and            had said he wouldn't want to            for Ivy House if            were to be there.
- iv) "I do nothing with children because I'm not Care staff. I            them to the park but never alone"; "their rule is 3 children to one staff"
- v)            activities take place when children not around during school terms. In holidays staff always with kids.
- vi) I check the bulbs upstairs in the morning. In evening only if specifically asked and only if a member of staff present.
- vii) After 6.00 p.m. work is only ever for
- viii) You haven't asked any questions I wasn't asked last time.
- ix) Since then I've been doing the same job without complaint.

10. Mrs. B. (with solicitor)

- i) We explained we were interested only in the allegation against            and were not opening up the original enquiry.
- ii) Mrs. B. recounted incident at Wareham Road:-            had just said "Oh it's            Mrs. B. maintained            would normally have gone up and kissed a man in this situation but he was "wary";            had continued            from Monkton Street".

Mrs. B. described            as "looking around and looking very funny at me and            When she next looked around            had gone.

Mrs. B. states that            had explained his anxiety to            (Social Worker) in the            on his return from Wareham Road, she quoted            as saying at that time "I don't want to go there because of            the S.W. had asked "why are you afraid?" and            had replied            touched my bum..... I don't want to go.....".

(<sup>The</sup> The timing of            first detailed reference to            to the Social Worker is at variance with the record made by the S.W. at the time. In the S.W.'s report dated            which provides more detailed background he said of the            "none of the family on this occasion made any specific allegations about            role beyond telling me that he was the second man mentioned by            at the time. I deliberately refrained from pursuing this).

iii) When S.W. returned (a month later) Mrs. B. told him [redacted] had been hysterical the night after visiting Wareham Road and had "spoiled Christmas", and that he'd "been going hysterical about that [redacted] When questioned by S.W. [redacted] had said [redacted] touched my bum and I. .... and got my willy and put....." at this point Mrs. B. rushed from the room in distress.

We calmed her down, saying we didn't want details of the incident but only her recollection of what involvement she was claiming for [redacted]

- iv) Mrs. B. said [redacted] had referred to [redacted] as having "touched my bum" before the incident leading to the allegation against [redacted]. She said she had dismissed it because "he was only the [redacted]"
- v) Mrs. B. said she had referred to [redacted] as also being involved in her interview with original panel but described it as "just mentioned", and agreed she had concentrated on [redacted]
- vi) She now elaborates on her account of the party at Monkton Street, maintaining that [redacted] had followed [redacted] and wouldn't leave him alone with his family. [redacted] had been looking out of the window "but I hadn't thought anything of that". She felt with hindsight that [redacted] didn't want [redacted] to be alone with his family in case he "said something". She also said she thought the other children at the party "were frightened" and one had wanted to go home with her.

She also described a video which had been shown - taken on a holiday and had been distressed when [redacted] "backside" came up on the screen.

- vii) She referred to [redacted] the transvestite, expressing bewilderment at how to refer to "him/her" and .... "I didn't know anything about this".
- viii) Mrs. B. says [redacted] has referred to seeing other Monkton St. staff, including [redacted] before the Wareham Road incident, "without displaying distress".
- xi) [redacted] concluded by asking Mrs. B. if there was anything else she'd like to say.

11. Visit to Monkton Street by [redacted] and [redacted]

This confirmed that the policy of the Home is aimed at ensuring that no member of staff has unsupervised access to children. The physical arrangements (sound sensors) and the lay-out facilitate this.

