

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 Heather Stephenson (ASSM/2) and Pauline Rowe (Personnel Officer), with:-

Tony Emett	- Chair of original Enquiry
Mary Webb	- Member of original Enquiry
Pat Bell	- R.R.A. and Member of original Enquiry
Nick Topliss	- Social Worker, St. Thomas'
Chad Botley	- O.I.C. Monkton Street
Dr. Papas	- S.C.M.O. West Lambeth Health Authority
Dr. Heath	- C.M.O. West Lambeth Health Authority and Shelly School Doctor.
Charlie Moat	- Social Worker, Area 4
Mother of LA-A49	- Mother of [LA-A49]
[LA-F2]	- Subject.

2. The allegation that is the subject of this present Enquiry is one of assault on the child [LA-A49] by a member of staff, [LA-F2]
3. The present panel members cannot state with certainty that a specific allegation against [LA-F2] 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 black member of staff") was referred to only briefly by Mother, some way into the Enquiry. Mother herself confirms that she "only mentioned" [LA-F2] involvement to the original Enquiry. This is at variance with Mother current insistence that [LA-A49] had been referring to [LA-F2] specifically.
5. The original Enquiry rejected the allegation against [LA-F2] 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 [LA-A49] 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 [LA-F2] and the details of the nature of the assault.
8. Even if [LA-A49] were a witness with the reliability appropriate for a child of his age, the new details would not seem to out weigh the factors considered by the original Enquiry insofar as they relate to the possibility of [LA-F2] guilt; as it is, the balance of informed opinion about [LA-A49] 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.

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9. This Enquiry reviewed the point made in 6(ii) above and considered it in specific relationship to [LA-F2]

The policy of the Home is that [LA-F2] 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 [LA-F2] 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 [LA-F2] 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 [LA-A49] capability as a reliable witness in the absence of medical evidence acceptable as corroboration;
- ii) The absence of evidence that [LA-F2] breached the policy of the Home regarding independent access to children;
- iii) [Mother] had the opportunity to make these specific and detailed allegations against [LA-F2] at the time but did not do so. This is supported by Panel members and [Mother] herself.
- iv) The increasing behavioural problems which [LA-A49] is exhibiting are being linked by [Mother] 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 [Mother] own personal problems and how these might influence her reactions and perceptions.

Addendum.

Regardless of the findings of this Enquiry related to [LA-F2] we feel it essential that [Mother] 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 [LA-A49]

Heather Stephenson

7.6.88.

Pauline Rowe

7/6/88