

SEX TRIAL PROMPTS INQUIRY

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE has launched an investigation to find out how a residential social worker, who was jailed last week on serious sex abuse charges, was allowed to foster a boy without the usual checks being made.

By Tim Lunn

According to information obtained by *Social Work Today* alleged incidents earlier in the man's career, which were relevant to the fostering application, were overlooked.

The social worker, Norman Campbell, was found guilty of four charges of buggery and one of indecent assault against the boy he had fostered. He was also found guilty of indecent assault against two other boys.

Mr Campbell was jailed for six years at the end of a week long trial at Nottingham Crown Court.

The court heard how Mr Campbell expressed interest in fostering the boy after being his keyworker for some years at a Nottinghamshire children's home.

The teenage boy went to live

with Mr Campbell on an emergency basis after being expelled from a special school. Some months later the fostering application was approved even though the social services department had not visited Mr Campbell's flat to see if it was suitable. The boy had to share Mr Campbell's bedroom when he moved in because there was nowhere else to sleep.

Social Work Today has established that two allegations were made against Mr Campbell in 1982 and 1983 concerning his involvement with teenage boys. Neither

was proven though it is unclear to what extent they were investigated.

The department's investigation will attempt to establish the exact circumstances of the fostering process. It will also consider a disciplinary hearing in 1988 which cleared Mr Campbell of an allegation of sexual assault against a 16-year-old boy. This allegation was one of the indecent assault charges on which Mr Campbell was found guilty.

Nottinghamshire's social services director, David White, had no comment.