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Concerns over social worker who had sex with boy, 15, were 'swept under the carpet'

She had an inappropriate relationship with the child but concerns were ignored at a children's home



By [Rebecca Sherdley](#)

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A social worker who had sex with a 15-year-old boy was allowed to continue in her job for almost 30 years after concerns were ignored, a court was told.

Myriam Bamkin, now 61, indecently assaulted the troubled teen in a gym at [Amberdale Children's Home](#), in Stapleford, just before he turned 16.

Bamkin, then in her twenties, had been overheard having sexual activity in a tent with the child on a camping trip, [Nottingham Crown Court](#) heard.

Concerns were reported at the home by a staff member but "unfortunately nothing much happened about it", said prosecutor Rebecca Herbert.

"It wasn't taken further," she added.

Bamkin continued to work for Nottinghamshire County Council until 2016, when she was suspended following the complaint.

Recorder Paul Mann QC - who jailed Bamkin for two-and-a-half years - said: "The head of the unit appeared to have told that member of staff to keep it to himself and it was swept under the carpet."





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Bamkin, of DPA went on to have a successful career until a complaint was made in 2016 and she was suspended.

This morning she sat stooped in her seat in the dock with one hand touching her face as she listened quietly to the evidence.

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Amberdale secure unit in Stapleford, 1989 (Image: Ian Brown / Picture the Past)

During her time at Amberdale she had taken the boy to the gym for a work out, said Mrs Herbert, and they played badminton.

"They started to do that more frequently than any other member of staff," she said. "She spent time in his bedroom, sitting close to him watching TV."



Having sex once in the gym was "at her instigation and a culmination, in effect, of grooming behaviour by her for some months before that".

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The offence surfaced on April 5, 2016, when the victim went to police.

"Myriam Bamkin was arrested as a result of the allegation made by him," said Mrs Herbert. "She was still working for the local authority and worked for them throughout. She gave no comment to police."

Later, she admitted she had consensual sex with the boy when he was 16 on the camping trip.

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Myriam Bamkin, 61, has been jailed for two-and-a-half years (Image: Nottinghamshire Police)

The case was initially set to be a trial, because she did not accept any sexual activity before the trip.

But by her guilty plea to indecent assault on Tuesday "has now accepted the truth of that matter", said Mrs Herbert.

Sentencing her, the judge said she would now sign the sex offenders' register indefinitely and would be barred from working with children.

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Now a married mother and grandmother, the judge told her how back then she had started to find excuses to be physically close with him.

And to some extent she groomed him; allowing him visits to shops and extra cigarettes, and gradually her relationship became less and less professional.

"It led onto other consensual sexual contact but still in care," added the judge. "Other members of staff reported their suspicions to the then head of the unit, who decided not to take it further, and told staff to keep their suspicions to themselves.

"Those staff felt let down by the head of the unit and also very let down by you."

And he said it was not a case of the boy having a crush on her, saying: "On any view you seduced him."



Katrina Wilson, mitigating, said Bamkin had been on a high dose of antidepressants after her mental health deteriorated after her suspension.

And she said: "She will not ever be able to work in this field again."

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Steve Edwards, service director for youth, families and social work at Nottinghamshire County Council said: "I am pleased that Bamkin has been brought to justice and welcome the decision of the court. Bamkin betrayed the trust of the children she was responsible for and her colleagues.

"I want to take this opportunity to personally thank the victim of Bamkin's abuse for coming forward, it was a courageous step to take and I can only imagine how difficult this must have been for him.

"As soon as the allegations came to light Bamkin was immediately suspended from her post; she no longer works for Nottinghamshire County Council.

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Amberdale secure unit in Stapleford, 1995

"All allegations of abuse, historical or current, are taken extremely seriously, and we as a council work tirelessly to bring the perpetrators to justice. I would encourage anyone who feels they have been abused to contact Nottinghamshire Police."

When asked if Bamkin has retired with a full pension, a council spokeswoman said the council's understanding of the position under the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) is that the regulations relating to forfeiture of pension do not apply in this case.

"We are currently writing to the government and the LGPS technical team to confirm our interpretation and suggesting that they review the current regulations," she said.

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The investigation was part of Operation Equinox which is investigating the non-recent abuse of children at children's homes and other institutions in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

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DC Vincent Clark said: "The victim in this case was totally reliant on the adults around him after he went into a children's home. But instead of caring properly for him Bamkin manipulated the teenager to get what she wanted.

"He has lived with this for a long time and I am pleased to say that having the courage to report Bamkin has resulted in a prison sentence today.

"Hopefully this outcome will give the victim some closure on what happened all those years ago."



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