

Annie Hudson  
Chair of Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel  
Department for Education  
Sanctuary Buildings  
Great Smith Street  
London SW1P 3BT

29 April 2022

By email

Dear Annie,

## **ANALYSIS OF 48 INCIDENTS WHERE LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN DIED OR WERE SERIOUSLY HARMED**

We write as organisations concerned with the rights and welfare of looked after children, to ask that you publish the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel's report which analyses 48 separate incidents where looked after children entered care following abuse or neglect and then died in care, or were seriously harmed.<sup>1</sup>

At a time of huge concern about the well-being of children in the care of the state, and widespread commitment to bring about fundamental change, we believe it is imperative that we collectively learn from incidents where highly vulnerable children have suffered grave harms. The care review led by Josh MacAlister is due to report in a matter of weeks, and we consider the Panel's report could contain critical evidence about systemic failings in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of looked after children.

Your Panel is leading two national reviews into the appalling deaths of two young children, Arthur Labinjo-Hughes and Star Hobson. The reports from these reviews are due to be published at the end of May 2022, and they will feed into Josh MacAlister's analysis and recommendations for child protection.

In a similar vein, we believe it is vital that your Panel's analysis of 48 incidents where looked after children died or were seriously harmed is made public and can contribute to policy development around the children's care system.

Article 39 has been seeking to obtain your Panel's report from the Department for Education, and has had to resort to making a complaint to the Information Commissioner's Office. The Department for Education refuses to release the report because it states this was shared by the Panel with the Secretary of State only as part of Article 39's judicial review connected to the use of unregulated accommodation. For the reasons set out above, we contend that learning from these 48 incidents must be a collective endeavour and far wider than a minister having sight of the document during litigation.

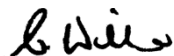
As with other safeguarding reports containing very private information, we understand the need for appropriate redactions ahead of publication to protect the privacy of individual

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<sup>1</sup> Headline findings of this analysis were included in your 2020 annual report, published in May 2021 (paragraph 35).

children and their families. However, we do not believe the safeguarding of children who are looked after by the state can be assured or advanced by continuing secrecy. We therefore respectfully ask that you publish the report as a matter of urgency.

All good wishes,



Carolyne Willow, Founder Director, Article 39

Dr Tim Bateman, Chair of the Board of Trustees, National Association for Youth Justice

James Blewett, Chair, British Association of Social Workers (BASW) Children & Families Group

Joy Bradley, Director, Beanstalk Leadership Associates

Care Review Watch Alliance Steering Group

Deborah Coles, Executive Director, INQUEST

Jane Collins, Director, Foster Support

Patricia Durr, CEO, ECPAT UK (Every Child Protected Against Trafficking)

Kathy Evans, Chief Executive, Children England

Terry Galloway, Norman Galloway Homes, Care Leaver Offer and ShowUsYouCareToo

Sean Geoghegan and Isabelle Kirkham, The Care Experienced Movement

David Graham, National Director, The Care Leavers' Association

Christopher Hardy, Director, Prospect Training and Consultancy

Kim Harrison and Richard Scorer, Principal Lawyers, Abuse and Public Inquiries, Slater and Gordon

Dr Carol Homden, CEO, Coram Group

Delma Hughes, CEO, Siblings Together Charity

Philip Ishola, CEO, Love146

Naomi Jackson, Development Lead, Social Workers Without Borders

Mark Lee, Chief Executive, Together Trust

Carole Littlechild, Chair, Nagalro - the Professional Association for Children's Guardians, Family Court Advisors and Independent Social Workers

Louisa McGeehan, Chief Executive, Just for Kids Law

John McGowan, General Secretary, Social Workers Union

Hannah Perry and Siobhan Kelly, Co-Chairs, Association of Lawyers for Children

Leo Ratledge and Lianne Minasian, Co-Directors, Child Rights International Network

Ruth Scotten, Director / Practitioner, Roots of Connection

Paul Smart and Jon Fayle, Co-Chairs, NAIRO (National Association of Independent Reviewing Officers)

SPACE (Stop & Prevent Adolescent Criminal Exploitation)

Vava Tampa, Chair, British Association of Social Workers (BASW) England Committee

Rita Waters, Group Chief Executive, NYAS (National Youth Advocacy Service)

Kevin Williams, Chief Executive, The Fostering Network