

Correspondence & Letters Direct To & From Herefordshire Social Services
(Children's Wellbeing Directorate)

All correspondence was sent by us using Royal Mail Signed For post. Receipts & proof of receiving signature are with our records.

Jim McGeown

**1 Newton Cottages
Nr Weobley
Herefordshire
HR4 8QX
01544 318263**

To
Head of Children's Well-being
Safeguarding & Family Support
New Bath St Offices
Bath Street
Hereford
HR1 2GY

2nd June 2015

On 6th May my home and family were visited by Paul Coleman from MASH. He was making an enquiry from a referral alleging emotional abuse of my daughters.

On 15th May we were again visited by Paul Coleman making an enquiry from a further separate referral. This time alleging physical abuse of my youngest daughter Pippa.

On 16th May we were required to have Pippa examined for abuse by the paediatric consultant at the children's wards in Hereford County Hospital. This was with a social worker present.

We have received no information or correspondence about any of this from your relevant departments or the management of Dilwyn playgroup who made the referrals.

This not knowing and nobody being willing to communicate with us is putting an intolerable strain on my family and myself.

This is not fair dealing.

I would very much appreciate being informed in writing where we stand on these issues and how you intend to proceed.

I would be grateful for a prompt response from you.

Yours
Jim McGeown

To
Head of Children's Well-being
Safeguarding & Family Support
New Bath St Offices
Bath Street
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HR1 2GY

Jim McGeown
1 Newton Cottages
Nr Weobley
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HR4 8QX
01544 318263

9th June 2015

On 2nd June I wrote to you, copy of letter attached. It is unjust not to inform us of how we stand and how you intend proceeding on these issues. What action must we take to get correspondence from you?

Yours
Jim McGeown

To
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Jim McGeown

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Delete Reply Reply All Forward Actions Apply Previous Next

core assessment

From: "james mcgeown" <james.mcgeown2@btinternet.com>

To: sarup.reehal@herefordshire.gov.uk

Dear Sarup

I would like to inform you that I have consulted with my solicitor. Who has advised me that I have nothing to fear from taking part in a core assessment. Also once this has taken place to request the date when the core assessment will be ready. So that this can be sent to me and I can take it to my solicitor so we can discuss the way forward.

Jim McGeown

Email dated 23/6/2015

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RE: core assessment

From: "james mcgeown" <james.mcgeown2@btinternet.com>

To: "SarupReehal" <Sarup.Reehal@herefordshire.gov.uk>

Dear Sarup

We can be available for most of this coming week with the exception of Thursday 9th July. The difficulty is you wanting to speak alone to the children in an age appropriate manner to allow disclosure to be made by the children.

To achieve this you did suggest that you would be happy to speak to the children at the school during the school day. This Wednesday 8th July Freya will be as normal in school all day but Pippa will also be in school for the full day. As an introduction day for pupils that will be joining next September.

This would be an ideal opportunity for us to complete at our address and without distraction, the business and paperwork of your core assessment. You could speak to the children at the school either before or after this. You would be speaking to the children at a time and place that they will be at their brightest and most responsive.

Can I encourage you to arrange this at a time that is most convenient for you and we will fit in around it. The school is St Marys Primary School, Dilwyn, HR4 8HR, Tel 01544 318277, email:- enquiries@stmarysprimarydilwyn.co.uk School Head, Peter Kyles.

If this Wednesday is not convenient then Pippa will be in school with Freya on Wednesday 15th July.

Jim

Email dated 6/7/2015

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

Mr James McGeown
1 Newton Cottages
Weobley
Herefordshire
HR4 8QX

Your Ref:

Our Ref:

Please ask for: Josh Davies

Direct Line / Extension: 01432 260180

E-mail: childrenscomplimentsandcomplaints@herefordshire.gov.uk

2nd July 2015

Dear Mr McGeown,

RE: COMPLAINT

My name is Wayne Calder and I am a Team Manager in the MASH Team of Herefordshire Children's Wellbeing Directorate.

I acknowledge receipt of your letter dated the 02/06/2015. In your letter you identified that:

- That a social worker, Paul Coleman, attended your home on the 06/05/2015 and the 15/05/2015 in regards to referrals that the department had received.
- You go onto say that a Child Protection medical was conducted on the 16/05/2015 with a social worker present.

I have now had an opportunity to review the case and can respond by clarifying that:

- The case initially came to the attention of the department when a referral was received from the nursery stating that Mrs McGeown was spoken to as she had expressed that she felt angry with a child and stated that she wanted to 'hit him'. It is recorded that that she did not hit him but she had told the manager that the thought was there. On further enquiries there was a record that Mrs McGeown had hit her own child in September 2014.
- On the 15/05/2015 further information was received from Pippa's school stating that Pippa had bruising to her arm and leg, there was no disclosure made by the child into how the bruising occurred so it was agreed between the parents and the social worker that the child would be taken to the GP.
- Our Emergency Duty Team (our team that works outside of normal office hours, i.e. evenings and weekends) conducted a s47 enquiry on the 15/05/2015 with the child CP medicaled on the 16/05/2015..
- The case has been transferred to our Child In Need (CIN) team for a more comprehensive assessment (referred to as a Core Assessment).

I do apologise on behalf of the department in regards to the length of time it has taken for the case to progress. The issue has been addressed with the relevant team and remedial action put in place to ensure that this situation does not happen again.

I hope that this response addresses the concerns that you raised.

Regards,



Wayne Calder
MASH TEAM MANAGER

To
Wayne Calder
Team Manager, MASH Team
Herefordshire Children's
Wellbeing Directorate
New Bath St Offices
Bath Street
Hereford
HR1 2GY

**Jim, Megan, Freya &
Pippa McGeown
1 Newton Cottages,
Nr Weobley,
Herefordshire,
HR4 8QX,
Tel 01544 318263**

24th July 2015

Dear Wayne Calder

I am contacting you as the most senior person from Herefordshire's Children's Wellbeing Directorate that has corresponded with us. I hope you can help us.

I have received some documentation about our case from Anthony Sawyer, Information Governance Officer as a result of making a subject access request. This is the first meaningful information that we have received.

This information contains a significant factual error in four separate records :-

Manager's decision

Decision

Case previously put through for closure then a further incident was reported when Pippa's school rang the MASH to express concerns that Pippa has bruising to her arm and leg when she went swimming with the school on 14/05/15. Pippa made no allegation against any adult and her GP had a medical undertaken that raised no concerns. Mother is subject to a LADO investigation and concerns are around inappropriate chastisement and mother's views on parenting and discipline generally therefore a core assessment is needed to further explore the family functioning and some parenting work to be carried out with both parents.

Wishes and feelings work to be carried out with both children.

Name

Date this Initial Assessment was completed

Mash Duty Manager

02/06/2015

If any of the children have not been seen during the course of this assessment, please confirm reason(s)

Assessment reopened and updated following new information being received.

In light of further information from Pippa's school who rang the MASH to express concerns that Pippa has bruising to her arm and leg when she went swimming with the school on 14/05/15, the case destination for this Initial assessment has changed from closure to a child in need plan.

Page 1 of letter dated 24/7/2015

Home Visit: Unannounced home visit undertaken

14/05/2015 at 12:35

In light of further information from Pippa's school who rang the MASH to express concerns that Pippa has bruising to her arm and leg when she went swimming with the school on 14/05/15, the case destination for this Initial assessment has changed from closure to a child in need plan.

I undertook a home visit to the address and initially only Jim (Father) was present. I informed him of the concerns. He was agitated and when Meg and Pippa subsequently arrived home he would not initially look at Pippa marks to her arm and leg. As there was no disclosure by Pippa that she was grabbed by her mother or father, this was not a section 47 enquiry. Pippa told me when alone that her friend in school grabbed her for the small bruises on her arms, or she may have caught her arm on the way into her Father's car and she was unsure as to how she occurred her bruises to the leg.

It was agreed that the parents would take Pippa for a non child protection medical to their local practice and Heather Manning from the MASH prioritised this appointment.

Entered on 04/06/2015 at 12:37 by Paul Coleman.

Manager's Decisions: Manager's oversight of assessment

04/06/2015 at 10:53

Case previously put through for closure then a further incident was reported when Pippa's school rang the MASH to express concerns that Pippa has bruising to her arm and leg when she went swimming with the school on 14/05/15. Pippa made no allegation against any adult and her GP had a medical undertaken that raised no concerns. Mother is subject to a LADO investigation and concerns are around inappropriate chastisement and mother's views on parenting and discipline generally therefore a core assessment is needed to further explore the family functioning and some parenting work to be carried out with both parents.

Copied from Freya McGeown on 04/06/2015 at 11:12 by Joslyn Young. Last Updated on 09/06/2015 at 20:00 by Mr Steve Niblett.

So the error :- "*bruising discovered when swimming with the school on 14/05/15*" ?

Pippa is under 4 years old and does not attend a school.

She does attend a pre-school playgroup (offstead registered).

This playgroup operates 3¹/₂ days a week (closed Wednesdays) in Dilwyn village hall. All activities take place within the environs of Dilwyn village hall.

They do not take the children to remote swimming lessons or any other instructional activities requiring undressing within or outside Dilwyn.

Pippa attends playgroup 7 hours Mondays, 7 hours Tuesdays and 4 hours Thursdays.

Pippa attended playgroup for the full 4 hours in the village hall on Thursday 14/05/15. I believe she was seen in the setting by one of your social workers around noon that day (I don't know the social workers name but she is a Muslim lady wearing a Hijab).

Page 2 of letter dated 24/7/2015

We later found that what we thought was a social worker visit to playgroup on 14/05/2015 (Muslim lady wearing Hijab) was an unannounced visit by an OFSTED inspector to investigate their actions regarding their referral of us.
<http://www.reports.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/CARE/223516>

Pippa is taken swimming on Wednesdays by her mother. This is at the HALO Leisure centre Leominster. The Leisure centre have public swim times for parents and children the rules of which require a parent to be with each pre-school child at all times.

This is a completely private visit with Pippa's mother being the only person changing, swimming with and drying/changing Pippa.

Dilwyn Playgroup is closed on a Wednesday and has no connection with Leominster swimming pool.

So I can not understand in any way the context of the referral recorded against us.

May I urge you to investigate and clarify the details of this reported incident. As the case was being put through for closure. This incident was the pivotal point between common sense prevailing and escalation to allegations of serious physical abuse.

Natural justice alone surely demands that this report is correct and accurate.

Can I appeal to you to help us with this issue or pass this letter on to the appropriate person who can.

Confirmation of receipt and action upon this letter would be very much appreciated.

Yours Sincerely

Page 3 of letter dated 24/7/2015

Jim McGeown

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

Mr J McGeown
1 Newton Cottages
Nr Weobley
Herefordshire
HR4 8QX

Your Ref:

Our Ref: IAT10119

Please ask for: Christine Dallow

Direct Line / Extension: 01432 260535

E-mail: accesstoinformation@herefordshire.gov.uk

30 July, 2015

Dear Mr McGeown,

RE: Formal Complaint IAT 10119 Case Records.

Thank you for your letters dated 24 July addressed to Wayne Calder, Team Manager and Sarup Reehal, Social Worker, MASH Team which were received on 27 July, 2015 and forwarded to the Information Access Team. I am sorry to learn of your concerns regarding an alleged error on 4 separate records held by Children's Services. Herefordshire Council takes all complaints seriously and would like to thank you for sharing your concerns with us. The complaint details have been noted and officially recorded and given the following reference: IAT10119. Please quote this reference number on any future correspondence if necessary, in relation to your complaint.

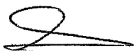
In order to address your concerns as quickly and as effectively as possible, I have arranged for an investigation to take place with Wayne Calder, Team Manager, Mash Team.

It is anticipated that we will provide you with a formal response within the next 15 working days; however, if there is a delay in sending this response, I will contact you to explain the reason for this so as to enable us to provide you with a full and detailed response to your concerns.

The Information Access Team will be your single point of contact for this complaint and we will ensure you are kept up to date on who is doing the investigation, how long this will take, and when you can expect a response.

In the meantime if you have any further queries about this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



**CHRISTINE DALLOW
INFORMATION ACCESS TEAM
HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL**

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

Mr J McGeown
1 Newton Cottages
Nr Weobley
Herefordshire
HR4 8QX

Your Ref:
Our Ref: IAT10119
Please ask for: Christine Dallow
Direct Line / Extension: 01432 260535
E-mail: accesstoinformation@herefordshire.gov.uk

13 August, 2015

Dear Mr McGeown,

RE: Formal Complaint IAT 10119 Case Records.

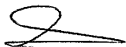
Further to my letter dated 30 July, 2015, I am pleased to advise you that Wayne Calder, Team Manager, has now completed the investigation into your complaint raised regarding an alleged error on records held by Children's Services. Please see the enclosed response.

I am sorry that this experience gave you cause for complaint and trust that you will now feel reassured that your complaint has been fully investigated, however if you require further assistance or clarification please contact me within 10 working days clearly outlining any issues outstanding along with your preferred outcome. If we do not hear from you within this timescale we will close the complaint accordingly.

Alternatively, if you remain dissatisfied, you are of course, at liberty to contact the Local Government Ombudsman. Please find details below:

This body can be contacted by writing to Local Government Ombudsman, PO Box 4771, Coventry CV4 0EH, telephoning 0300 061 0614, website www.lgo.org.uk/making-a-complaint or fax 024 7682 0001

Yours sincerely,



**CHRISTINE DALLOW
INFORMATION ACCESS TEAM
HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL**

1st part letter dated 13/8/2015

PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

Mr J McGeown
1 Newton Cottages
Nr Weobley
Herefordshire
HR4 8QX

13th August 2015

Dear Mr McGeown,

I am writing in response to your letter dated 24 July, 2015 where you requested that an investigation was undertaken in regards to some information contained within the documentation that you had received that was factually incorrect.

I have now had the chance to review the case, and have also now spoken to Dilwyn Nursery. As a result of my investigation I can confirm the following:

- The nursery confirmed that they had noticed the injury to Pippa while she was attending the playgroup and this led to their referral to Herefordshire Children Wellbeing Service.

In the recordings it states that the injury was observed when Pippa had been taken swimming, following speaking with the nursery the circumstances surrounding how the injuries were discovered have been clarified.

I apologise on behalf of Herefordshire Children's Well-being Service for the factual error that the bruising was observed when the child was taken swimming. The bruising was, in fact, observed at the nursery.

I will append a note to the case record to ensure that it is recorded that the bruising was not found when the child was taken swimming and I will also address the accuracy of our recordings with our duty social workers.

I hope this resolves your issue.

Yours sincerely,



WAYNE CALDER
TEAM MANAGER
MULTI AGENCY AND SAFEGUARDING HUB (MASH)

2nd part letter dated 13/8/2015