

20 January 2016

Serious Case Review in relation to Southbank International School.

**Response from Independent Chair of the Local Safeguarding Children Board for
Hammersmith and Fulham, Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster**

In 2014, the LSCB was notified about the serious abuse of at least 54 pupils perpetrated by William Vahey, a former teacher at Southbank International School between 2009 -2013. In September 2014, in my role as the Chair of the Local Safeguarding Children Board, I decided to initiate a Serious Case Review (SCR), in line with Regulation 5 of the Local Safeguarding Children Board Regulations 2006 and consistent with the statutory guidance in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013.

I asked Dame Moira Gibb to chair a Review Panel. The review was led and the Report was authored by Jane Wonnacott and Edi Carmi, both of whom are experienced SCR authors.

The SCR focuses on the abuse by William Vahey whilst working at Southbank International School. The review's overarching finding is that there were opportunities to identify the risks posed by William Vahey, however these were not well understood by the school or its owners at the time. The full eleven findings of this complex review are laid out in the report published today. The LSCB has accepted the findings of the review and shared these fully with those agencies that will need to consider action that they should take.

The review prioritised the privacy and well-being of the children and young people affected by it. To support the children, young people and their families, or indeed anyone affected by the events described in the report, the LSCB has published, alongside the review, a list of services that are available to them.

The LSCB acknowledges that, whilst this review focuses on the abuse of children and young people within a school setting, much of the learning from this case can be applied to the wider children's workforce. All organisations that work with children should be mindful of the need to develop an open culture, where concerns can be raised, and all organisations should be prepared to accept that abuse 'can happen here' if we are to keep children safe in the future.

Jean Daintith

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Independent Chair of the Local Safeguarding Children Board