

Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP  
Home Secretary  
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28 May 2019

MOPAC080519-D2683

Dear Home Secretary,

**Metropolitan Police Service – National Child Protection – post inspection review**

I write with regard to the national child protection inspection report published by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) on 28 March 2019 which focused on the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) activity.

As you would expect, I was aware of some of the Inspections outcomes prior to publication. The improvements made by the MPS in how it protects children in some important areas is of course welcomed, but I share your concerns about a greater focus on outcomes for children at risk of harm. Keeping children and young people safe is a key priority of the Police and Crime Plan and I will continue to provide oversight of the MPS to ensure this is delivered through a range of mechanisms, including the London Child Protection Policing Improvement Oversight Board.

I am pleased of the recognition the report made to the clear commitment by senior leaders both in the MPS and MOPAC to respond to the findings from the 2016 and 2017 inspections. Resource, structural changes, and competing demands have all impacted on the speed of delivery in this area, however the structural changes to the Borough Command Unit model, where each BCU will have a dedicated Detective Superintendent, will further assist once fully embedded.

A further positive within the report, highlighted as 'notable practice', was the development of the Child House, a multi-agency model firmly rooted in the child's voice and experience. The Mayor opened The Lighthouse in December 2018, following £8m investment from the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime, the Home Office, NHS England and the Department for Education. The country's first dedicated service for children and young people which will reduce the need of multiple interviews for vulnerable victims of sexual abuse.

The report detailed two recommendations requiring immediate response from the MPS. The first was to continue to implement all the recommendations from its 2016 inspection. This will of course continue to be the focus of the London Child Protection Policing Improvement Oversight Board which I chair on a 6-weekly basis.

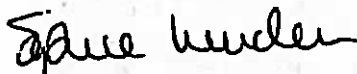
The new recommendation identified in the report was to improve the quality and timeliness of investigations related to the exploitation and abuse of children via the internet. In recognition of the growing threat to children and young people, MOPAC has signposted

additional funding to enhance the risk-based approach, enabling the MPS to stop and prevent more predatory offenders and to protect London's children and young people in a more effective way. Without this additional funding, the only way to achieve this effect would have been to take away resource from other important parts of local policing.

I can assure you that the MPS is progressing this area of work and has already delivered an awareness training session to 120 officers from BCUs. Workshops focussing on the learning from the dedicated inspection team at the MPS and a 3 week training package will be delivered later this year. There has been further work to develop a toolkit to support BCU officers investigate online child abuse and exploitation offences. And a dedicated team of online child abuse and exploitation investigators will be set up on each BCU to address the high level of no further action (NFA) cases. Although this work is not yet fully complete, I am confident that the MPS has the tools in place to improve its response to the quality and timeliness of these investigations.

I am thankful to the HMICFRS for working closely with the MPS and for opting to give the force time and space to further introduce and embed enhanced arrangements. I hope this provides a useful summary of the MPS activity in response to this report.

Yours sincerely,



Sophie Linden  
Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime

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