



OSCB press statement

OSCB publishes a Serious Case Review concerning Child A and Child B

Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (OSCB) has today published a Serious Case Review (SCR) into the case of two young siblings, Child A and Child B, who suffered serious sexual and physical abuse at the hands of their male carer, Mr K, within a Special Guardianship care arrangement.

Mr K was convicted of a number of serious offences and received a very substantial prison sentence.

The review covers the period from January 2013, when discussions about the children's future care arrangements were initiated by the family, to May 2015, when the abuse came to light. It concludes that the abuse was not foreseeable by local child protection agencies and highlights areas of learning to improve wider safeguarding systems in Oxfordshire.

It is important to remember that an SCR is initiated when the circumstances of a case meet specific national criteria, not because there is a suspicion or presumption of poor practice by child protection services.

Independent Chairman of the OSCB Paul Burnett said: "This was a particularly distressing case involving the despicable abuse of vulnerable children. The man responsible had no background to suggest he posed a risk to children, and as the report concludes, it could not have been foreseen that he would go on to commit these offences.

"The review recognises that children's social workers and other professionals demonstrated great compassion and commitment in promoting the best interests of the children. It also raises concerns which have led to recommendations for improving care planning processes and highlighting the particular vulnerability to abuse, of children with disabilities and special needs."

Mr Burnett added: "Significantly, the Government had begun a review of the use of Special Guardianship Orders at the time of this case, and guidance on when and how such care arrangements should be used in Oxfordshire has been strengthened following national changes."