



Home Office

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Mr Alexander Baron  
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Reference: T8988/17

11 October 2017

Dear Mr Baron,

Thank you for your letter of 22 September to the Home Secretary in which you raise your concerns about Wiltshire Police's investigation into allegations of child sexual abuse made against Sir Edward Heath. Your letter has been passed to the Safeguarding Unit of the Home Office for reply.

Child sexual abuse is a despicable crime and the Government is committed to keeping children and young people safe from all forms of abuse.

We are clear that, where allegations of any kind are made, they should be thoroughly and professionally investigated by the police and, if the evidence supports and where appropriate, prosecutions brought.

I should clarify that the police are operationally independent of government, and it would not be appropriate for Ministers or officials to comment on, or intervene in, a specific case. This is to ensure the police can carry out their duties independently and make decisions free from political influence.

In your letter you also raise the point about prosecutions for those who submit false allegations to the police. The College of Policing Guidance to police forces on managing complex child abuse investigations provides that, where an investigation identifies a false allegation, it may be appropriate to support a prosecution for attempting to pervert the course of justice. It is essential in all cases that all steps are taken to test the validity of statements, corroborate accounts and establish an accurate picture.

I hope this clarifies matters and I would like to thank you for writing about this issue.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be a stylized 'S' or 'J' followed by a flourish.

**Safeguarding Unit**  
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