

Historical Child Abuse Inquiry *Scotland*

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Ms Angela Constance MSP
Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning
The Scottish Government
Victoria Quay
Edinburgh EH6 6QQ

20th November 2015

Dear Cabinet Secretary

Historical Child Abuse Inquiry

As you would expect, I have been arranging for members of the Inquiry team to meet with representatives of the main survivor/victim groups, to ascertain their views about how the Inquiry should proceed. In addition, they will be meeting representatives of other groups for the same purpose. Through its website, the Inquiry has called for any interested party to make similar representations. We wish to consider views and ideas before drafting the Protocols which will govern the Inquiry's procedure.

At meetings with White Flowers Alba and INCAS this week, my team were told that many of the survivors are unhappy with the limitations placed on the Inquiry's remit by the Terms of Reference. In particular, they wish the Inquiry to look at abuse suffered outside residential establishments, for example at the hands of parish priests in the community. In addition, they expect the Inquiry to consider redress, and interim relief, both in terms of money and also in the form of specialist care and support. They see these matters as being urgent.

They have asked me to use my influence with the Scottish Government to assist them in pressing for these needs to be addressed, and for extensions to the Inquiry's remit.

I must decline to assist them by requesting any specific extension to the Terms of Reference, as it seems to me that the matters raised fall squarely within the provenance of discretionary decision making by Government. These are political decisions, and I do not wish to comment further.

However, I do consider that I have a responsibility to bring these issues to your attention. As Mr Graeme Pearson MSP was present at one of the meetings, I am copying this letter to him. I will also arrange to place a copy on the Inquiry website in due course: www.childabuseinquiry.scot.

Yours sincerely

Ms Susan O'Brien

cc Graeme Pearson MSP, MG.07, Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, EH99 1SP
cc Gary McAteer, Beltrami & Co., Solicitors on behalf of White Flowers Alba (by email)
cc Simon Collins, Capital Defence Lawyers on behalf of INCAS (by email)
cc INCAS (by email)
cc FBGA (by email)