

Home Secretary pledges new chapter to end child sexual abuse

- The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse publish their final report
- Home Secretary pays tribute to victims and pledges to learn from mistakes of the past
- He commits to act quicker to put an end to devastating crime

The Home Secretary has today (20 October) responded to the publication of the [final report from the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse](#).

The inquiry was established by the government seven years ago to investigate failings of state and non-state organisations over several decades, across England and Wales, to protect and safeguard children from sexual abuse and make recommendations for reform. The report published today makes recommendations for the government and marks the end of the inquiry.

Victims and survivors of child sexual abuse have bravely shared their experiences with the inquiry and shed light on the number of failures by institutions which should have protected them. This afternoon, the Home Secretary extended his personal thanks to everyone who contributed to the inquiry and pledged to make sure that these failings are never repeated.

The Home Secretary, Grant Shapps said:

I am incredibly grateful to the thousands of victims and survivors who have bravely come forward to share their experiences with the inquiry, their bravery will not be forgotten.

I will keep their voices front and centre in everything I do and I will ensure that the findings of the inquiry, and their invaluable testimonies, are acted upon.

To date, we have already taken action to tackle this abhorrent crime and learn from the lessons of the past, but I know there is much more to do. This is the start of a new chapter in our efforts to put an end to this terrible crime.

I want to give assurances – where we can act quicker, we will. I will use all available levers to protect our children, to improve the law enforcement and criminal justice response, provide the support victims and survivors deserve and ensure all institutions and leaders are properly held to account.

Over the last seven years, the government has responded in real time to recommendations from the inquiry to ensure that across government work continues to be driven forward to tackle all forms of child sexual abuse and

ensure victims are better supported.

Last January, the government published the Tackling Child Sexual Abuse Strategy, setting the strategic direction for addressing this terrible crime across the whole system, and putting lessons learnt from the inquiry into practice. This has helped to drive initiatives to increase reporting, target offenders, drive up convictions and provide better support for victims.

The work to tackle child sexual abuse doesn't end with the conclusion of the inquiry. The government is committed to ensuring that the valuable work of the inquiry is translated into action to end this terrible crime.

The government will respond in full to the inquiry's report within six months, when proper consideration has been given to all of the recommendations, but today the Home Secretary announced a further £4.5 million for organisations supporting victims and survivors of child sexual abuse at a national level.

This money will go to seven organisations who provide vital support for children and young people who have experienced sexual abuse, adult survivors, and parents or carers of victims. This includes telephone and online counselling and support services; support groups; specialist support to LGBT+ victims; and survivor-led interventions.

In addition, the Home Secretary will champion children's safety at the highest levels and convene ministers from across government to drive action against the inquiry's recommendations.

Lord Chancellor & Secretary of State for Justice, Brandon Lewis said:

This inquiry has laid bare the horrors that many children suffered as a result of historical institutional failings that must never be repeated.

That is why we will continue to transform the justice system's response to these heinous crimes – locking up child abusers for longer to protect the public, making sure predators cannot use sports or religious roles to harm young people, and hugely increasing funding for support services so that no victim is left to suffer alone.

The government will continue to ensure that the voices and perspectives of victims and survivors are placed at the centre of work tackling this horrific crime. Victims must feel confident in being able to seek justice and find support.

The Victims Code and draft Victims Bill have been important steps in setting out clear victims' rights and the level of the support they can expect throughout the criminal justice process.

We have also increased investment in specialised support services to make

sure that victims and survivors can be supported in rebuilding their lives.

Education Secretary, Kit Malthouse said:

The scale of historic abuse and exploitation suffered by these children is horrifying, and their bravery in coming forward will help improve services to protect children.

Over the last seven years we have strengthened the join-up between police, health care professionals, councils and schools, so more children feel protected by the institutions that are supposed to keep them safe, and we will continue to improve children's social care so every child has a safe and loving childhood.

In the past seven years the government has established the Child Safeguarding Practice Review panel to improve local practice and outcomes for vulnerable children, and across government we are making sure that the services and organisations which have a responsibility for the welfare of children continue to put safeguarding at the top of their agenda.

Our Child Protection Ministerial Group, set up following the Care Review, will also champion children's safety at the highest levels and provide the leadership to oversee necessary reforms across children social care.

All government responses to recommendations from the inquiry's previous reports to date have been published and can be found on the [The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse \(IICSA\)](#) or GOV.UK.