

# Greater Manchester man has sentence for child cruelty increased following referral to the Court of Appeal

News story

A man from Greater Manchester has received an increased sentence for child cruelty after his case was referred under the Unduly Lenient Sentence scheme.



A man from Greater Manchester has received an increased sentence for child cruelty after his case was referred to the Court of Appeal by the Solicitor General, Alex Chalk QC MP.

The offender, who cannot be named for legal reasons, engaged in a course of extensive physical and emotional abuse against the victim, which amounted to a case of cruelty to a person under 16 years.

This abuse included regular beatings, with one assault resulting in the victim suffering a fractured finger. To conceal their actions, the offender intentionally acted to isolate the victim and would forbid them from attending school or seeing friends when they had visible bruising.

On 15 December 2021, the offender was sentenced to 3 years and 4 months' imprisonment at Manchester Minshull Street Crown Court.

Following the sentencing, the Solicitor General referred the sentence to the Court of Appeal under the Unduly Lenient Sentence (ULS) scheme.

On 10 March 2022 the Court of Appeal found the original sentence to be unduly lenient and increased it to 6 years' imprisonment.

Speaking after the hearing, the Solicitor General, Alex Chalk QC MP said:

Cruelty to children is cowardly and abhorrent. This increased sentence reflects the severity of the offences that occurred and demonstrates that any act of cruelty against a child will be met

with robust punishment.

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## [Addressing the continuation of disinformation on chemical weapons in Syria](#)

Mr President, I thank High-Representative Nakamitsu for her briefing.

Just ten days ago we discussed Syria's chemical weapons in this Council. It was clear then that Syria remains uncooperative. The serious outstanding issues on its chemical weapons declaration, which include the fate of thousands of chemical munitions and hundreds of tonnes of chemical agents, remain unresolved. The terms of resolution 2118 continue to be breached. We therefore call on the Syrian regime – as we do every month – to cooperate with the OPCW and return to compliance with the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Mr President,

In the ten days since we last met, Russia has continued its war of aggression against Ukraine. Besieging cities, killing civilians indiscriminately, forcing millions to flee in search of safety. The parallels with Russian action in Syria are clear. Regrettably, the comparison also extends to chemical weapons, as we see the familiar spectre of Russian chemical weapons disinformation raising its head in Ukraine.

Russia has a long history of deflection, denial and obstructive behaviour when it comes to chemical weapons. In 2017, Putin claimed the Khan Shaykhun attack, for which the expert and impartial OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism found the Assad regime responsible, was staged by the West.

Russia has offered more than 40 different narratives about the chemical weapons attack its military agents carried out in Salisbury four years ago, and we have seen nothing but obfuscation and falsehoods in relation to the Novichok attack on Alexei Navalny.

So colleagues,

As you listen to the Russian statements during this session, I ask you to consider – who should we believe? Should we believe the state with a track record of using chemical weapons, that has denied and deflected questions about attacks by its client, the Assad regime, whether in Khan Shaykhun, Ltamenah or Saraqib? Or should we believe the independent, impartial

international organisations that have conducted rigorous investigations, attributing responsibility based on clear evidence?

This Council has heard enough lies about chemical weapons from the Russian Federation. We must stop pretending that the Assad regime is acting in good faith. We should stand up for the rules we have all agreed, look those who break them in the eye and hold them to account for their actions.

Finally Mr President, I note that Libya is on our agenda for next Wednesday – I look forward to discussing it then.

Thank you.

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## **Procurement reforms launched to improve service for DSA customers**

At SLC, our customer vision includes providing an outstanding customer experience, helping customers to invest in their futures by providing an intuitive, supportive and trusted service.

We are making progress and one area in particular where we recognise improvements can be made is the journey for customers in receipt of Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA). DSA provides support with study related costs and provides vital support to thousands of students with a disability across the UK. It's hugely valuable in enabling opportunity and widening participation in higher education.

Our customers have told us that accessing this support has challenges, including too much onus on them to take action, it's a lengthy process and that no organisation takes ownership of their journey.

This is why we have been working on significant reforms that will transform and improve the DSA service. It will remove key pain points in the customer journey, provide the customer with a single point of contact and support throughout the process, and introduce contractual control to ensure consistent quality of service. In addition, these changes will reduce the time taken to access DSA.

[More information on the supplier model is available in our recently published procurement prospectus.](#)

Enhancing the customer experience is a crucial element of the reforms and at a recent supplier day, we outlined that new suppliers will work with SLC, the UK Government's Department for Education and Welsh Government to enhance and strengthen the quality standards to create a service that better meets the needs of our customers. The quality metrics will include agreed service

levels, quality standards and processes for resolving exception complaints.

We also confirmed that we are engaging with our customers and non-commercial stakeholders, such as third sector bodies, in these discussions to ensure the quality framework best suits our customers. A DSA Student Finance Customer Panel has been established to hear first-hand experiences of customers in receipt of DSA and help to shape the reforms, building on the insight gathered from customer surveys and a number of in-depth one to one interviews with students with a disability.

Working together will ensure the best outcome for our customers and we look forward to collaborating to improve the journey for customers in receipt of DSA.

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## **AUKUS: Tri-lateral statement to the IAEA Board of Governors**

UK Ambassador to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Corinne Kitsell said:

Chair,

I have the honour of speaking on behalf of Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

In September 2021, our leaders announced the beginning of an 18-month consultation period to determine the optimal pathway for Australia to acquire conventionally-armed, nuclear-powered submarines.

Integral to these consultations are our shared objectives of setting the highest possible non-proliferation standards, strengthening the integrity of the non-proliferation regime, and maintaining Australia's impeccable non-proliferation credentials.

Chair,

Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States remain fully committed to our respective non-proliferation obligations. Our cooperation under AUKUS will reflect our longstanding leadership in global non-proliferation.

Consistent with this, Australia has voluntarily committed to not domestically enrich or reprocess nuclear material in support of the nuclear-powered submarine program.

Chair,

Our goal is to enable verification of the non-diversion of nuclear material in our nuclear propulsion-related cooperation under AUKUS by proceeding under the framework of Australia's Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and Additional Protocol with the IAEA.

We also seek to identify opportunities to advance the use of safeguards tools in ways beneficial to the Agency and the international non-proliferation regime.

At the beginning of this meeting, the Director General reported on our engagement with the IAEA to date. Our engagement with the IAEA is a critical element of our consultations. We have commenced technical consultations with the IAEA on verification-related issues. These discussions build on the direct engagement we have sought and maintained with the Agency since the announcement of our joint effort.

AUKUS partners, including at leader and ministerial level, have and will continue to engage directly with the Director General, Board Members and other interested member states.

Chair, On 8 February, the AUKUS partners brought into force an agreement for the Exchange of Naval Nuclear Propulsion Information (ENNPPIA). This agreement is narrowly focused on providing for the exchange of naval nuclear propulsion information among the three parties during the 18-month consultation period. It does not allow for the transfer of nuclear material or equipment, but provides a basis for more detailed consultation between partners and will support our ongoing engagement with the IAEA.

Chair,

We continue to oppose calls for a standing agenda item, a 'special committee' or an 'inter-governmental process' on AUKUS.

As noted earlier, AUKUS cooperation is proceeding under the framework of Australia's Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and Additional Protocol. Not only is it proper and appropriate, but there is a firm legal basis for the Director General and the Secretariat, to engage Australia, with the support of relevant partners, on these issues. The international non-proliferation regime relies on such engagement taking place.

We remain deeply concerned by continuing calls for the Director General to avoid engaging with us on these issues, and by suggestions that IAEA safeguards arrangements in relation to prospective naval nuclear propulsion in Australia lie outside Australia's Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and are not within the mandate of the Agency. These claims are absurd. In fact, some colleagues that have aligned with suggestions that the transfer of nuclear material to Australia goes beyond the mandate of the IAEA are the very same that have suggested we haven't engaged with the IAEA sufficiently. Such incorrect and contradictory statements undermine the role and authority of the Agency, and are purely politically motivated, and have no place in this Board.

Chair,

Transparency and open engagement have been central to our approach from the outset, especially in regard to issues of nuclear material, facilities, and activities relevant to the IAEA. We remain committed to keeping member states and partners informed, and we look forward to the opportunity to inform the Board of significant developments related to naval-nuclear propulsion under AUKUS under Any Other Business at future meetings of this Board.

Thank you, Chair.

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## **Bikeability receives record £20 million government investment to improve access to cycle training**

- record £20 million Department for Transport funding commitment ensures more children and families can cycle confidently and safely
- government continues to support vital cycling skills through Bikeability and encourage instructors to join the sector
- funding builds on commitment to decarbonise our transport network and build back greener from COVID-19

Cycle training for children and families has received a record investment as the Department for Transport (DfT) has confirmed £20 million of funding for Bikeability to deliver its cycle training programme next year.

Bikeability has trained over 3.6 million children since 2007 and DfT has now announced record funding to ensure even more are equipped with the skills, confidence and knowledge to cycle on our roads and have the opportunity to gain other essential life skills.

This funding has the potential to deliver half a million training places for children and their families, supporting even more people to introduce active travel into their everyday lives.

The [Bikeability Trust](#) is continuing to offer bursaries for those wanting to join the industry, boosting the number of Bikeability instructors, which is important to ensure every child who wants it can be trained.

This comes as the industry gathered last week for the Bikeability annual conference today, at which Minister Trudy Harrison delivered the keynote speech.

Speaking ahead of the conference, Active Travel Minister Trudy Harrison said:

Cycling helps both our planet and our wellbeing, and learning to cycle is also an important life skill.

Our ambition is for every child to be able to access Bikeability training and I'm delighted we've been able to invest a record £20 million to help make this a reality.

Emily Cherry, CEO at the Bikeability Trust, said:

We have already trained more than 3.6 million children how to cycle confidently and safely. This record investment will help us to achieve our ambition of offering every child cycle training.

Bikeability teaches children an essential life skill that benefits their health and helps them make more sustainable travel choices. Getting children cycling when they're young embeds active habits for life, gives them the independence to travel to school and, most importantly, helps them discover how fun cycling is.

The government wants more parents and pupils to choose cycling for the school run and other everyday journeys, as we look to decarbonise our transport network and build back greener from COVID-19.

The ambition is for half of all journeys in towns and cities to be walked or cycled by 2030 and DfT is allocating an unprecedented £2 billion over 5 years to deliver that ambition.

This all comes as DfT recently launched Active Travel England, the Executive Agency tasked with driving up the quality of cycling and walking routes, led by former Olympic cyclist Chris Boardman.