



**Rt Hon Ed Balls MP**  
Secretary of State

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Christine Gilbert  
HMCI  
Alexandra House  
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12th

November 2008

Dear *Christine*

### **Urgent Joint Area Review of Safeguarding in Haringey**

You will be aware of the tragic death of Baby P in Haringey in 2007. We have today urgently studied the findings of the Serious Case Review which examined the circumstances of the baby's death and the role of each of the services involved with the family. The review's findings indicate a number of failings of practice and management by the agencies involved.

Having studied the report over the course of the day, it is our initial view that there is clear evidence that:

- each agency has singly and collectively failed to adhere to the procedures for the proper management of child protection cases set out in Chapter 5 of Working Together 2006. In particular:
- there was evidence of poor quality practice, management and supervision of staff in all agencies; and
- health professionals appear to have failed to follow the appropriate procedures when there was evidence of a child having suffered non-accidental injuries.
- there was inappropriate use of family friends as temporary carers for Baby P. Our reading of the Serious Case Review suggests that the local authority was responsible for making arrangements for the placement of this child with a family friend and therefore Regulation 38 of the Fostering Services Regulations 2002 should have been followed.



department for  
**children, schools and families**

Further examination of the Serious Case Review may reveal other examples where implementation of proper procedures could have led to a better outcome for the child. Such findings in an individual case raise serious concerns about the wider systems and management of services for safeguarding children in Haringey.

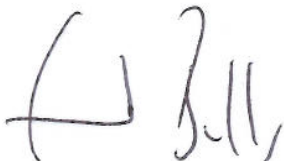
In the light of these findings, I have today decided that Ofsted, the Commission for Healthcare Audit and Inspection and the Chief Inspector of Constabulary should carry out an urgent Joint Area Review of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in Haringey. I am requesting this under Section 20(1)(b) of the Children Act 2004.

The Review will need to undertake an urgent and thorough inspection of the quality of practice and management of all services which contribute to the effective safeguarding of children in the local area. It will be important to ensure rigorous scrutiny of the quality of practice and decision making by front line workers and their managers, and of the effectiveness of management practice and performance management systems in all relevant agencies.

I would expect the Review to be led and carried out by inspectors with specialist expertise and experience in child protection. Given the importance and urgency of these matters, I request that a first report should be submitted to me by 1 December 2008.

I am copying this letter to the Chief Executive of the Commission for Healthcare Audit and Inspection, and the Chief Inspector of Constabulary.

*Yours sincerely*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ed Balls'.

ED BALLS MP