

WD -17

WD

From: Bernard Hill [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 1 September 2009 5:34 PM
To: WD
Subject: Professional Standards Matter

Dear WD

I refer to the matter that you brought to my attention by telephone this afternoon.

I confirm that the following actions suggested by you are appropriate and reasonable:

- Stand the alleged perpetrator down on full pay (You may wish to consult their employment agreement to check any applicable provisions re power to suspend, however it is highly likely that the common law would allow suspension for such alleged serious misconduct)
- Inform the parents of the alleged victim and report your action and intention to report the matter to the police (if that is your decision – see below).
- Offer access to counselling to the victim, parents and immediate family members (Professional Standards will pick up the bill for this – we can discuss the details at another time)
- Offer access to counselling to the alleged perpetrator (ditto re PSU funding)
- Satisfy yourself that the alleged perpetrator has access to support – either family or friends – to ensure their emotional well-being
- Report the allegation to the Archbishop's office so that he is aware if there is any media attention
- Prepare a media response – which should be 'it is a police matter' as it should be left to the police to investigate the allegation and you do not want to say anything that will compromise it.

I have emailed the members of the Professional Standards Committee, listing your proposed actions. At the time of writing only the Chair, John Hedges (a barrister) has responded.

He agrees with the actions with the exception that he believes that it should be up to the alleged victim to report the matter to the police. I can see the merits of both arguments – ie the issue that it is an allegation of criminal misconduct in your workplace. It is certainly not wrong of you to report it to the police.

You should also be mindful of any other members of staff who may need debriefing or counselling as a result of the allegation.

I will keep you informed if I have any further responses from PSC members.

In the meantime, I will be available to assist when required.

All the best WD

Bernard

 Bernard Hill

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