

**Press Release
19 October 2023**

SHOCKING INCIDENT INVOLVING VIOLENT ARREST OF CHILD X AGED 13 YEARS BY FIREARMS OFFICERS IN HACKNEY

Child X, a black male aged 13 years, was playing with a brightly coloured plastic water gun with younger sibling in the streets outside their home when a uniformed officer saw them and reported what he saw as a potential firearms incident.

As a result, two firearms units – from the Met and City of London Police – were deployed to the scene. A police van rammed Child X off his bicycle without any warning, knocking him to the ground. He was surrounded by armed officers who pointed their firearms at him, handcuffed and arrested him on suspicion of being in possession of a firearm.

Child X was de-arrested at the scene, once his mother arrived and challenged what was happening, but she too was treated with contempt by the officers when she sought an explanation for their conduct from them.

NOTES TO EDITORS

A statement by Child X’s mother is set out overleaf: it is not made in her own name because of the need to protect Child X and his privacy. The family request that there should be no speculation as to their identities.

- The MPS Directorate of Professional Standards has since confirmed that they are investigating Child X’s mother’s complaint about the incident, after the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) refused to conduct an independent investigation.
- The City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership has confirmed that they intend to undertake a Rapid Review of the incident.
- In March 2022, [a review by the City & Hackney Child Safeguarding Panel into the case of Child Q](#) identified issues including the way in which race and adultification of black children shapes their treatment by the authorities. As a result, multi-agency training was said to have been rolled out across Hackney for the various relevant agencies including the police.
- In March 2023, [the Casey Review](#) concluded that there was institutional racism within the Metropolitan Police Service and that Black Londoners are under protected and over policed. The Review also specifically identified an “*unwillingness*” inside the MPS to “*interrogate whether there are broader issues around race, desensitisation and system bias towards black children*”.

Child X is represented by:

Catriona McGregor of Bhatt Murphy Solicitors who can be contacted on 0207 729 1115 or c.mcgregor@bhattmurphy.co.uk.

STATEMENT FROM MOTHER OF CHILD X

I feel very angry about the way in which my 13-year-old son was treated by the police. It has been a deeply traumatic experience for him, for me, and for our family as a whole.

The attitude of the police to him – and to me – is shown up in the words of the senior officer at the scene when I protested to him about the conduct of his officers: he told me I was lucky that they had not arrested my son!

For what?

For playing with a brightly coloured plastic water gun with his younger sibling on the streets behind our home?

For being a black boy on the streets of Hackney?

I know – and the police know – that they would not have treated my son in the way they did if he had been a white 13 year old boy.

I know that they would not have treated me with the contempt shown towards me or described me as “aggressive” if I was not black.

I am still in shock about it all, and so is my son as well as his siblings.

How do I explain to them what happened?

How do I help them cope with the fact that the police present at the scene seemed unable or unwilling to apologise, explain or answer for what they had done?

And after what has happened, how can I ever tell them that they can turn to the police for help?

I feel broken by it all; distraught because I was not able to protect my child from what happened.

After I wrote to my MP about this, the Borough Commander asked to meet with me, and he arranged for me to view the body worn video footage from the officers involved in the incident with my son – but when I tried to watch the footage, I found it was too painful and traumatic to see what they did to my son.

I have been assured that the police are now taking the matter seriously, and they asked the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) to investigate what had happened, not once but twice – and yet the IOPC refuse to do so, insisting that the investigation must be carried out by the police themselves.

Why? How can I be expected to place my faith in the police to investigate themselves when they have treated my son and me with contempt?

I feel let down and betrayed, not only by the police, but also by the IOPC, and by the whole system that is supposed to look after our children, black or white: they deserve better!

That is why I hope that the police may yet find the courage and the integrity they need to look at what went wrong here, to bring the officers involved to answer for their wrongdoing, and to work with the City & Hackney Child Safeguarding Panel to make sure that all children are free to play on our streets in Hackney.

Ends