



Department  
of Health &  
Social Care



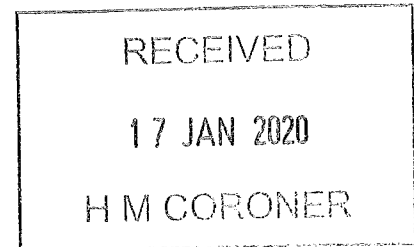
Department  
for Education

Nadine Dorries MP  
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Mental Health,  
Suicide Prevention and Patient Safety

Michelle Donelan MP  
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families

Your Ref: IMA/LH/CJ/46/18  
Our Ref: PFD-1185555

Mr Ian M Arrow  
HM Senior Coroner, County of Devon  
HM Coroner's Office  
1 Derriford Park  
Derriford Business Park  
Plymouth PL6 5QZ



*Dear Mr Arrow*

*14<sup>th</sup> January 2020*

Thank you for your correspondence of 1 August 2019 to Matt Hancock and Gavin Williamson about the death of Daniel Cameron Shorrocks. We are grateful for the additional time in which to reply.

We would like to take this opportunity to say how deeply saddened we are about Daniel's death. His loss, at such a young age and in such circumstances, is deeply upsetting and we offer our condolences to those who knew, loved and supported Daniel.

Your Report raises two matters of concern.

Firstly, you asked that we review the availability of resources to those local authority care services which have a high proportion of young people in care and disproportionately few qualified staff.

We recognise the importance of addressing challenges in children's social care and supporting local authorities to deliver quality children's services. Every child growing up in care should have a stable, secure environment where they feel supported. Where a child cannot live at home, it is one of the State's most important

responsibilities to ensure that they are kept safe and flourish. Looked-after children should benefit from the care and support that every child is entitled to. We will review the care system to make sure all care placements and settings provide children and young adults with the support they need.

The proposals in next year's finance settlement will give local authorities a 4.4% real-terms increase in their Core Spending Power, which will rise from £46.2 billion in 2019-20 to £49.1 billion in 2020-21.

The funding package for next year delivers significant extra resources to adult and children's social care. This includes allocating a £1 billion additional grant on top of the existing social care package, which will continue at 2019-20 levels.

In relation to the second matter of concern, you ask for a review of the integration between local authority children's care services, child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), and pastoral care provided in education settings.

It might be helpful to know that joint statutory guidance on the health and wellbeing of looked after children has been issued by the Department of Health and Social Care and the Department for Education<sup>1</sup>. The guidance is issued to local authorities, clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) and NHS England under sections 10 and 11 of the Children Act 2004 and they must have regard to it when exercising their functions. It aims to ensure that looked after children have access to any physical or mental health care they may need. The guidance is scheduled for review in 2020.

In addition, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) and the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) issued a joint public health guideline in 2010 on '*Looked-after children and young people*'<sup>2</sup>. The guideline covers how organisations, professionals and carers work together to deliver high quality care, stable placements and nurturing relationships for looked after children and young people.

The recommendations in the guideline set out how agencies and services can work collaboratively to improve the quality of life for looked after children and young people and timely access to appropriate health and mental health services. Commissioners are expected to have regard to NICE guidance when planning and commissioning services. I am advised that an update of the guideline is planned.

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[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/413368/Promoting\\_the\\_health\\_and\\_well-being\\_of\\_looked-after\\_children.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/413368/Promoting_the_health_and_well-being_of_looked-after_children.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph28>

We are taking steps to improve mental health support for children and young people and, in doing so, we have considered the needs of those more likely to experience mental health difficulties, including looked after children.

Since the publication of the Five Year Forward View for Mental Health in 2016<sup>3</sup>, we have seen access to community treatment increase from approximately a quarter, to a third of those with a diagnosable mental health need from birth to 18 years of age.

The NHS Long Term Plan<sup>4</sup>, published in January 2019, reaffirms NHS England's commitment to improve children and young people's mental health services beyond the Five Year Forward View. The Plan sets out priorities for improving mental health services for children and young adults (from birth to 25 years of age). This includes better crisis services through 24/7 provision of mental health crisis services that combine crisis assessment, brief response and intensive home treatment functions.

The Government is prioritising the transformation of mental health services for children and young people and has confirmed its commitment to provide early support for children and young people's mental health in response to the consultation, *Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Provision: A Green Paper*<sup>5</sup>.

Improving the join up between local health and education services is at the heart of this programme of work led by NHS England, the Department of Health and Social Care, the Department for Education and Health Education England. The new NHS funded Mental Health Support Teams resulting from the consultation, which will be established in 20-25 per cent of the country by 2023, are designed to work in and around schools and colleges to provide additional capacity to address the mental health needs of children and young people. These teams will deliver interventions for those with mild to moderate mental health issues, support education settings to develop whole school or college approaches to promote good mental health and help children and young people with more severe needs to access the right support by working with schools and colleges to provide a link to specialist NHS services.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Mental-Health-Taskforce-FYFV-final.pdf>

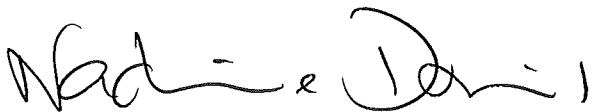
<sup>4</sup> <https://www.longtermplan.nhs.uk/>

<sup>5</sup>

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/728892/government-response-to-consultation-on-transforming-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/728892/government-response-to-consultation-on-transforming-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health.pdf)

Finally, to further support the integration between schools and colleges, and local mental health services, over the next four years, from 2019 to 2023, the Department for Education-funded Link Programme will be made available to all areas and CCGs, and through them to every school and college (including alternative provision settings) and children and young people's mental health services in England. The Link Programme encourages better join-up and communication between education settings and specialist children and young people's mental health services. This will help more children and young people get the right support when they need it and help prevent individuals falling between the cracks in provision or experiencing poor transition between services.

We were very sorry to hear of this tragedy and hope this reply is helpful. Please do not hesitate to let us know if there is any further information which you require.



**NADINE DORRIES**



**MICHELLE DONELAN**