



**Courts and  
Tribunals Judiciary**

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**-v-**

**LYDIA SUFFIELD**

**Sentencing remarks of the Honourable Mrs Justice Cutts DBE**

**At Isleworth Crown Court**

**On the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of July 2026**

1. You are 29 years of age and a woman of previous good character. You are an intelligent woman and you live in Liverpool with your loving parents. You have no reason or excuse to commit criminal offences. Yet for over a year you did just that. You do not know George Osborne, his wife or his family yet you harassed – that is you stalked – them both for that length of time. What you did was persistent, determined, well-planned and sophisticated. Not only was it unnecessary, it was malicious and unkind, causing them a great deal of concern and distress over a protracted period. I am to sentence you today for two offences of harassment reflecting that conduct.
2. You were initially charged with the more serious offences of stalking involving serious alarm or distress contrary to s4A of the 1997 Act. It was open to you to plead guilty to the lesser offence of harassment from the outset. You did not. From your first appearance at the Magistrates Court in December 2024 until May 2026, just before your case was to be listed for trial, you maintained that you were not guilty of any offence. I acknowledge that you have now pleaded guilty but your delay in doing so inevitably caused additional stress to both of your victims who believed until very recently that they would have to give evidence at your trial. I consider that credit of 15% for your guilty plea is applicable in this case.
3. I do not propose to rehearse the facts in any detail in these sentencing remarks. I do not consider it necessary to increase further harm to your victims by repeating the false and hurtful allegations that you repeatedly made over the course of a year to the friends, family and work colleagues of Mr Osborne and his wife.

4. It is clear from the evidence that prior to and including that time you had developed something of an obsession with Mr Osborne. As I have said you did not know him personally and there was no reason for you to engage in the behaviour that you did.
5. You showed an interest in him from 2020. By the summer of 2022 that had become entrenched.
6. Between June 2022 and July 2023 you sent multiple direct communications to those close to him making false allegations of an upsetting personal nature. You used multiple email addresses to conceal your identity. As is pointed out in the pre-sentence report – your offending behaviour demonstrated a pattern of persistent and targeted contact including the use of multiple false identities, anonymous communications and indirect contact via third parties. It was a deliberate and sustained effort to intrude into your victims personal and private lives whilst concealing your identity.
7. Your offending began in June 2022 with emails being sent to friends of Ms Rogers, including to her mother, making allegations about Mr Osborne. Whilst these were not believed, it caused Ms Rogers concern as she did not know who they were from or why they were being sent. She had a very young child and was pregnant with her second. It was a time she should have been able to concentrate on her young family rather than deal with the malicious communications you were sending.
8. At the same time, again using multiple accounts, you were sending similar emails to Mr Osborne's friends, his work and even to his elder children from his first marriage. You caused, and I am satisfied intended to cause, huge upset to the Osborne family given the tone and content of what you were saying.
9. It is clear that somehow you were obtaining information about the Osborne family and their private lives. You seemed to know of the birth of Mr Osborne and Ms Roger's second child before close friends of theirs did. The messages you sent contained key personal information, such as the addresses they lived at which were not in the public domain. As you kept your identity concealed the family understandably felt intimidated and concerned.
10. Your communications seemed to tail off for a while but in the spring of 2023 you started again in earnest in a more serious way. Between March and June 2023 you made 8 anonymous referrals to the NSPCC and sent further emails to social services making false allegations about Mr Osborne and his wife and their ability to care for their children. You were persistent, sending multiple emails to try to ensure their lives were disrupted. These referrals had to be investigated, causing social services to attend the Osborne family home. Unsurprisingly nothing was found to begin to substantiate the false allegations you had made which brought the matter to an end. To make such unsubstantiated allegations against a couple with two very small children was a wicked thing to do. It of course caused immense upset, hurt and concern.

11. You did not leave things there. You pursued your campaign against the Osbornes by making anonymous false allegations about Mr Osborne to the Parliamentary authorities and to the police officer who led the Parliamentary Liaison and Investigation Team in 2023. He could see through them and declined to open any criminal investigation.
12. In one final act of cruelty before your arrest, you sent messages to most of those attending the wedding of Mr Osborne and Ms Rogers in July 2023 making your familiar allegations against him. It made both of them extremely anxious. They did not know who was doing this or what it might mean. A wedding should be a happy and relaxed occasion. Whilst they achieved that on the day, you had set out to utterly ruin their celebration. The fact that in your communications you were repeating what others had said is irrelevant. The way that you used that information was utterly unacceptable.
13. By October 2023 your identity had been discovered and you were arrested. The police found your notebooks which contained a wealth of information about the Osbornes and some fan fiction you had written about Mr Osborne. You had even saved the Facebook profiles of his adult children.
14. Stalking is a pernicious offence. As you sent out malicious communication after malicious communication, hiding behind your multiple email accounts, your targets grew fearful and became ever concerned. As they had no idea who was doing this they feared for their and their children's physical safety for over a year. They paid for additional security measures to protect their family. Ms Rogers, described your conduct as having completely ruined the early months with her second baby, the run up to her wedding and over a year of her life.
15. I am told that you behaved in this way because you considered yourself a journalist undertaking investigative work into alleged misconduct by Mr Osborne. Although not a credited journalist, you clearly had journalistic ambitions. I have seen a statement from Patrick Kidd, the editor of the diary column for The Times. He confirms that in 2020, along with other freelancers you would send tips for his column. You would read books at his request to find new stories.
16. That was legitimate journalistic work. It does not begin to compare with your persistent behaviour towards Mr Osborne and his wife. I am prepared to accept that your interest in them began as a result of your interest in journalism. I cannot however accept that your continuing behaviour was in pursuance of any interest as a journalist. In sending communications under false identities to friends and the family of Mr Osborne you were not trying to find out more about him. By your repeated contact with the NSPCC you were not trying to obtain a scoop. The letters to guests of his wedding could never be described as such. You were intending to disrupt, if not ruin, your victims' lives as much as you could without revealing your identity.

17. You have been diagnosed with ASD since the age of 3 years and more recently with ADHD. I have read with care the report by Dr Brotherton, a clinical psychologist to ascertain what, if any, effect these conditions had on your behaviour. Dr Brotherton says that your developmental disorders have been impacted by difficulties you have seeing the bigger picture and being highly attuned to whether others are adhering to rules leading you to express opinions in the context of having limitations in your ability to predict cause and effect and to consider what the social and emotional consequences for you and others might be.
18. I am prepared to accept that you may not have fully recognised the harm caused but I do not accept that you were devoid of any understanding in that regard. You were not acting in an impulsive way. You planned what you were doing. The only reason to send the communication to guests at your victims' wedding was to cause upset and potentially to influence whether the wedding would go ahead at all.
19. So, whilst I accept that your neurodivergence may limit your ability to predict cause and effect and to consider what the social and emotional consequences for you and others might be, I do not consider that this was such as to lower your culpability to any great extent. As Dr Brotherton says, you are not out of control in your behaviour. I find that you knew that what you were doing was wrong. There can have been no other reason to conceal your identity and use so many different email addresses. You could not have failed to appreciate how reporting a family to social services or sending out malicious emails to wedding guests would impact on your victims.
20. I turn to your sentence.
21. The maximum sentence for the offences to which you have pleaded guilty is 6 months imprisonment. They are summary only offences. Although you have pleaded guilty to two offences, that means that by s.133 of the Magistrates Courts Act 1980 preserved by s224(3) Sentencing Act 2020, I cannot pass a total sentence which is more than 6 months imprisonment.
22. In sentencing you I must have regard to sentencing guidelines. This means assessing your harm and culpability for the offences you committed.
23. I have no hesitation in placing these offences within category 1A of the relevant sentencing guideline. Both parties agree with that categorisation. They fall within category A harm as I am sure that you caused very serious distress to both of your victims.
24. I am also sure that they fall within culpability category 1. Three of the criteria for such a categorisation are made out. I am satisfied that your conduct was intended to maximise fear and distress, that there was a high degree of planning for sophisticated offences and you engaged in persistent action over a prolonged period.

25. I have had careful regard to the guideline for sentencing offenders with mental and developmental disorders which requires me to consider whether your culpability is reduced by reason of your neurodevelopmental disorders.
26. For the reasons I have given I do not consider that your neurodivergence is such as to impact on your culpability in this case. In my view you were able to exercise appropriate judgment, to make rational choices and to understand the nature and consequences of your actions. I will however take it into account in mitigation.
27. Going back to the offence guideline, the 1A categorisation results in a starting point of 12 weeks imprisonment and a range of a high level community order to 26 weeks.
28. Your offending is aggravated by the impact on others, that is the friends and family of Mr Osborne and Ms Rogers, especially their young children and the older children of Mr Osborne.
29. I take into account all that your counsel has said on your behalf:
  - a. You are of previous good character and said to be at a low risk of reoffending.
  - b. I have read the character evidence submitted on your behalf. They show a different side of you. It is clear that these offences are out of character although the length of time over which they were perpetrated renders that factor a little less potent than may otherwise have been the case.
  - c. I accept that now you have had time to reflect on your behaviour you are remorseful. I am told that you recognise the distress that you caused and that the therapy which you have voluntarily undertaken has assisted you in that regard.
  - d. You have taken steps in the three years since this offending to address issues that you have in terms of learning to live with and manage ADHD and in relation to other areas of your life that are set out in the report and which I do not propose to state in any detail in these remarks.
30. I take into account your neurodivergence and all that I have read about how this impacts on your life. I accept that an immediate custodial sentence would have a more significant impact upon you by reason of it.
31. However, notwithstanding these factors, these offences in my judgment are so serious that only a custodial term can be justified. The length and scale of your offending, the impact on the Osbornes and the fact that I am sentencing you for two offences takes the appropriate sentence to the top of the category range – that is 6 months imprisonment. I afford in the region of 15% credit for your guilty pleas which brings the sentence to 22 weeks imprisonment.

32. That of course is less than 12 months imprisonment. By s.277A(2) of the Sentencing Act 2020 I am required to suspend that sentence unless I am of the opinion that there are exceptional circumstances either about the offences or about you which require an immediate term of imprisonment.
33. I have thought long and hard about that. The offences you committed are so serious that I have come close imposing an immediate sentence of imprisonment today. I am however persuaded that a suspended sentence order is the correct sentence in this case. I have come to that conclusion by reason of your previous good character, the remorse you have shown and the steps you have taken to address your behaviour since the commission of these offences and the impact that immediate custody would have on you by reason of your neurodivergence. If you were to reoffend in the same way again the court would not be so lenient.
34. Lydia Suffield, on each of counts 1 and 2, I sentence you to 22 weeks imprisonment, such term to be suspended for 2 years. There will be a rehabilitation activity requirement of 30 days. These to run concurrently with each other. There will be a period of supervision for 2 years.

What the sentence means is this: if in the next two years you commit another offence or fail without good cause to comply with the requirement you will be in breach of it. You will be brought back to court and the sentence will be activated.

35. I consider a restraining order is required in this case. I recognise that you have complied with an interim order since your arrest. However, I agree with the author of the pre-sentence report that your risk of serious harm to Mr Osborne and Ms Rogers remains high for the reasons that she sets out. I make the order in the terms sought. Whilst I accept that you have not contacted your victims in the three years since your arrest you have been subject to these proceedings throughout that time. I hope that will continue but I do not know how you will behave once the proceedings are at an end. For that reason the restraining order will be until further order. Should there come a time when you would wish a variation of that you can make application to the court.
36. I see no reason why you should not pay the prosecution costs of £1,630. I am told this will be met by your parents at the current time. I would expect you to repay them as soon as you are gainfully employed. That sum is to be paid within 6 months.
37. The surcharge must be paid in the applicable amount.

You must see the probation officer before you leave court. Comply with these orders. I do not want to see you in the Crown Court again.