



**House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA**

**Sarah Champion
Member of Parliament for Rotherham**

**Immediate release
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MP meets with Home Secretary to demand national approach to tackle child abuse

Rotherham MP Sarah Champion has this week held a private meeting with Teresa May to advise her on how to tackle child abuse, particularly child sexual exploitation, nationally.

During her national inquiry into child sexual exploitation and trafficking, Sarah received evidence from police forces across the country, local authorities, health professionals, justice professionals and charities. Sarah's Parliamentary inquiry therefore put her in a unique position to advise the Secretary of State.

Champion's recommendations included:

- Encouraging the Police and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) to prosecute groomers on lesser offences already in legislation, for example trafficking and grooming, before the abuse actually occurs.
- Using the forthcoming 'Serious Crime Bill' to put Child Abduction Warning Notices on a statutory footing. Currently, if a perpetrator breaches the warning notice there is nothing the police can do. If these notices are given a statutory footing, the police could then intervene at this early stage of grooming.
- The need for information sharing protocols to be put in place between local authorities, the police, health bodies, and education bodies - with multi-agency co-location being the best approach.
- Giving chairs of local Safeguarding Children's Boards being given the power to require agencies to provide them with information, mirroring the Children's Commissioner for England. Local Safeguarding Children's Boards also need to evidence what they are being told, rather than accepting information on face value.

- Teaching children about their bodies, their relationships and their rights from a young age, so that they know what is right and wrong, and are empowered to say something.

Sarah Champion commented: "It is of vital importance that the horrors that occurred in Rotherham are not replicated in other parts of the country. There are simple measures that can be put in place to prevent this, but it does require Government intervention to make sure it happens.

"My concern is that unless I keep up the pressure on the Government, other children may fall victim to this horrendous crime. I'm not prepared to let that happen.

"Teresa May did seem genuinely concerned about child sexual exploitation nationally. She was open and interested to my recommendations and I expect her to start implementing them so this crime can be contained."

ENDS

Notes to editors:

For more information on Sarah's Parliamentary Inquiry, the full report can be found here:

http://www.barnardos.org.uk/cse_parliamentary_inquiry_report.pdf

For more information, please contact:

Adam Lilley
Press Officer to Sarah Champion MP
Moorgate Crofts Business Centre
South Grove
Rotherham
S60 2DH

T: 01709 331037

M: 07580341398

E: lilleya@parliament.uk

W: www.sarahchampionmp.com