



Department for Education

The Rt Hon Bridget Phillipson MP
Secretary of State for Education

The Chair of the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel

Sir David Holmes

By email: David.HOLMES@education.gov.uk

12 February 2026

Dear David,

I would like to thank you and the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel for your thorough work on this national Review into the issues raised by the death of baby Victoria. The death of Victoria was a tragedy, and our thoughts are with all those affected.

The Panel's findings highlight complex issues – particularly around concealed pregnancy, persistent non-engagement with services, domestic abuse, risks associated with serious offenders who are parents, and the challenges that arise when families move frequently between areas. The Review also underscores the need for a proactive relational and trauma-informed, multi-agency safeguarding and child protection system, with clear pathways of support for parents and safeguarding of unborn babies. I welcome these insights which provide valuable learning for government and local statutory safeguarding partners and agencies.

The government will now carefully consider the recommendations made. As part of this, we will be inviting the Panel to attend a future meeting of the Keeping Children Safe (KCS) Ministerial Board, so that ministers across government can collectively discuss the Review's findings and reflect on the changes needed to strengthen systems nationally and locally.

We remain firmly committed to ensuring that the lessons from this Review lead to meaningful and lasting improvements for vulnerable babies and their families. The findings from baby Victoria's death are a stark reminder of the need for a safeguarding system that acts swiftly, accurately and collaboratively.

As you know, our wider children's social care reforms – including the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill and the Families First Partnership programme – aim to strengthen multi-agency safeguarding, improve support for families and deliver a joined up, decisive and accurate child protection system.

I will provide a fuller written response to the Panel's recommendations in the summer, setting out the government's position and the actions we have taken and will take.

Once again, I thank the Panel for their work in bringing together the lessons from this case. We remain committed to working closely with the Panel and safeguarding partners to strengthen child protection and ensuring that babies and children receive the care and protection they need.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bridget Phillipson". The signature is written in a cursive style and is contained within a thin black rectangular border.

The Rt Hon Bridget Phillipson MP
Secretary of State for Education