

Press Release

Issued: 21 October 2014

For immediate use

Sir Anthony Hart, Chairman of the Historical Institutional Abuse Inquiry said “My HIA Inquiry panel colleagues and I welcome the written statement made by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland to the House of Commons in which she has given assurances that all Departments of HM Government and its agencies will co-operate to the utmost of their ability with the HIA Inquiry into Kincora.

“As we have already announced, and as the Secretary of State has said, the HIA Inquiry is investigating Kincora, and so her announcement does not extend the Terms of Reference of our Inquiry. On the contrary, it now provides our Inquiry with the means to investigate the activities of non-devolved Government Departments and agencies.

“We are satisfied that the assurance of full co-operation by all Government Departments and agencies, and the satisfactory resolution by HM Government of the other issues the Inquiry has raised with it, will provide our HIA Inquiry with the ability and financial resources to carry out an effective and thorough investigation into all the Kincora allegations.

“However, should it become apparent during our work that it is necessary to have powers under the Inquiries Act 2005 then we will ask OFMDFM and HM Government to confer such powers on our Inquiry.”

ENDS

Notes to Editors

1. The Inquiry is not yet in a position to confirm when the module in respect of Kincora Boys Home will take place. However it will probably not be before the end of 2015 at the earliest.
2. Following an inter-departmental task force report, the Northern Ireland Executive, on 29 September 2011, announced there would be an Investigation and Inquiry into historical institutional abuse.
3. On 31 May 2012, the First Minister and deputy First Minister announced the Terms of Reference for the Inquiry, and advised the Assembly of the Chair of the Inquiry and of the Panel Members for the Acknowledgement Forum.
4. An amended terms of reference to widen the scope of the Inquiry from 1922 - 1995 was announced by the First Minister and deputy First Minister on 18 October 2012. See <http://www.northernireland.gov.uk/news-ofmdfm-191012-ministers-widen-historical>
5. On 12 June 2012, the Inquiry into Historical Institutional Abuse Bill and the associated Explanatory and Financial Memorandum were laid before the Assembly. The Bill passed through a number of stages and, on 11 December 2012, the ‘Inquiry into Historical Institutional Abuse Bill’ was passed by the Assembly. Following Royal Assent, the Inquiry into Historical Institutional Abuse Act (Northern Ireland) 2013 became law on 19 January 2013. The Inquiry is formally established under this Act.

HIA Historical Institutional Abuse Inquiry

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6. The Inquiry has a remit to investigate physical, emotional and sexual childhood abuse, and childhood neglect which occurred in residential institutions in Northern Ireland over a 73-year period up to 1995.
7. For the purposes of this Inquiry “child” means any person under 18 years of age; “institution” means anybody, society or organisation with responsibility for the care, health or welfare of children in Northern Ireland, other than a school (but including a training school or borstal) which, during the relevant period, provided residential accommodation and took decisions about and made provision for the day to day care of children; “relevant period” means the period between 1922 and 1995 (both years inclusive).
8. It should be noted that the Inquiry has been tasked with examining whether there were institutional failings in respect of historical abuse and neglect. The Inquiry has no legal power to find anyone guilty of criminal acts.
9. The Inquiry is chaired by Sir Anthony Hart, assisted by Panel members Geraldine Doherty and David Lane. Acknowledgement Forum Panel members are: Beverley Clarke, Norah Gibbons, Dave Marshall QPM and Tom Shaw CBE. Biographical details for these individuals, Senior Counsel to the Inquiry, and other members of the Inquiry team are available on the Inquiry website: www.hiainquiry.org
10. The Inquiry is formally established under The Inquiry into Historical Institutional Abuse Act (Northern Ireland) 2013 which became law on 19 January 2013.
11. The institutions currently under investigation by the Inquiry in relation to alleged historical institutional abuse and/or neglect are as follows (in due course, the Inquiry may decide to investigate other institutions):

Local Authority Homes

- Lissue Children’s Unit, Lisburn
- Kincora Boys’ Home, Belfast
- Bawnmore Children’s Home, Newtownabbey

Juvenile Justice Institutions

- St Patrick’s Training School, Belfast
- Lisnevin Training School, County Down
- Rathgael Training School, Bangor

Secular Voluntary Homes

- Barnardo’s Sharonmore Project, Newtownabbey
- Barnardo’s Macedon, Newtownabbey

Roman Catholic Voluntary Homes

- St Joseph’s Home, Termonbacca, Derry/Londonderry
- Nazareth House Children’s Home, Bishop St., Derry/Londonderry
- Nazareth House Children’s Home, Belfast
- Nazareth Lodge Children’s Home, Belfast
- De La Salle Boys’ Home, Rubane House, Kircubbin

12. Further background information on the Inquiry is contained in a background briefing paper which is available from the Inquiry’s Press Officer. Further information is also available on the Inquiry’s website.
13. **All media requests for information should be directed to the Inquiry’s Press Officer, Liz Fawcett, on 028 9020 0811 or 0771 943 5662, or at liz@lizfawcettconsulting.com.**