



Rt Hon Priti Patel MP  
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Dear Home Secretary,

### **Child Q**

The appalling strip-search of Child Q by police in our borough, within what should have been the safe environment of her school, has shocked and distressed people not just within Hackney, but across the whole country. It has traumatised many people, especially in our Black communities.

Child Q should have been treated with dignity, respect and her best interests, as a child, protected. It is clear from the report that she was failed by police officers. And she was further failed by her teachers and school leaders, who did nothing to safeguard, protect and advocate for her.

An [independent safeguarding report](#) has concluded that racism was 'likely an influencing factor' in the strip search; and that Child Q was subjected to 'adultification' bias where Black and global majority children are held to adult standards in a way their White peers are less likely to be.

This is not something that happened in a vacuum. It is the culmination of an endemic culture of racism and adultification that is rife in establishments, structures and bodies, up and down the country.

This review must serve as a wake-up call to leaders at every level to drive meaningful change for diverse communities across the country. In Hackney, we are taking action to embed anti-racist practice in our child safeguarding work. However, we are deeply concerned by the Metropolitan Police's actions and its response to this case.

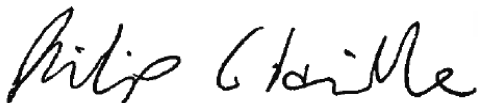


It is now time for action. We urge you to take action to ensure that the horrifying actions that police officers took in this case can never happen again. In particular, we ask you to:

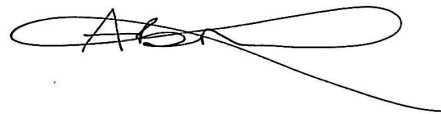
- Ensure that the Metropolitan Police urgently complies with and responds to the recommendations made by the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership report
- Commission an urgent review of policing guidelines and practices around the strip-searching of children to ensure that no child endures the humiliating experience that police officers subjected Child Q to
- Review the law to ensure that no child is strip-searched without their parents/guardians being notified

We have also written to Deputy Assistant Commissioner Laurence Taylor to ask for a detailed, robust and rigorous plan to respond to this case within a fortnight.

We would be happy to meet you to discuss this matter further.



Philip Glanville  
**Mayor of Hackney**



Cllr Anntoinette Bramble  
**Deputy Mayor of Hackney and  
Cabinet Member for Education,  
Young People and Children's Social  
Care**



Cllr Susan Fajana-Thomas  
**Cabinet Member for Community  
Safety**

CC Yvette Cooper MP, Shadow Secretary of State for the Home Department  
Diane Abbott, Member of Parliament for Hackney North & Stoke Newington  
Meg Hillier, Member of Parliament for Hackney South & Shoreditch