



Suicide of ten year old after horrific two year ordeal

Ten year old Jevan Richardson experienced two years of hell which included:

- bullying by his teacher and headmistress
- witnessing violent arrests by the police of his family,
- watching his mother victimised by the school, governors and police,

- inaction from the local authority despite frequent letters from his family including details of Jevan's note threatening suicide
- and finally exclusion from his school and loss of his friends.

He took his life soon after this final episode on 13 February 2001.

Unlawful exclusion admitted by school

In May 2002 the Board of Governors agreed to settle the Judicial review case taken out by the family for the illegal and wrongful exclusion of Jevan in December 2000. The Governors admitted that they were wrong and that they should not have excluded Jevan.

For Carol and Oliver the parents of Jevan Richardson the settlement demonstrates that institutionalised racism is still rife in education. The question is what is to be done to those responsible now that the school have admitted their guilt.

Race discrimination case to be heard in court

On June 18th at the Central London county Court the judge upheld Carol Edmund's claim granting her permission to pursue cases of race discrimination, negligence and failure in statutory duty and care against St.Mary Magdalene Roman Catholic School, the Board of Governors and Lewisham Education.

right to be answered'.

Granting us permission to take the above action will enable us to bring all those to account for their failures and actions. We will not allow them to hide, or sweep things under the carpet. We hope to have a court date for the full hearing in August - so we will keep you informed of developments via regular newsletters, emails and through our website (see bottom of page 2)

The judge actually said that, 'we have too many unanswered questions, that we have a

Justice for JEVAN



Family demands Justice

We will continue to fight for Justice to ensure that another tragedy like ours never happens again. And we continue to demand:

- that the Part 8 review to be finalised and made public to the family;
- Lewisham Council to make public their findings from their investigation;
- The headteacher of St.Mary Magdalene school dismissed from duties;
- The Chair and Board of Governors dismissed from their duties;
- Metropolitan police to account for their involvement and actions.

The family campaign needs your support

Please continue to support the campaign. Local organisations, e.g. churches/clubs/unions are asked to send donations to support the campaign. For up to date information and developments please contact us by:

e-mail jfj_campaign@yahoo.com or go to our website at www.blink.org.uk

or write to us at address below where donations can be sent to and made payable to Justice for Jevan Campaign PO Box 24785 London SE13 7GQ

Local authority delays internal inquiries – family fears cover up

We are still awaiting the outcome of the Part 8 Review, which Lewisham Council commissioned. We have always maintained that the Part 8 review is too little to late, as far as we are concerned investigations should have started when we made our initial complaint in June 1999 and not after the death of Jevan.

Following the death of Jevan, Lewisham council launched its own internal enquiry. At the time the Chief Executive Barry Quirke met with members of the family on several occasions and informed us that the enquiry would be completed within three months. To date we have not heard from Barry Quirke or seen sight of their enquiry report

Police actions under the spotlight

We are pursuing the Metropolitan Police and intend to take legal action for their racist approach which was co-ordinated with the school. The Police

Complaints Authority have already agreed to a panel to examine all aspects of the policing of the family because of the many separate complaints by members of the family against the police.

Justice for Jevan



Summary of key events

1999

June
Bottle of aftershave confiscated from Jevan and disposed of by Head, Carmelita Winston, without consultation with his parents. Head threatens to exclude Jevan.

October 1
Jevan tells his mother how he was humiliated by the Head Teacher in front of the class and called a liar. Jevan says he is frightened of her. Disagreement between mother, Carol Edmund and Head Teacher over above incident, police called. Police deliver notice banning Carol from school, church and hall from October 4.

December 3
Lewisham council's Legal department write to family to say they support banning of Carol from school, threatens to take legal action and says that Carol's allegation that the Headteacher is racist is an example of insulting the Head teacher. Illustrating that the Local Authority has not listened to the family's case. This approach to alleged racism contravenes the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry's recommendations which were published earlier in the year and which the Council said it supported.

Sep 28
Jevan banned from after school activities, as he was collected late on one occasion.

October 4
Police present at school gates when Jevan is brought to school.

October 4 – 10
Carol makes several complaints to Lewisham Education and Board of Governors. Lewisham Education just advises Carol to contact Governors and also to contact Lewisham Racial Equality Council (LREC). Head refuses to discuss with LREC.

December 14
Complaint heard by Governors, however family not happy and lodge a further complaint. Not all issues were addressed including racism expressed by the Premises Manager. Informal hearing rather than formal as requested and banning order on mother remains.

2000

March
Jevan resumes after-school activities. School change policy on informing parents on after school activities and dealing with confiscated items – as a result of the complaints made by Jevan's parents.

April 4
Parents evening – Carol is humiliated and treated with no respect. Carol learns that Jevan's Pokemon cards were confiscated by Head teacher and not returned – however cards confiscated from other pupils are returned to them.

April 7
Family writes complaint letter to Director of Education at Lewisham Council. Council advises family to request a meeting with Governors Complaint panel – which does not exist.

April 16
Carol appears before Courts.

Dec 3
Police arrest Jevan, his teenage sister, his cousin and his father, using violence and CS gas resulting in permanent physical damage to Jevan's father and keeping two young teenage girls in prison overnight. Incidentally this is the day before Carol's trial is scheduled to commence. Reason for arrest was alleged robbery.

Dec 5
Jevan excluded from school without warning, to protect 'Health and Safety' of Head teacher and fact that Jevan's presence in school is 'damaging'. Parents told they have no right of appeal. Exclusion letter comes from Chair of Governors, on school headed paper and signed in his capacity as a solicitor.

March
Jevan banned from football.

April 5
Jevan's suicide note found by Carol in which he says he was being bullied by the Head Teacher and one other teacher – Miss Murphy. Head teacher refuses to discuss suicide note due to ban. Head is provocative, abusive and uses racist language, police involved. Police liaison suggests mediation as a way forward.

April 16
One week later – Police change their approach, use excessive force involving seven officers, forced entry, no warrant and bring charges of racially aggravated assault against Carol.

May 2
Governors refuse to deal with problems due to court case against mother despite the fact that the parents complaints pre-date the April incident and parents are concerned about the well being of their son Jevan.

Dec 4
Court case against mother adjourned. Jevan has to attend police station.

Dec 12
Jevan offered place at new school, of which he had been on waiting list for 18 months without success. New school not informed that Jevan was excluded.

2001

January 8
Jevan attends new school. Settles in well but repeatedly complains about missing his friends and confused about why he was excluded.

February 9
Family learns court case against mother to continue despite legal appeal.

March 19
Case against Carol: evidence withdrawn (charges were also dropped against his father, but charges were still outstanding when Jevan took his life)

Nov 28
Family granted permission for a Judicial review of Jevan's illegal exclusion.

January 13
Jevan returns to police station – no further action taken.

February 13
Jevan hangs himself with stocking in his bathroom.

June 11
Inquest records Open Verdict – no suspicious circumstances. Coroner's summary supports the view that Jevan was traumatized by the many events he witnessed and experienced, and this was capped by his school exclusion.

2002

January 2002
Police Complaints Authority agree to set up independent panel to investigate action throughout the various episodes of events.

June 02
School admits illegal exclusion of Jevan. School and family settle out of court.

March
Judicial Review – scheduled at High Court, Strand (adjourned)

June 02
County Court grants Carol Edmunds permission to pursue case against headteacher of St. Mary Magdalene School, the Board of Governors and Lewisham Education.



Please support the campaign by writing to us at:

Justice for Jevan
PO Box 24785, London, SE13 7GQ.

Or email us:
jff_campaign@yahoo.com