Dear Ivan ,

This week an independent review has been published into how the Church of England covered up the abhorrent abuse of more than 115 children and young men by John Smyth, who was ‘the most prolific child abuser associated with the Church of England’.

Smyth, a barrister and lay reader, abused his victims while volunteering on Christian camps across five decades in three different countries. He subjected victims (including his own children) to physical, sexual and psychological attacks that caused them permanent damage.

He died aged 77 in Cape Town in 2018 while being investigated by Hampshire Police and so was ‘never brought to justice’, the review said, despite Church of England authorities ‘at the highest level’ being aware of Smyth’s abuse.

The Makin Report concludes that Smyth was able to relocate to Africa and continue to abuse more boys “because of inaction of Clergy within the Church of England” who failed to investigate the allegations of abuse and were more concerned with the reputation of the Church than preventing further child abuse.

The Revd David Fletcher, the leader of Iwerne Camps where many of the boys were abused, who was told of the abuse in

1981 and facilitated the cover up, told the review before he died: “I thought it would do the work of God immense damage if this were public.”

The late Canon Michael Green one of the C of E’s most prominent Evangelists was “sworn to secrecy” according to the review, despite his long association with Iwerne camps, from which he learned “much about evangelism and pastoral care” (but apparently not enough to realise this should have included protecting children from abuse).

The Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby has apologised for his failure to act after becoming aware of the extent of the abuse but claimed that “lessons have been learned” over the last 11 years.

“The review is clear that I personally failed to ensure that after disclosure in 2013 the awful tragedy was energetically investigated”, he said.

The way in which the Church of England engages with victims and survivors had changed beyond recognition, he continued. “Checks and balances introduced seek to ensure that the same could not happen today.”

The Makin report makes 27 recommendations on how the Church of England can ensure that abuse of children is thoroughly investigated and prevented.

One of the key recommendations is that “*safeguarding developments currently underway should take full account of the learning from this Review, with a particular focus on the need for a clear ‘golden thread’ of safeguarding, and line of sight from leaders within the Church (at Diocesan and Provincial levels) to those dealing directly with abuse investigations*.”

It also advises that the Church takes account of the learning from this Review “*to avoid ‘groupthink’ in terms of safeguarding decisions, and assures itself that there is*

safeguarding decisions, and assures itself that there is sufficient external and independent influence on decision-makers and leaders in their everyday approaches to safeguarding matters."

However, we believe that the Church of England hierarchy may in practice have learned precious little about the safeguarding of children, bearing in mind that it has just published its latest anti-bullying document for CoE schools '**Flourishing for All**' in which it focusses on its LGBT+ agenda, teaching children that they are 'transphobic' if they 'misname' pupils or teachers who are presenting as the opposite sex.

It is particularly troubling as more than 60% of CoE schools are primary schools, meaning that teachers are being advised to affirm children aged 4-11 years old as gay, lesbian, bisexual, non-binary or transgender.

We are extremely concerned that the Church of England does not recognise that biological sex is immutable and is advising teachers to tell children that 'sex is assigned at birth'. Sex is not 'assigned at birth' like some kind of magical Harry Potter sorting hat - it is determined at conception, observed in utero and recorded at birth. These are biological, unchangeable facts and no teacher should be lying to children that it is possible to be 'born in the wrong body.'

We are also appalled that the CoE guidance suggests that schools should "create safe spaces for LGBT+ children", which in practice will mean the creation of LGBT+ lunchtime clubs. We already know that activist school staff use such groups to groom children into believing that they are transgender and often operate without the knowledge or consent of parents.

The guidance also suggests that staff should be provided with training on LGBT+ topics and terminology, which means that outside providers (such as Mermaids) will be invited into schools to indoctrinate staff about these issues. Coercing both staff and children into believing contested gender

both staff and children into believing contested gender ideology as fact is not only wrong but extremely harmful, especially in light of the Cass Review.

Sexualising children blurs the boundaries between adult and children and puts them at risk of becoming victims of abuse – something that surely the Church of England does not want to repeat considering the Makin report?

Archbishop Welby has refused to resign despite acknowledging his role in failing to investigate child abuse, insisting that the way in which the Church of England engages with victims and survivors of sexual abuse had "changed beyond recognition".

However, we would argue that '*Flourishing for All'* and its focus on pushing LGBT+ concepts onto young children promotes non-contact child abuse. Adults who involve children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse are arguably just as guilty of harming children as those who physically abuse children.

Archbishop Welby has apologised for the "the wickedness, concealment and abuse by the church more widely, as set out in the report". Why then can he not realise that his own anti-bullying document for schools is a vehicle to expose children to yet more wickedness and leave them vulnerable to becoming victims of sexual and emotional abuse?

It gives a completely different spin on the phrase "changed beyond recognition" when the very necessary efforts towards safeguarding by the Church of England are undermined by the promotion of deeply contested ideologies in CoE schools encouraging exposure of children to sexual matters way before their time along with little or no transparency to parents.

We urge our supporters who are members of the Church of England to write to Archbishop Welby to ask him to withdraw

this guidance, as it not only poses a safeguarding risk to children but is also completely unnecessary. Children should be taught that **all** bullying is wrong without drawing attention to adult sexuality and contested ideas about gender identity before they are old enough to understand what this means.

Do let me know your thoughts!

Can you help us continue our vital work into protecting the natural family? A donation of just £5 can help us with our research and raising awareness of the importance of the marriage and the family unit in raising resilient and healthy children.

With very best wishes,
Lucy