

## **Appropriate Adult not present during most strip searches of children.**



### **Public protest in support of child Q, see further below.**

In our news article dated 8<sup>th</sup> March 2023 we referred to a *Freedom of Information* response dated 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2023 from the Isle of Man Constabulary which disturbingly revealed that on average **17 children per year** have been subject to strip searches on the Island over the last 5 years.

We subsequently submitted a further FOI request in relation to whether such strip searches of children (where the child's clothing is removed and a police officer performs an intimate search of bodily cavities such as vagina and anus) were carried out in the presence of an appropriate adult and whether any items of interest were actually found.

By a FOI response dated 27<sup>th</sup> March 2023, the answers to our questions are as follows:-

i) Appropriate Adult

Out of 86 strip searches of children (persons under the age of 17) on the IOM in the years 2018 to 2022, only 26 were conducted in the presence of a parent or appropriate adult. Alarming, this means that in 70% of cases there was **no** parent or appropriate adult present during the child's strip search.

ii) Articles Found

Out of such 86 strip searches of children, items were only found on **8** occasions. Significantly, this means that 91% of searches did not find any items of interest.

See link below for full FOI response.

<https://www.ik.im/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/27.03.23-Appropriate-Adult-not-present-during-most-strip-searches-of-children.pdf>

The deeply personal and sensitive issue of strip-searching of children was recently highlighted in a report by the *Children's Commissioner* of England and Wales, Dame Rachel De Souza.



**Dame Rachel De Souza, Children's Commissioner of England and Wales.**

Dame De Souza found that children as young as 8 years old were strip searched and some searches had actually been carried out in the back of Police vans and even in fast food outlets.

In the case of **Child Q**, a 15 year old black girl was strip searched at school while on her menstrual period. Additionally, such search was carried out without any parent or appropriate adult present.

Dame De Souza stated that the data and statistics she had requested and been supplied from Scotland Yard revealed evidence of "*deeply concerning practice*".

See link below to BBC feature on Dame De Souza's report.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-65081765>