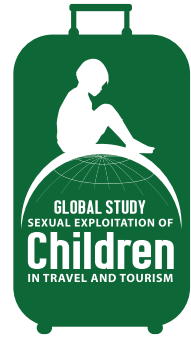


EXPERT PAPER

A CASE STUDY

WEST MERCIA POLICE
NCA CRIME AGENCY
CHILD EXPLOITATION & ONLINE
PROTECTION CENTRE (CEOP)



A case study depicting a situation whereby a foreigner enters the country, establishing him/herself and starts or runs an orphanage or school for children with the intent to use the establishment as a front to gain access to children to sexually abuse or exploit them.



Simon Harris is a British national. In the late 1980's he left a teaching post in the UK following allegations of sexual assault by students. Simon Harris travelled to Kenya where he set up a second home, he became a Trustee of Harambee Schools Kenya¹, a charity engaged in the building of schools. He also set up VAE Kenya², an unregistered charity placing UK 'gap year' students in local schools to teach and providing funding to place street children into schools. Simon Harris worked closely with and in the local schools and with the street community, many of whom believed they would gain places in the schools.



Simon Harris spent his time travelling between the UK and Kenya. In 2009, Simon Harris returned to the UK and in a separate investigation he was convicted of possessing indecent images of children³. He was prevented from returning to Kenya by order of the UK Courts but subsequently, successfully overturned this.



Simon Harris again returned to Kenya and in 2013, following disclosures by a street child to a television documentary team looking at the plight of street children, a UK based investigation by West Mercia Police and the National Crime Agencies Child Exploitation and Online Protection Command began in relation to the sexual exploitation of the street children Simon Harris was working with. This was carried out in Kenya under UK legislation.

Simon Harris was convicted in 2014 and sentenced to 17 years and 4 months⁴. To date 40 Kenyan victims have come forward and his offending is known to have spanned 30 years⁵.

© Jointly National Crime Agency, CEOP and West Mercia Police, UK (2015)

1 www.hsk.org.uk

2 VAE has now removed the links to its web site but references can still be found by internet searches.

3 Convicted at Worcester Crown Court and subject to public record.

4 Convicted at Birmingham Crown Court and subject to public record.

5 Investigative Case File Records held by West Mercia Police.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Detective Inspector Jonathan Roberts

Detective Inspector Jonathan Roberts has twenty years experience as a police officer, the last ten as a Detective Inspector and Senior Investigating Officer in the UK. He works as part of the Protecting Vulnerable People Team within West Mercia Police and is currently leading a project to deliver shared safeguarding services across a number of partnerships for the protection of adults and children.

Protecting Vulnerable People Unit
Protective Services Command
West Mercia Police
Phone: 101 Ext 61226
E-mail: jonathan.roberts@westmercia.pnn.police.uk

Detective Sergeant Kelvin Lay

Detective Sergeant Kelvin Lay has 28 years experience as a Police Officer, the vast majority as an investigator. For the last 8 years he has been seconded from Northamptonshire Police to the National Crime Agencies Child Exploitation and Online Protection Command conducting online and offline investigations around serious and complex child exploitation cases. Kelvin has worked extensively in Africa and South East Asia specialising in the extra territorial prosecution of British Nationals who offend against children overseas.

Kelvin Lay Operation Team Leader - Specialist Advice - Investigations
CEOP Command - National Crime Agency
Desk 0207 238 1770 Mobile 07500 032104
Email kelvin.lay@nca-ceop.gsi.gov.uk