



**Making every child matter ... everywhere**

**Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre**

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Tony Bennett  
The Madeleine Foundation  
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16<sup>th</sup> July 2010

Dear Mr Bennett

Thank you for your letter of 3<sup>rd</sup> May. I would like to highlight that the Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre is not covered by FOI legislation, because it is an affiliate of the Serious Organised Crime Agency. This response is therefore not submitted under the provisions of that Act. Notwithstanding that we do try to operate as openly as we can and I think I can address most of the issues you have raised in your letter.

Your first point refers to the sexualisation of children and the appropriateness of the photo released by the McCanns of Madeleine. The issue you raise is a broad and complex one which is not central to CEOP's remit, and the judgement of the appropriateness of an individual photo is a subjective one. I am of course aware of the emerging findings in academia relating to the sexualisation of children and we follow this research and trends in this area. However, I would be keen to emphasise that in our experience adult perpetrators who abuse children do so in the knowledge that what they are doing is wrong. While some mainstream images of children may rightly be considered as sexualised this should not be seen as something that can account for or explain the serious sexual violence against children that we deal with on a daily basis. The broader implications of sexualising children should be taken seriously but this is not an issue where CEOP has a clear role and remit.

I will now turn to your specific numbered points:

1. CEOP has a range of legal powers at its disposal. Some of our staff are police officers and others enjoy designated powers as SOCA staff, under the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act, 2005. We also have seconded NSPCC social workers who have their own social work powers.
2. Please have a look at our website for more background on this; but in essence, we ask the public to report all crimes directly to their local police force. We ask children to report suspicious or concerning behaviour to us if it is within our remit. On other matters (such as cyber-bullying, mobile problems, hacking and so on) we signpost to other agencies that can provide help, support and advice.
3. CEOP will always report crime to the local police force concerned. Most of our investigatory activity is in support of local forces. We do have a capability to lead

investigations and will do so in appropriate cases. These are generally more complex in terms of the scale of their networks and geography.

4. None – as previously stated the sexualisation of children is outside of the remit of CEOP's work. I would like to refer you to the recent report into the Sexualisation of Children by Dr Linda Papadopoulos and campaign by the Home Office.
5. Our current full complement is 125.
6. Including support in kind from partners, CEOP cost £10.654m in 2009-10. In addition, SOCA provides support services to a value of approximately £3.4m.
7. In particular, I would refer you to the Most Wanted website - [www.ceop.police.uk/wanted](http://www.ceop.police.uk/wanted) - which we use to encourage the public to help us track down absconded offenders. We are successful in some 80% of cases. We do not specifically alert children to the threat these people pose as we view this as alarmist and ineffective. Rather, we have found our broader education and awareness raising campaigns to empower children to better protect themselves, particularly online, to be more effective. Our key safety messages in these campaigns have reached over 6 million children and young people in the UK,
8. No.

There is one other matter I must raise with you. I notice that your website features the CEOP logo, with a link to our website. I have to point out that we do not allow the use of our logo without our permission. I would therefore be grateful if you would ensure its removal forthwith. You can register interest in adopting our logo at [ceop.police.uk/assetregister](http://ceop.police.uk/assetregister).

I would like to thank you for taking an interest in CEOP and in particular for the words of support in your letter. Finally, I'm delighted to enclose a copy of our recently published Annual Review for 2009-10.

Many thanks



**Jim Gamble QPM**  
**Chief Executive**