



Totley Primary School
Sunnyvale Road
Totley
Sheffield
S17 4FB

0114 2364 482)
enquiries@totley.sheffield.sch.uk ✉
www.totley.sheffield.sch.uk 🌐

Headteacher: Mr Ben Paxman
Chair of Governors: Mr Alex Munro

Tuesday 14th September 2021

Dear parents and carers,

It has been brought to my attention that a BBC Documentary is going to air on Monday 20th September titled, 'Nowhere to Run: Abused by Our Coach.' In the programme, the well-known journalist, Charlie Webster, explores distressing events from her past which cover a period of time in the 1990s and possibly into the early 2000s when Charlie and some of her fellow members of a local junior athletics club were abused by their coach as teenagers.

This is clearly a most upsetting story in its own right. The reason I am contacting you is that the coach in question, Paul North, was employed as a caretaker at Totley Primary School during this time. Without the knowledge of school, North, who lived as caretaker on site, committed some crimes in the school grounds and buildings.

He was convicted after some of his victims spoke out and in 2002, was sentenced to 10 years in prison. I have been informed that North is now located outside of the region.

It is truly horrendous to think that such appalling abuse happened in the past, and in our community. We have huge admiration for the bravery that Charlie and the other victims have shown in telling their stories and we stand by them in support.

As a school, we are fully committed to ensuring the highest standards of care and safeguarding for our children and school community through rigorous systems, policies and procedures. This includes undertaking extensive background checks of all adults who work closely with children. We constantly strive for a genuine culture of safeguarding in which children are empowered to speak out and be heard, know how to keep themselves safe and know how and where to get help when they need it. It might be that some of our children, particularly in key stage two, hear about this documentary within the community. If any of our children have any questions, please be assured that we will be prepared to discuss these with them at an age appropriate level.

Whether or not you choose to view the programme, I hope you understand why we felt it necessary to make you aware that it is going to be broadcast. If you wish to discuss any of the issues raised in the programme or have any questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely,

Ben Paxman - Headteacher

