On 2nd of February 2015 I received a call on my mobile whilst at work from the M.A.S.H team saying they had had a safeguard issue raised against my daughter Amelia.

The safeguard was that Amelia (2) was at my mother’s house with my nephew Levi (1), when a friend of my sister Izobel (12) who was also present, said my brother Cameron (26, and also Levi’s father) had asked for the girls ‘to take the kids out of the room so he could do some drugs’ this was an anonymous report and no date or time was given.

Levi is currently under a supervision order involving his mother and does not leave with brother. My mother is having problems getting her to girls Sophie (13) and Izobel (12) to go to school and is working with the Kingfisher group.

I have been working full-time since the beginning of October, and my mother was helping out with looking after Amelia temporarily whilst I was organising permanent childcare. My partner and I had been to Belfast for 2 weeks over Christmas to visit his family and decided to privately pay for Amelia to go to nursery 3 afternoons a week (1pm-6pm Monday, Tuesday & Thursday) and I also had been given authorisation to work from home on Friday’s. My Partner is also a bricklayer and has a lot of rain days over the winter period so there have been days where she has stayed with her Dad if he is off.

Cameron works full-time as a painter a decorator, and Izobel does attend school some of the time. Also as Levi has a supervision order so it would be easy to prove this allegation was not true if we could be provided with a rough date and preferably a time, as with all of the factors the chances of all of those being present was highly unlikely. When I explained this to the M.A.S.H team, they said I was more interested in protecting my mother than safeguarding my child, which simply wasn’t true but I explaining it was an untrue allegation, I have asked to see the report this has never been sent.

Whilst on the phone discussing the above issue, they said they had another report come in, this time by a professional. On Thursday 29th January 10.10am my mother attended a meeting at the school, the Kingfisher Group where waiting for her unannounced she had Amelia with her (which I was aware, as my mother said she would need to take Amelia with her). On the way into the school the Amelia bumped her head on a glass door, she didn’t cry but my mother didn’t notice so they raised a safeguard against her. I said to the M.A.S.H worker that there was no evidence of a bump on her head when she came home that evening.

The M.A.S.H team contacted my partner and said our daughter was at risk, there are things going on in my mother’s house that they cannot tell us about but that our child is in danger.

The M.A.S.H were not happy that I asked for more information as I am aware that anyone can contact them, and I would like to qualify the information. They became very agitated with me and only ever contacted my partner from then on.

We gave authorisation for the M.A.S.H team to contact all the necessary departments and provide the necessary checks with the nursery, my Health visitor, doctor etc.

As parents we decided that although my mum would never intentionally harm Amelia, she was probably overloaded with the issues with her own children and it would be best if I lowered my hours to part-time, Amelia is looked after in the morning by her other nan, and continues to attended nursery in the afternoons, I am at home 5 out of 7 days, and we feel we have acted in a responsible and reasonable way with of course putting Amelia first.

I contacted the M.A.S.H as we didn’t hear anymore and they said we would receive a letter stating they were happy with us and the case was closed, they would also send us copies of the reports, they never came.

I called the M.A.S.H team to let them know we hadn’t seen received this letter or reports once a week for three weeks until finally we received a letter yesterday with no reports. The letter states that -

‘***Following our recent involvement, this letter is to advise you that all relevant welfare checks have been completed and no safeguarding concerned have been raised. Therefore, the decision has been made to close the case regarding your child to the MASH.***

***However, I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate the advice given to you at the time of the closure as follows –***

***Amelia’s case has been closed to the MASH on the understanding that Amelia will longer be left in the sole care of her maternal grandmother. If there are any further reports of Amelia being exposed to risks as a result of being left in the care of her maternal grandmother then we will have to reconsider what intervention is needed to safeguard Amelia’s best interests. I hope this expectation is clear and trust you will abide by this agreement to ensure Amelia’s safety’.***

This is not a true representation of what was discussed or agreed, and we have still not had the reports.

As parents we have moved Amelia’s care as my mother was only a temporary arrangement, what are the implications of this letter?

As although I am happy to commit that Amelia will not be attending my mother’s house for day-care while I am at work again, but I may pop in to visit my mother, or she may come to my house to visit us.

Does this letter mean I cannot leave my child with my mother while I go to the shops?

Or my mother can’t take her to the park?

Is there time limit? As I think this is quite a harsh penalty of not being allowed to be left with Amelia until she is 18 for her allegedly bumping her head and my mother not noticing.

I am also aware that a lot of the information in these departments have are hearsay and based on circumstantial evidence and I want to make sure they have the details surrounding these events detailed correctly.

Do they have an obligation to provide me with the reports that initiated this case?

I am totally dedicated to our daughter’s well being but am mindful about entering into ‘agreements’ or ‘expectations’ that seem unreasonable, when we have totally complied with the department and removed any reasonable risk.