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For Immediate Release

## Foreign Convictions Records Failure is “Giant Breach of Trust” and “Reminiscent of Soham”

The failure to put information on British people convicted in Europe onto the Police National Computer is a “giant breach of the trust” that vulnerable people, schools and charities place in the Home Office and police according to coalition of three learning disability charities that campaign against abuse.

“Children, older people, people with learning disabilities and other vulnerable groups rightly expect that people who are paid to care for them are not convicted killers and rapists. They trust charities, schools and other people who employ their carers to employ people who are not dangerous. These organisations trust that the Criminal Records checks they do will weed out potentially dangerous future employees” said Kathryn Stone, Chief Executive of Voice UK. “For the authorities to mess up the handling of this information is a giant breach of the trust these vulnerable people and organisations put in the Home Office and police.”

“The CRB check is the first line of defence” said Deborah Kitson, Director of the Ann Craft Trust. “An abuser will seek out vulnerable people to abuse and see employment with children or people with learning disabilities as a way to perpetrate that abuse. This gross omission may potentially give the opportunity to many people with previous convictions to gain employment without being checked. This must be rectified as a matter of priority.”

“This reminds me of Soham” said Richard Curen, Director of Respond, “– it’s not that the authorities don’t have the information about a dangerous person; it’s that they mishandle it. The Government recently passed an excellent new law, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act, to prevent something a Soham-like information mistake happening again. Yet, here we are with another failure in handling information about dangerous individuals and so the Government undermines all its own good work. We can only hope that none of these people are now in positions of trust with children or vulnerable adults.”

### Note to Editors

1. Voice UK supports people with learning disabilities and other vulnerable groups who have experienced crime or abuse. We also support their families, carers and professional workers. For further information visit [www.voiceuk.org.uk](http://www.voiceuk.org.uk).
2. The Ann Craft Trust works with staff in the statutory, independent and voluntary sectors to protect people with learning disabilities who may be at risk from abuse. We also provide advice and information to parents and carers who may have concerns about someone they are supporting. For further information visit [www.anncrafttrust.org](http://www.anncrafttrust.org).

3. Respond offers a range of services which provide emotional and psychological support to victims of sexual abuse who have learning disabilities. It also provides training and support to professionals and carers working with them. For further information visit [www.respond.org.uk](http://www.respond.org.uk).
4. Interviews available upon request.

**Contact:**

Robin Van den Hende  
Policy and Campaigns Officer  
Respond, Voice UK, Ann Craft Trust  
020 7874 5486  
[robin.vandenhende@respond.org.uk](mailto:robin.vandenhende@respond.org.uk)