

Instructions to Client (Sarah Maddock)

Name: Sarah Maddock

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You are in your 50s. You left school without any qualifications, and married Kenneth soon after leaving school. You had a daughter, Vicki, in your late teens.

When she was 18, Vicki fell in with a “bad crowd” who you believe introduced her to heroin. A year later Vicki gave birth to Callum Maddock now aged 8. Initially Vicki managed to care for Callum, but after the birth of her second son, Jayden Maddock, now aged 6, Vicki’s difficulties with heroin increased. You ended up looking after both Jayden and Callum.

Jayden and Callum go to the local school in Ruddington, which is about 6 miles from Nottingham. Jayden is now in Year 1, Callum in Year 3. You make a point of always taking the boys to and from school.

Jayden was happy at school when he started, but over the last few weeks he has been saying he has tummy aches in the mornings, and does not want to go to school. You have questioned Jayden, and he eventually told you that a boy in his class, Samuel Wilson, has started calling him names, taking toys and sweets off him, pinches him and pushes him over at every opportunity.

Last Thursday, you went to pick Jayden and Callum up from school as usual. You arrived a little early, and saw Samuel’s mother waiting. You decided to go and speak to her. Your intention was to have a quiet word to see if she would speak to Samuel about his behaviour towards Jayden.

You approached her, and asked for a word. She turned to you, and was immediately confrontational. You calmly began to relate what Jayden had told you. Samuel’s mother immediately began shouting at you, stating that you could not go around making accusations about her son. She kept stepping towards you, causing you to back into the railings at the edge of the playground. You tried to reason with her, but she became more and more irate, waving her arms around, and you thought that she was getting so angry that she would strike you. By now you were backed right up against the railings, so in order to get away you pushed her once, with both hands to her shoulders. You did not mean to push her hard, just to get her to step back to give you opportunity to move away, but she stumbled and fell over backwards. She immediately held her elbow, shouting that she was going to get you “done for assault”, and shouting for someone to call the police. By now a crowd had gathered, the children had come out of school and you just wanted to get away, so you just took Jayden and Callum home.

The police came to your house at 10 o’clock the next morning. You were arrested on suspicion of assaulting Sandi Wilson (Samuel’s mother) and taken to the police station where you were interviewed.

When you arrived at the police station you were told that you were entitled to have someone informed that you had been arrested. You asked for Kenneth to be told. You were allowed to speak to Kenneth on the phone. Kenneth told you not to say anything to the police without a lawyer present. You were very anxious that you did not want to be delayed as you wanted to make sure that you were out of the police station in time to pick the boys up from school. You told Kenneth that you could not wait for a lawyer, and he told you to say "no comment" in answer to all questions. He said that was what his friends always did. You took his advice believing that his friends knew best how to deal with the police.

After the interview there was a short wait while the officer spoke to someone from the CPS. You were then charged and bailed to appear at court next week. You were given a charge sheet.

There were witnesses to the incident at the school. You think some of those present were Sandi's friends, but when you went to pick the boys up from school yesterday two mothers approached you and told you they had seen what happened. They said that they thought Sandi had overreacted when you first went up to her, and that they had thought she was going to strike you before you pushed her. They have told you that Sandi's family are always in trouble with the police, and that some of her children have ASBOs.