

## **Press Release**

7 March 2017

### **IRISH FOSTER CARE ASSOCIATION WELCOMES CABINET APPROVAL FOR 'GRACE' CASE INQUIRY TERMS OF REFERENCE**

#### **Vital that inquiry is speedy, thorough and leaves no stone unturned**

The Irish Foster Care Association (IFCA) welcomes today's Cabinet decision to approve terms of reference for a Commission of Inquiry into the 'Grace' case which relates to allegations of abuse at a foster home in the South East. IFCA's CEO, Catherine Bond said that it's vital that the inquiry be speedy and thorough.

"We understand from reports that the Government has appointed Senior Counsel Marjorie Farrelly to lead the investigation and IFCA very much welcomes this. Speaking on behalf of the country's dedicated foster carers – who carry out invaluable work on behalf of the Irish State providing loving, safe homes for our most vulnerable children – I think it is vital that the inquiry proceeds thoroughly and speedily and leaves no stone unturned in getting to the truth," Catherine Bond said.

"It will also be important that the placement history of each child placed in the foster care home be reviewed, to ensure that all other children in the foster home were safe".

"It is essential that whatever we learn from this Inquiry is acted upon to ensure that the rights of children in care are fully vindicated by the State. In particular, we need to ensure that the resources required are put in place to ensure that all children in foster care get the social work support they require and that all foster carers are fully assessed, trained, supported and supervised throughout their time as carers."

Catherine Bond concluded by saying that it's important to bear in mind that the vast majority of foster care placements are proving to be successful with the young people concerned going on to lead full and active lives.

#### **Notes to Editors**

IFCA is the support, learning and advocacy organisation for foster care in Ireland. It provides support to all involved in foster care through our Helpline (01 458 5123) that runs every week day from 11am – 3pm.

#### **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT:**

Catherine Bond 086 -0425279