

From: 
To: [sentencingcouncil](https://www.sentencingcouncil.org.uk/)
Subject: Anonymous submission against Good Character in Sentencing
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Children and sex do not belong in the same sentence. In the same way, perpetrators of child sexual abuse and the term “good character” do not belong together. They simply do not relate. They are irrelevant to one another.

What defines good character? The majority of humans can be argued to be good in character as a general notion of their being, but how should that excuse them from the full force of the law? Do we consider the “good character” or a murderer before deciding their sentence? Some would argue that you can’t compare the crime of murder to that of child sexual abuse. The crimes differ, but the concept of considering a perpetrator of either crimes’ character is ridiculous and irrelevant. If the sexual abuse had occurred adult to adult, would a consideration of character be relevant? No. Neither should it when the crime is committed against a powerless, innocent child.

A child subjected to sexual activity of any form is abuse. A fundamental breach of human rights. A child suffers unimaginable loss of innocence, trust and power over their own body and self at the hands of an adult crime. An act of selfish sin. Such loss has huge impacts on a child’s life, both as they experience childhood, and as they grown into adulthood. So many victims of child sexual abuse suffer long term poor mental health as a result of their abusers. Put yourself in their shoes for a moment and imagine the impact it would have if it happened to you or a child close to you.

I urge you to consider the immense power and privilege you have in having the opportunity to remove the consideration of a perpetrators “character” when sentencing on crimes of child sexual abuse. Punishment should deter people from committing sexual crime against children and as such should not be lessened by considerations of character irrelevant to the crime committed.