Children's Panel member exposed as predator who posed as teenage girl to get boys to perform sex acts over webcam

17 Feb 2013 00:01

BRIAN McMENEMY, 47, who worked with homeless teenagers and volunteered on the Children's Panel, hid his true identity from teenage boys by claiming his webcam wasn't working.

Brian McMenemy appeared at Glasgow Sheriff Court

A MEMBER of the Children's Panel posed as a teenage girl to groom unsuspecting boys on the internet.

Brian McMenemy, 47, worked with homeless teenagers and was also a Children's Panel volunteer helping shape the future of some of Scotland's most vulnerable kids.

But, secretly, he was contacting 13 and 14-year-old boys over Facebook before asking them to perform sex acts for his character "Jade" over their webcams.

McMenemy – who was deputy manager of Quarriers' teenage homeless project Stopover – was stopped when a victim's mum became suspicious about a chat log. Police discovered a string of young victims duped by him.

He posed as Jade to speak to one 18-year-old male in his care – although that did not include any sex talk.

Claude Knights, director of child abuse charity Kidscape, said: "This is a very disturbing crime indeed.

"One of the worst elements of this is the betrayal of the offices that he was meant to be representing.

"He was a person with authority and responsibility and he has completely breached the trust put in him."

Scottish Conservative chief whip John Lamont said: "There's a robust system for checking the background of people who are in posts of authority but sometimes individuals will slip through that, - particularly if they've never aroused suspicion in the past. It's critical the punishment meted out is firm, leaving anyone else considering such actions in no doubt as to the severity of the consequences."

McMenemy created the Facebook page in the name of fake 17-year-old blonde Jade in May 2011.

He added a 14-year-old boy as a friend and they began chatting via MSN instant messaging. McMenemy steered the conversation to sex and on one occasion persuaded the boy to perform a sex act on his - webcam.

McMenemy hid his true identity by claiming his webcam wasn't working.

The teenager's mum later discovered the chat log between her son and the fictitious Jade and contacted police.

The email address was traced to McMenemy's home computer.

This led police to McMenemy's three other victims – one he befriended on Bebo and two on Facebook.

McMenemy told a 14-year-old who accepted a friend request on Facebook that his webcam was broken but sent him a topless picture supposed to be of Jade.

Another Facebook friend of Jade was a male that McMenemy knew and was caring for at the time. McMenemy also set up a Bebo account using another email address, which led police to a 13-year-old victim. The boy also spoke to McMenemy via MSN but didn't perform any sex acts or send any pictures of himself that were requested.

McMenemy pleaded guilty at Glasgow Sheriff Court to lewd, indecent and libidinous practices towards a 13-year-old between July 2008 and July 2009.

He also admitted two charges of pretending to be Jade and inducing two 14-year-olds to commit sex acts via webcams and hold sexual conversations from January 2011 to February 2012.

The pervert also admitted talking to a fourth male by pretending to be the teenage girl. Sheriff Martin Jones QC deferred sentencing until next month.

Glasgow-based Stopover, where McMenemy worked – provide supported accommodation for 14 young single homeless people aged 16 to 25.

Quarriers said: "As a result of the guilty plea, disciplinary proceedings will now be expedited without further delay.

"We take the safeguarding of the people we support extremely seriously and carry out all appropriate checks including police checks on all staff."

A Scottish Government spokesman said: "All Panel members are subject to appropriate Disclosure - Scotland background checks prior to being fully appointed and do not have unsupervised access to children."