

Nottinghamshire Police Criticised Over Handling of Disability Abuse Case

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— Categories: Human Rights



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A Nottinghamshire mother has strongly criticised the police after her disabled daughter was subjected to a verbal attack at a McDonald's drive-thru and received only what the family described as a “second-hand apology” following a lengthy police investigation.

Jasmine Currie, 22, who lives with TUBa1a-associated tubulinopathy, a rare genetic condition affecting neurological function, was left visibly distressed after being verbally

abused at the Sutton-in-Ashfield McDonald's on 5 May. She had been in the car with her carer, Jodi Haycox, when a male passenger in another vehicle began hurling ableist insults.

Her mother, Louise Grafton, said she was appalled by the way the situation was handled. "It's disgusting and farcical," said the 48-year-old. "If it had been a racial crime, it would've been taken more seriously. They've not even had their wrists slapped."

The incident, categorised by Nottinghamshire Police as a hate crime, resulted in no charges or direct consequences. Officers were able to identify the driver of the white SEAT Ibiza involved, but he refused to name the passenger accused of launching the abuse. Instead, he offered a verbal apology on behalf of the man, which was later relayed to the victim.

Inspector Chris Boylin, district commander for Ashfield, stated: "CCTV was obtained and staff were spoken to, but the nature of the comments could not be verified. Despite repeated attempts to obtain a written apology, none was forthcoming."

He added that officers made a follow-up call and offered support services. "There is absolutely no place for hate in any of its forms in our communities and we remain committed to tackling this kind of behaviour."

Carer Jodi Haycox, 35, described the incident as deeply upsetting. In a recent interview, she explained how a simple mistake pulling slightly ahead of the other vehicle triggered a hostile and abusive outburst. "He used vile words, including a disgusting ableist slur. Jasmine was really emotional. I told her she's none of the things they said," Ms Haycox said.

While she expressed gratitude to the officer who took the time to write a personal letter to Jasmine explaining the outcome, she felt the overall handling fell short. "It's unacceptable. Jasmine already suffers from anxiety and depression. My heart was breaking for her."

Ms Haycox, who works in the local care sector, added that verbal abuse towards disabled individuals in Ashfield appeared to be on the rise. "There's hardly a day when someone doesn't make a comment in public. Some people walk by and say things like 'that's disgusting'. It's cruel and there's absolutely no need for it."