

PCC upholds complaint over funeral coverage

The Press Complaints Commission has today upheld a complaint against the Bristol Evening Post under Clause 5 of the Editors' Code of Practice (Intrusion into grief or shock), over a report about the funeral of a young man who had sadly taken his own life.

The article was published the day after the funeral. It included details taken from the order of service as well as messages taken from flowers that had been left outside. It was accompanied by photographs of mourners that the newspaper's photographer had taken from outside the crematorium, despite the fact that he had been asked to leave by the undertaker on behalf of the family. The complainant - the young man's mother - found the coverage distressing and intrusive. The newspaper argued that cremations were public events and that the photographer - who, it said, had behaved sensitively throughout - had left as soon as he had been asked to. It claimed that it did not know that the family did not wish for any photographs to be published subsequently, but offered to publish an apology to the family for the distress it had caused.

The Commission ruled that the newspaper's behaviour "was not appropriate in the context of this untimely and tragic death". Although it had regard to the wider importance of the role of newspapers reporting tragic events such as funerals, the young age and manner in which the complainant's son had died was of particular importance in this case. Parents grieving for the loss of their child in these circumstances, it ruled, "should not have to be concerned about the behaviour of journalists, or the likelihood that details of the funeral would be covered without their consent". It said that the newspaper "should have taken steps to establish the parents' wishes before sending a photographer and a journalist to the funeral".

The complaint was upheld as a result.

To read the adjudication, which will be published by the newspaper today, please [click here](#).

ENDS

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