

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE
QUEEN'S BENCH DIVISION
B E T W E E N:

CAROLINE WHITMORE

- and -

NEWS GROUP NEWSPAPERS LTD

STATEMENT IN COURT

Solicitor for Caroline Whitmore, Julia Varley: My Lord, I appear for Mrs Caroline Whitmore. Mrs Whitmore is the Entertainment Correspondent for ITV Granada. She reports regularly on showbiz issues, specialising in stories from the North West of England where she is based.

On 21 July 2012 Mrs Whitmore interviewed the popular boy band One Direction who were due to perform at the Echo Arena in Liverpool that evening. The interview was broadcast on Granada Reports on 23 July. During the interview, Mrs Whitmore was greeted by members of the band including Harry Styles, who gave her a kiss on either cheek.

Harry Styles has recently been the subject of a great deal of media coverage over alleged relationships with older women. He is 18 years old and was recently alleged to have dated another TV presenter who also happens to be called Caroline as well as a second woman. Both are aged 32.

Following the interview, in the Bizarre column of The Sun dated 23 July, an article was published under the headline "Harry and cougar No 3", referring to Mr Styles' interview by Mrs Whitmore. The Sun has stated that the article was intended as light hearted. However, some readers seemingly understood that in referring to Mrs Whitmore as a "cougar" and linking her to Mr Styles, the newspaper was seeking to suggest she had behaved inappropriately by pursuing a relationship with a considerably younger man, notwithstanding her being a married woman. The Sun has stated that no such meaning was intended.

Such reading was particularly damaging and distressing to Mrs Whitmore, since she has been with her husband for 17 years and married for the last two. The article has also been repeated and expanded upon widely by the worldwide media. As a result, Mrs Whitmore has been the subject of abuse on the internet, including on her Twitter page.

This matter has now been promptly and amicably resolved with The Sun, without the need for proceedings to be issued. The Sun on 25 September published an apology and has agreed a settlement with Mrs Whitmore. Other terms of redress including payment of her costs have also been agreed.

In these circumstances, Mrs Whitmore is pleased to record that the matter is now resolved.

I am grateful to your Lordship.