

# Police reveal suspect as hunt for three-year-old Madeleine widens

Detectives searching for Madeleine McCann, the three-year-old British girl abducted while on a family holiday in Portugal, have identified a suspect.

Using information from 30 potential witnesses, the police said they have put together a sketch of the person they believe snatched the girl from her bed. Offering her parents a glimmer of hope, officers also said they believed Madeleine was still alive yesterday and being held within three miles of the Mark Warner Luz Ocean resort on the Algarve. 'It's more than hope. It's a distinct feeling of elation,' said Madeleine's aunt, Philomena McCann, about how the family reacted to the news. The last few days had been like a 'rollercoaster', she added.

Last night Madeleine's father Gerry McCann, in a breaking voice, thanked everyone in [Portugal](#) and the UK for their support during what was 'an extremely difficult time for the family.

'The police family liaison officers from Leicestershire are working closely with police and keeping us informed. We have no further information regarding the investigation,' he said.

They both appreciated the 'significant efforts' being made to find their daughter. The statement came exactly 48 hours after Madeleine was found missing. Mr McCann held his wife Kate tightly and gave her a kiss as they went back to their apartment.

Earlier, the couple, both doctors from Leicestershire, spoke of their 'anguish and despair' since their daughter disappeared on Thursday. They had left her and their twin two year olds, Amelie and Sean, at their apartment in the Praia da Luz resort while they ate at a restaurant 100 metres away.

A colleague of Madeleine mother was last night reported to have offered a \$100,000 reward for information leading to the toddler's recovery.

Guilhermino Encarnacao, director of the judicial police in the Faro region, faced reporters yesterday in the first official briefing about the case. He said officers were working on the assumption that Madeleine was being held between three and five kilometres from the resort.

In response to criticism that the police were slow to act, Encarnacao said officers had reached the apartment 10 minutes after being called and launched an investigation within 30 minutes.

Earlier yesterday some family members were highly critical of the police. 'My brother is at his wits' end,' said Philomena McCann. 'They've just played it down from the minute he approached them.'

Police, dogs and dozens of holidaymakers joined the search on the first night. Among them were Paul and Susan Moyes, who have been visiting the resort for six years and own property there. 'It would normally be very safe,' said Paul.

Some witnesses have suggested that a couple were seen carrying a child near the road that runs by the apartment.