

Alleged Arson at Home of Russian Teacher Accused of Abusive Homework

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A Russian elementary school teacher who was investigated for child abuse after assigning difficult homework has accused arsonists of setting fire to her home, the Interfax news agency reported Friday.

Tatiana Porseva's cottage near the town of Zlatoust in the Chelyabinsk region burnt down Thursday evening, Interfax reported.

The 55-year old teacher told onlookers at the scene that the fire has been caused by arson but was unable to say who had committed the crime, eyewitness Alexei Kazantsev told Interfax.

The local fire department are investigating and believe that the blaze could have been caused by a lightning strike. The exact cause of the fire will be determined within ten to 14 days.

The Chelyabinsk Prosecutor's Office opened a criminal case against on charges of child abuse on May 10. An investigation had found that Porseva was assigning homework consistently too difficult for her class of seven-year-olds, humiliating students embarrassing nicknames if they received poor grades. The charges were later dropped.

The teacher, who has been working at the same school for 30 years, denied all the charges.

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