

living away from school “falls outside the scope of this Department’s statutory powers”.

62. On 12 October 2010, the Minister of State for Schools, Nick Gibb, wrote to the Charity Commission (PJ/2/12/87-88) asking them to intervene on the issue of individuals residing within the monastery when they were subject to allegations of misconduct relating to safeguarding, or convicted of wrongdoing. This was in reference to the issue of [RC-F41] and I recall drafting this letter for the Minister and discussing the issue with him. At the time, independent schools were governed by a set of standards that did not include any criteria relating to management, governance and leadership. We had consulted on acquiring these powers in 2002, but there had been significant opposition, so this proposal has not yet been implemented. The problems at Ealing Abbey had been created in large part by the absence of effective leadership but we had no means of requiring the Trust to change its governance and leadership. This is the reason that the Minister had set out his opinion in the letter of 16 July 2010 but stopped short of requiring the Abbey to remove monks from the Abbey. The Abbey’s solicitors knew that we lacked the necessary powers.

63. It was for this reason that the Minister sought help from the Charity Commission who were the regulator for the Abbey Trust and possessed powers to tackle ineffective leadership and management.

64. I am afraid that I cannot recall the contents of the reply we received. I have a hazy recollection that the Charity Commission and school wanted to wait for Lord Carlile’s recommendations before making reforms. I also recall the school working hard to find alternative accommodation for [RC-F41], whose health was failing.

Question 13: Please provide any observations Ms Jones may have on the role of interested members of the public in safeguarding, and what opportunities and/or difficulties such interest can create. See for example observations made by her at point 7 (‘other contacts’) in a note of a meeting with Lord Carlile attended by Ms Jones, and others, on 11 January 2011 (ISI000180).

65. It is helpful for interested members of the public to let us have their views – it certainly helps the police and others by alerting them to potential problems and giving lines of enquiry.