

An advice file was sent to the CPS who decided there was insufficient evidence to charge. The matter was NFA'd.

CRIS [DPA] - OIC DS MORGAN

In June 2010 [RC-A601] contacted Northwood CAIT as a result of publicity regarding the conviction of Fr David PEARCE and a blog belonging to a Jonathan WEST. [RC-A601] was a former pupil of St Benedict's School and alleged that he had been spanked on the bottom in a sexual way by Fr Lawrence SOPER when he was in charge of the Middle School in the early 1980s. Fr Lawrence had also made him pull down his trousers exposing his naked bottom after the spanking. He told his parents, but they did nothing about the allegation. Arrangements were made for West Yorkshire Police to ABE interview [RC-A601]

Fr Lawrence was contacted in Rome and arrangements were made for him to attend Heathrow Police Station in September 2010 where was arrested and interviewed regarding the allegation made by [RC-A601]. He stated he was the Master in charge of discipline in the Middle School from 1979 and 1983 and would either use corporal punishment or other methods e.g. detention for disciplining children. He stated that he would not touch the boys' buttocks and would not cane the boys on their bare backsides except on two occasions. Once on the instructions of the boy's parents after he stole from the school and, secondly, as a last resort for a boy who was continually being naughty. He couldn't recall the names of the boys. He was bailed pending further enquiries.

In November 2001 [RC-A600], a former pupil at St Benedict's, contacted Northwood CAIT regarding abuse he had suffered at the hands of Fr Lawrence in the early 1980s. He had discovered on the Internet that there had been previous allegations arising from St Benedict's and had also contacted Jonathan WEST through his blog. He was interviewed by Devon & Cornwall Police and alleged he visited Fr Lawrence after minor incidents in class. He was made to bend over a desk and Fr Lawrence pulled down his trousers and underwear and felt his buttocks, explaining he was checking to see whether or not [RC-A600] had put anything down his trousers. [RC-A600] apparently pulled his trousers up and then Fr Lawrence caned him hard on his buttocks, 3-4 times, he stated that the force used would cause black and blue welt marks to his buttocks. Immediately after caning him Fr Lawrence would then try to comfort him by stroking his buttocks over his clothing and talking to him about his behaviour.

In January 2011 a further victim, [RC-A591] a former pupil, was interviewed. After an attack by another pupil, he went to see Fr Lawrence who told him to take down his trousers. He then started rubbing his left thigh up and down. And then put his finger under his pants and touched his groin.