

after supper and in the process of naming body parts he stated that he had touched the boy on the penis or testicles. In relation to the second boy he stated that he “could not recall touching him sexually”. He stated that there was a three year age difference between the two boys and that he did not think the younger boy had been present when he had been talking to the older one.

5.1.3 Fr. Peace stated the boy’s mother had subsequently [DPA] and that he had remained a friend of the family until the disclosure of this information. In retrospect he now acknowledges that his behaviour was inappropriate but that it did not seem to be so within the context at the time.

5.2 Whilst a teacher in the Junior School Fr. Pearce was approached by a boy of 9/10 years of age who complained that he was [Sensitive]. [Sensitive] Fr. Pearce states that he felt the boy’s spine over his clothing and there was [Sensitive]. He stated that a few days later the boy returned, stating that he had [Sensitive] [Sensitive]. On this occasion he asked the boy to drop his trousers in order to see what injuries had been sustained, but on seeing nothing he proceeded to inform Social Services who carried out an investigation. He stated that he was then himself made the subject of a police investigation following allegations that he had digitally penetrated the boy. These investigations did not substantiate the complaint, which Fr. Pearce considers most likely to have been instigated by the boy’s father in reprisal for the involvement of the local authorities.

5.3 In 2001 a former pupil made an allegation that whilst in the Junior School he had gone to see Fr. Pearce about a rash on his body (there was no school nurse at the time and as a trained dentist Fr Pearce was considered to be medically informed). It is alleged that Fr. Pearce looked down the boy’s trousers and that there were many other instances of him looking at boys in an inappropriate manner in the changing rooms etc. This pupil stated that there were a number of other ex-pupils who could attest to such inappropriate behaviour on the part of Fr. Pearce. It is understood that these allegations were the subject of a lengthy Police investigation resulting in no prosecution, but an opinion was expressed that Fr. Pearce had “behaved in a highly inappropriate manner”