

- The Governors and Trustees had not been kept properly informed of the situation at the school, and had not done enough to ensure that they were kept informed.

All in all, the criticisms of St. Augustine's Priory School were remarkably similar to those of St. Benedict's School.

#### **High Court injunction**

The school's response to the report was not to immediately ensure that the necessary improvements were made. Instead the school made a complaint against the ISI, sought Judicial Review of the decision in the High Court, and obtained a temporary High Court injunction suppressing publication of the report. The injunction was lifted in February 2011, and the report was published still containing all the criticisms the school complained of. The school's child protection policy has been rewritten, but remains significantly short of good practice, and is arguably still unlawful, in that it remains unclear about mandatory reporting and its definition of "sexual abuse" is worse than useless, it is grossly misleading.

#### **Actions of Abbot Martin Shipperlee**

In all these matters, Abbot Martin Shipperlee has been obstructive. The measures he has taken have always been the most minimal ones possible, and only when forced on him by outside events. He has told untruths in public about the situation. He has shown no apparent interest in finding out how many victims in total there may have been at the school. He undoubtedly knows a great deal about the allegations of past abuses. He was Abbot Lawrence Soper's immediate successor as Abbot, and before that he was Father David Pearce's immediate successor as headmaster of the junior school. It is inconceivable that he knew nothing at the time of the reason that Pearce resigned as Junior School Headteacher, and yet in 2010 in a radio interview on the BBC, he stated that he first became officially aware of Pearce's activities in 2005, 12 years later. He has on more than one occasion refused to meet me to discuss these matters, even when Mr. Peter Turner has attempted to arrange the meeting.

I have attempted to raise the issue with Archbishop Vincent Nichols, but he has indicated that he has no power to intervene, since although Ealing Abbey is geographically within the Diocese of Westminster, organisationally it is not, being a house of the English Benedictine Congregation.

#### **Request for action**

Given all these facts, it is my firm belief that abuse has been occurring at Ealing Abbey and St. Benedict's School for many decades. Due to the continuing shortcomings in the school's child protection policy and the obstructiveness of the Abbot, it is possible that abuse is still continuing undetected or unreported, though I have no certain knowledge of this.

I believe also that the monastic community at Ealing Abbey is incapable of reforming itself under its present leadership, and that unless and until it is reformed, there remains a high risk that further abuses of children may occur there. In addition, it appears that at least one priest has been permitted to conduct Mass in public, despite having been placed on restrictive covenant barring him from any public ministry. Therefore, I request that there be an intervention from the highest levels within the Church. It seems to me that an Apostolic Visitation might be an appropriate response to the situation, to ensure the safety of the children of the schools and of the parish.

I have a substantial quantity of documentation which I can provide to you in support of the points I have made in this letter. I have already provided several hundred pages of documents to Lord Carlile for his inquiry, and I would be happy to provide them to you, or to any Apostolic Visitation or other inquiry the Church might set up. I would also be happy to meet with you and to discuss these issues so that you can be in the best possible position to know how to proceed.

Yours sincerely

**DPA**

Jonathan West