

ST BENEDICT'S SCHOOL & EALING ABBEY ENQUIRIES

1. Fr. David PEARCE (date of birth [DPA]/1941)

CRIS [DPA] - OIC - DS MORGAN & DC HUDSON

In October 2001 Police were contacted by the Child Protection Co-ordinator for the Archdiocese of Westminster regarding an allegation that Fr David had sexually assaulted a pupil at St Benedict's School in 1984-5. Fr David was the Head of St Benedict's School at the time of the incidents. The victim, [RC-A418] made a statement in which he alleged that Fr David would take the boys to swimming lessons and, after the lesson, would check if the boys were dry by feeling their bodies. He also put his hands down their swimming trunks if a boy lost a locker key. Fr David would also watch boys taking showers and, on occasions, had filmed them. Checks revealed there had been a previous allegation made against Fr David by a schoolboy called [RC-A620] which involved a Police investigation resulting in there being insufficient evidence to proceed. [DPA] refers.

Other ex-pupils were spoken to and similar concerns were raised, although there was a reluctance to make a statement or give evidence. One of the parents spoke to the Abbott, Fr Lawrence SOPER, regarding her concerns. He informed her that he would deal with the matter. Fr Lawrence claimed that the information was vague and the family didn't wish to make a formal complaint. Fr David had been moved to an administrative role and Fr Lawrence hadn't challenged him regarding his behaviour. The present Abbott, Martin SHIPERLEE, stated that Fr David didn't have any unsupervised contact with children.

As a result of the reluctance of [RC-A418] to attend court and give evidence, no further action was taken in this case. Fr David was not interviewed by Police and the case was closed.

[DPA] - OIC DC HUDSON

In January 2004 the victim, [RC-A6] made an allegation that the Head Teacher, Fr David, had sexually abused him when he was a pupil at St Benedict's School in 1990-1. During school he felt faint and was taken to the infirmary where Fr David treated him. Fr David made him take off his trousers and touched his penis. He also alleged that Fr David had filmed the boys in the showers. When his mother had confronted Fr David about the filming, he said the tape had been erased. Among the people [RC-A6] disclosed to was Fr Mark BARRETT who was