

Ealing Abbey,
London. W.5 2DY

13/12/00

Dear Abbot Francis,

This is about the involvement of Fr David of our community in circumstances of unsupervised contact with children.

This Monday, at Fr Timothy's request I was hearing confessions in St Benedict's Junior School. It surprised me to find that Fr David was also doing so.

Remarks have been passed to me about events in Fr David's past by third parties including a past pupil, to lead me to believe that it is highly likely that it is true that he has been involved in some kinds of sexually inappropriate behaviour with children in the Junior School. I am not sure what the extent of this may have been and have no proof. Events in the life of our community including his being passed over for a number of posts have reinforced my belief.

Today I spoke to Abbot Martin expressing my surprise, firstly that Fr Timothy had asked Fr David, as I presume he did, and more seriously, that Fr David accepted. Abbot Martin agreed with me that he should not have been asked and said that he would give some guidance to Fr Timothy on the matter. He thanked me for raising the matter.

I do not wish to tackle Fr David directly on this issue because I believe it would make our relationship in community very difficult, nor do I wish to seem to threaten Abbot Martin as he has agreed with me, but I do regard this as very serious.

I would like it known by those who need to that if Fr David does start to involve himself in the life of the Junior school or other situations that allow contact with children in situations of trust, I will raise my concerns with the police and the diocese in that order.

I am sorry to have to raise this issue with you and find the whole thing very depressing. I am not without sympathy or understanding for human frailty but, as you know, this particular form of it is very dangerous. I really couldn't put the good name of our community above the duty to protect children and believe that to do so would be corrupt.

Yours

DPA

R.S.V.P.