



Nick Gibb MP
Minister of State for Schools

Sanctuary Buildings Great Smith Street Westminster London SW1P 3BT
tel: **DPA** ministers@education.gsi.gov.uk

Mr Sam Younger
Chief Executive
Charity Commission
30 Milbank
London
SW1P 4DU

12 October 2010

Dear Mr Younger

Ealing Abbey

I understand that Ealing Abbey has come to the attention of the Charity Commission on a number of occasions, and that the Commission is in receipt of continuing correspondence about matters raised in the inspection reports relating to visits in November 2009, and April and May 2010 by the Independent Schools Inspectorate.

Most of the recommendations of the inspection report relate directly to St Benedict's School which is a registered independent school and regulated by the Department. However, the recommendation:

'Ensure that any staff or members of the religious community live away from the school, if they are subject to allegations of misconduct related to safeguarding or convicted of wrongdoing'

falls outside the scope of this Department's statutory powers. For that reason we are referring the recommendation to the Charity Commission as there is an individual resident in the monastery to whom this recommendation is relevant.

I have considered carefully the information available to this Department, which we are happy to share with you, within the terms of our respective statutory powers. Although I have had expert advice that the individual poses a low risk to children, I would be concerned if the school fails to implement the very clear recommendation made by ISI. Such a failure could have the potential to undermine public confidence in the school and in our respective regulatory arrangements. For these reasons I am referring the case to the Charity Commission to consider whether the circumstances provide grounds for the use of the Commission's powers and whether the continuing residence of the individual in the monastery is appropriate.