



PARSONS MEAD ACTION GROUP

Charity Commission Sub-committee

"Five years not five minutes"



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Charity Commission

The Charity Commission are responsible for promoting the effective use of charitable resources.

To this end, they offer charities support and advice and, where necessary carry out investigations to check abuses.

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The Charity Commission will generally only get involved with cases where:

- the purposes of a charity are not being carried out;
- the assets of a charity are substantially at risk;
- the charity trustees are acting outside of their powers or are in other ways breaking charity law; or
- the administration of a charity has completely broken down

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All charity trustees must:

- run their charity according to the rules set down in the governing document
- follow the requirements of charity law.

However, within this framework, the charity trustees have a wide freedom as to how they run the charity and how they apply its money.

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The Charity Commission will

expect complainants to have tried first to resolve their concern directly with the charity before involving the Commission.

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We tried to do this with the PMET
by:

- Writing
- Phoning
- Requesting a meeting
- Going through our MP
- Involving the press
- Inviting them to this *Five years not five minutes* meeting



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To date, the Trustees have refused to meet with us to listen and adequately respond to our concerns

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So what are we doing and with what result?

- A number of parents wrote to the Charity Commission to voice concerns
- The Charity Commission responded by telling us that they had arranged a meeting with Trustees. This took place last Thursday, 28th June. The purpose of the meeting was to gather some further information surrounding the situation and to assess whether or not they have breached any provision of charity law.
- They are aware that we wish to present information and have reassured us that they will not be making any decision until they have received all relevant information.
- A decision will then be made as to whether or not there is any regulatory concern for the Charity Commission in this matter

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What can you do?

- If you have additional concerns and issues, please let us know
- Alternatively, if you would prefer, contact the Charity Commission direct – it is worth noting that they will do their utmost to preserve any confidences visit their website for more information at:

<http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk/>

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"The Vernon Educational Trust will be completely transparent with Parsons Mead parents".

5th July 2005

"It is with extreme regret that I have to notify you of the closure of Parsons Mead School at the end of this summer term"

5th June 2006

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What happened in
between.....?

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Consider this:

Dame Angela Rumbold, Chair of the PMET, is quoted in The Independent, only 1 month ago, as saying that

“You can’t walk into an inner city school and turn it round in five minutes. It’s a five year job”.

The similarity may not be exact but Parsons Mead was not given a fighting chance – if it had been, I do not think that we would be here tonight. Those who truly care about the School would have found a way to keep it going.

But all offers to do so have been ignored.

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The sudden, and unexpected, closure of Parsons Mead has caused very considerable upheaval and distress in the lives of the children, staff, parents and other stakeholders.

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If the Trustees will not give us answers to perfectly reasonable questions, then we must press the Charity Commission to investigate further.

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The Committee hopes that
you will support
us in that
endeavour.

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