

The PCC, Nicholas Soames MP v The Argus (Brighton)

Clauses noted: 6

In June 2008, the Press Complaints Commission upheld a complaint from Nicholas Soames MP against the Argus for publishing a photograph of his and his friends' children in breach of Clause 6 (Children) of the editors' Code of Practice. The photograph was published on page 8 on 7th January 2008. The Commission's adjudication – which the newspaper was obliged to publish in full and with due prominence – appeared on page 32 on 24th June.

Adjudication

The Commission has now considered whether publishing its ruling on page 32 when the item under complaint appeared on page 8 was sufficiently prominent. The newspaper asked the Commission to take into account the fact that there were more pages in the edition in which the adjudication appeared than the one in which the photograph appeared. This meant that the adjudication was a similar distance from the back of the paper to the photograph.

The Commission was not impressed with this argument. It considered that the editor had clearly failed in his duty to publish a critical PCC ruling with due prominence. There was therefore a further breach of the Code. As a result, the Commission required the editor to publish this statement in a prominent place in the newspaper.

Adjudication issued 23/07/2008