

PRESS RELEASE - Richmond Inclusive Schools Campaign

www.richmondinclusiveschools.org.uk



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NOW IT'S A NEW CATHOLIC PRIMARY AS WELL

The debate about the Council's plan for a new Catholic Voluntary Aided secondary school on the site at Clifden Road in Twickenham was already heated, especially since it became clear that it is the only new borough secondary the Council plans for the foreseeable future.

The temperature went up further this week with the news that the church also plans a new Voluntary Aided primary school on the same site. Both schools will give priority to children from Catholic families - in and out of the borough - over local non-Catholics. And it is expected that the secondary will have no spare places for children of non-Catholics.

Meanwhile there are two petitions running on the Council's website, both with over 2000 signatures. One asks the council to "support the creation of a new Catholic Secondary School within the Borough", and is in line with a similar petition presented in April. The other asks the council to "ensure that every state-funded school opening in the borough from now on is inclusive, so that no child can be denied a place in a good local school because of the religion or belief of their parents." Both are available at www.richmond.gov.uk/home/council_government_and_democracy/petitions/online_petitions/epetitions.htm.

The next important decision lies with the Secretary of State for Education, Michael Gove. His consent is needed for the church to "publish proposals" for the two Voluntary Aided schools, by-passing the normal process where the Council would first have to put the schools out to competition from other bidders. Last week it was reported that the church had applied to Michael Gove for consent, and were in negotiations with the Council on the finances. It is not known when the decision will be made.

Gaurav Mathur, speaking for Richmond Inclusive schools Campaign, said: "The Council is still trying to ignore the chorus of opposition from both non-Catholics and fair-minded Catholics to their plans for an exclusive Catholic school, funded largely out of taxation. But they are going to be disappointed - we are not going away. What is wrong with a high quality school at which children from all backgrounds are equally welcome, including children of Catholics?"

Notes to editors:

1. Evidence of primary school consent applications:
 - a) Email from the Department for Education:
[http://www.richmondinclusiveschools.org.uk/files/view/other-useful-documents/DfE_email_confirming_two_applications_for_consent_made - 7 Oct.pdf](http://www.richmondinclusiveschools.org.uk/files/view/other-useful-documents/DfE_email_confirming_two_applications_for_consent_made_-_7_Oct.pdf)
 - b) Paper issued in advance of the Council's Education and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting 17 Oct in which reference is made to a new primary school on the Clifden Road site:
<http://cabnet.richmond.gov.uk/documents/s27546/OS%20171011%20Education%20priorities.pdf> page 28, 2013-14 entry.
2. For more information, email home@jrodell.com or call Jeremy Rodell on 07798 935569.

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