

## **RISC website comment from Rev Dominic Stockford - 7 March 2014**

I have read with interest your letter in today's RTTimes.

I have pointed out in the past that Christ Church wished to have a school, and so in 1866 they built one and ran it for 70 odd years, out of their own pockets (until the Education Act of 1927 - I think - took over all such schools). After that time it kept only the name of the church. It is now Collis School.

Should we at Christ Church wish a Protestant School once again, it would be, once again, our responsibility to find the funding for it, or to accept anyone who wished to attend on an open basis. Further interest would be noted in the fact that the old Christ Church School had NO admission policy despite running it from their own funds!

I firmly believe that if a 'church' school takes state funding then it should have no admission policy which prevents anyone from attending (unless we have a return of Grammar Schools, which would be a separate matter, and would rightly base entrance on measured ability. Few of those were 'church' run anyway).

I think it wrong to take state funding for any school, and then prevent those who pay for the school from their taxes (in vast part) from attending. Also, logic would state that if church attendance is so important then the schools should focus on those who do NOT attend church for entrants, in the hope of bringing them into church influence and encouraging their future church attendance! I opposed the new Roman Secondary School in Richmond Borough, and I find the discriminatory admissions policy of CofE schools helpful from neither a religious or a practical perspective.

St Mary's & St Peter's is an interesting case anyway - as they have also refused to accept the nationally agreed policy that all Affinity churches member's children should also have some priority in admission (Affinity is a group which includes Free Churches which are not in the iniquitous 'Churches Together' ecumenical movement). So they not only discriminate against local non-church attenders, they also discriminate against those within the Christian community, despite them being those with whom the CofE has made a specific agreement. The issues you have with them particularly are probably very school specific therefore, and therefore even more need to be addressed publicly.

God's blessings  
Rev Dominic Stockford  
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