

From: Jeremy Rodell [mailto:home@jrodell.com]
Sent: 04 October 2013 13:21
To: 'Inigo Woolf'
Cc: 'Bishop of Kensington'; 'Liz Wolverson'
Subject: RE: Richmond Inclusive Schools Campaign (RISC)

Dear Mr Woolf,

Many thanks for your considered reply to our letter on primary schools in Richmond.

I understand the concern about changing the rules for a single form entry school, such as Bishop Perrin, at short notice. Perhaps the answer in such cases is to suggest to governors that they give notice now that the school will become more inclusive in, say, 4 years' time. Archdeacon Cambridge (PAN of 60) could do the same, and is less constrained by size. Otherwise these highly exclusive policies will never change.

Such considerations do not apply to St.Mary's & St.Peter's in Teddington, which had an expansion in 2009 to its current PAN of 90. Anything you can do to encourage a change there would be especially welcome.

I thought you might find the attached charts of interest. They show the % of pupils eligible for free school meals, and the % "white British" ethnicity at all the Richmond borough primaries, based on the School Census 2012. The Diocesan schools are shown in red, borough averages in green. Of course, there are variations across the borough in these respects. But it is clear from a comparison between Diocesan schools and nearby community schools (ref map on p2 of our report) that they are, to varying degrees, socially and ethnically selective, notably:

- Bishop Perrin 7% FSM; Heathfield Community 20% FSM.
- St.Mary's & St. Peter's 4% FSM; Stanley Community 8% FSM.

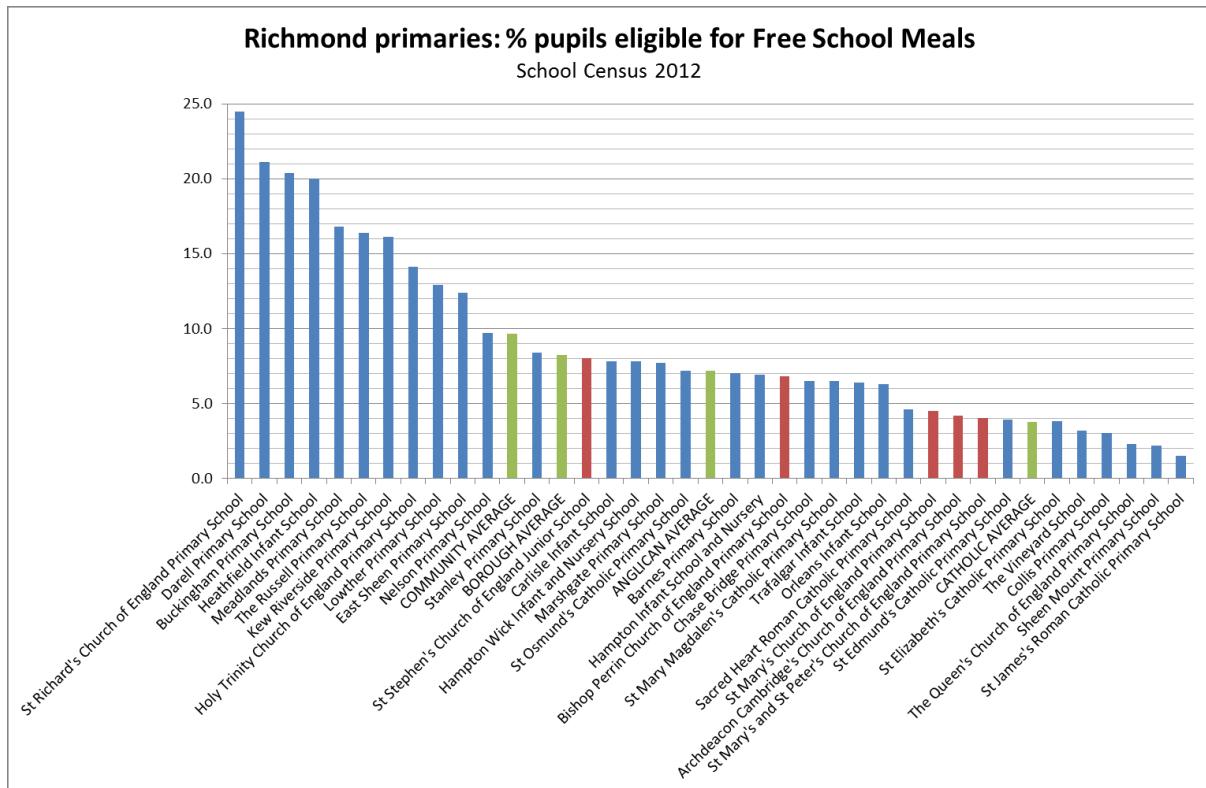
This mirrors the national picture as reported by the Fair Admissions Campaign <http://fairadmissions.org.uk/schools-map/>. In other words, the local children to whom access is denied through faith-based criteria - directly or indirectly - tend to be those from more disadvantaged backgrounds.

The recent Diocesan statements on the issue of inclusivity are therefore welcome. The challenge now appears to be persuading governing bodies to act. As they have a majority of church-appointed members, and are obliged to "have regard" to church guidance under the Admissions Code, Diocesan influence clearly has an important part to play.

Finally, I must apologise for mistaking your gender, and for the typo in Liz Wolverson's name.

Regards,

Jeremy Rodell
Richmond Inclusive Schools Campaign



From: Inigo Woolf [<mailto:Inigo.Woolf@london.anglican.org>]

Sent: 30 September 2013 15:05

To: communications@richmondinclusiveschools.org.uk

Cc: Bishop of Kensington; Liz Wolverson

Subject: Richmond Inclusive Schools Campaign (RISC)

Jeremy Rodell,

Thank you for sending me a copy of the Report and I am grateful that it recognizes the part the London Diocese is playing in encouraging schools to serve their communities.

As you will no doubt be aware it is the Governing Bodies of Voluntary Aided Schools which make the decisions on admissions and there is very little we can do to change outcomes especially when our schools are small schools and heavily oversubscribed. Any change in admissions policy to a one form entry school such as Bishop Perrin is going to disenfranchise some families who may have been counting on getting a place for the past 3 or 4 years. We have found that the best way to bring change about is to expand schools as offering new places allows for a change in policy without the Governors losing support. Suffice it to say we would be very happy to see Archdeacon Cambridge and Bishop Perrin expand but there are site constraints.

By the way I am Mr Woolf and my colleague is Liz Wolverson and not Wolverton.

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24 September 2013

Dear Ms Woolf and Bishop Williams,

The enclosed report from Richmond Inclusive Schools Campaign (RISC) - *Faith-based discrimination in Richmond primary school offers 2013* - is intended to provide dioceses and school governing bodies with a new, evidence-based perspective on the impact of selective admissions policies at church schools in the borough of Richmond. It includes constructive suggestions for simple changes schools can make to become, in the words of Vince Cable (Twickenham MP, and a defender of faith schools) "more community minded", without challenging their status or ethos. This is especially important at primary level, when parents rightly expect to be able to find a good school, close to home, and especially when there is so much pressure on places overall.

In preparing the report, we were encouraged by the indications given to the press by Liz Wolverton from the LDBS that Diocese schools "*should be there to serve the community, so we're really encouraging schools to move towards [open admissions]*"¹ and the example provided by the new St.Mary's primary in Hampton, with its fully inclusive admissions policy.

Unfortunately, as our report shows, this more inclusive approach is not currently reflected in the policies of several of the Diocesan primaries in the borough. We are writing now to ask you to urge them to adopt a revised approach along the lines suggested.

The scope of the report is schools with Reception classes. These are the Diocesan schools covered, with the % of places (after accommodation of siblings) offered on a faith-restricted basis:

- Archdeacon Cambridge's - 70%
- Bishop Perrin – 86%
- St.Mary's Twickenham – 36%
- St.Mary's Hampton – not over-subscribed but in any case inclusive
- St Mary's & St Peter's - 62%, with only a 303 metre distance cut-off for community places.
- St.Stephen's – 0% (but 6 new Foundation places introduced for 2014)

We have written to the chairs of governors at all the schools. But clearly our primary concern is with the policies at Archdeacon Cambridge's, Bishop Perrin and St.Mary's & St.Peter's, all of which are highly discriminatory. Meanwhile, there were children in Twickenham and north Teddington who were not offered any of their six preferred schools, and were instead assigned places at schools up to 5km away.

¹ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/educationnews/10205477/No-places-for-churchgoers-in-newly-opened-faith-schools.html>

We would much appreciate any action you can take to encourage schools to adopt the suggestion below, and in particular to encourage Archdeacon Cambridge's, Bishop Perrin and St.Mary's & St.Peter's to play their part in providing equitable access to primary places for the community as a whole.

Suggested change

We are calling for all local Church of England primaries that currently apply a faith-based admissions test to move to a model which would put a clear % cap – maximum 50%, but ideally below - on faith-based admissions for the remaining places after siblings have been accommodated. This type of model, albeit with an excessive %, is already in place at Archbishop Cambridge's. There seems therefore no obstacle to its adoption by the Admissions Code deadline of 15 April 2014 in time for September 2015 entry.

This suggestion does not fully address our in-principle concern that *no* local children should be denied access to state-funded schools because of their parents' beliefs or religious practices. But we believe it is a readily achievable way in which your schools could make their admissions policies more community-minded.

We look forward to hearing your views, and would be happy to discuss the matter further.

Yours sincerely,

Jeremy Rodell – for Richmond Inclusive Schools Campaign