



How the Church of England fails to deliver more inclusive admissions Green School for Boys, Hounslow

The Anglican London Diocesan Board for Schools has a policy that its new schools should be fully inclusive and existing schools should move towards a maximum of 50% faith-based admissions. Liz Wolverson, director of school support services for the LDBS has said: “We’re not big fans of people filling churches on Sunday just so they can get their children into school. We want people to come to church, but for the right reasons. We feel that it is really important to go back to our roots. We think we should be there to serve the community, so we’re really encouraging schools to move towards [open admissions].” The Archbishop of Canterbury has recently indicated his support for greater inclusivity in admissions. But each school governing body makes its own decisions. Unlike the Catholic Church, which actively enforces its policies through appointment of governors, the Diocese only provides guidance.

As this case illustrates, the result is that the policy can, and is, simply being ignored.

a) RISC exchange with Green School for Boys, Hounslow

From: communications@richmondinclusiveschools.org.uk

Sent: 31 October 2013 10:32

To: 'tgsboys@thegreenschool.net'

Subject: Admissions Policy at proposed Green School for Boys

Dear Green School for Boys,

We saw your proposal for a new secondary free school for boys in Hounslow, with prospective opening in 2016. Please can you confirm that its admissions will be fully inclusive, with no children being denied access on the basis of their parents’ faith, in line with the guidelines for new schools given by the London Diocese*. It is encouraging that these have already been followed by new Church of England free schools in Richmond (Hampton), Camden and Ealing.

As you may know, the need for inclusive admissions has become a major issue for families in the borough of Richmond where the most recent secondary school to open was a highly exclusive Catholic Voluntary Aided school on a prime site, and where the unfair effects of faith-based admissions at both Church of England and Catholic schools are being keenly felt at primary level, where there is great competition for places at most schools.

Our supporters would welcome your reassurance on this point.

Jeremy Rodell

Richmond Inclusive Schools Campaign

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

From: Pam Butterfield
Sent: 31 October 2013 18:24
To: communications@richmondinclusiveschools.org.uk
Cc: John Beastall
Subject: Re: Admissions Policy at proposed Green School for Boys

Dear Jeremy

In line with the Free Schools' guidance, the proposed admissions criteria will be 50% Christian and 50% open places for those of other faiths or no faith.

Kind regards

Pam Butterfield

From: communications@richmondinclusiveschools.org.uk
Sent: 31 October 2013 18:55
To: 'Pam Butterfield'
Cc: 'John Beastall'
Subject: RE: Admissions Policy at proposed Green School for Boys

Dear Pam,

Thanks for the swift reply. Clearly that's disappointing. The Free School's guidance gives the 50% as a maximum at faith-designated schools, not as an obligation. And the Diocesan policy favouring full inclusivity (0%) at new schools is very clear. The other new Anglican Free Schools I cited, including the William Perkin CofE secondary in north Ealing, and St.Mary's primary in Hampton, have 0% faith-based admissions.

Is there a particular reason why 50% rather than 0% (or a low number) has been considered necessary, especially bearing in mind the plurality of the local community? At what stage will the admissions policy be consulted upon?

Jeremy

b) RISC exchange with London Diocesan Board for Schools

From: communications@richmondinclusiveschools.org.uk
Sent: 06 December 2013 15:44
To: Inigo Woolf
Subject: FW: Admissions Policy at proposed Green School for Boys

Dear Mr Woolf and Ms Wolverson,

Further to our previous correspondence on the issue of inclusive admissions to Diocesan schools: no reply was forthcoming to the note [above] regarding the proposed Green School for Boys in Hounslow.

Given the Diocesan policy that new schools should be fully inclusive, please can you advise why the Green School for Boys is instead proposing the maximum level of discrimination (50%) permitted for a free school? The same applies to The Fulham Boys School.

Your advice appreciated.

Jeremy Rodell

Richmond Inclusive Schools Campaign

From: Inigo Woolf

Sent: 10 December 2013 08:53

To: communications@richmondinclusiveschools.org.uk

Subject: RE: Admissions Policy at proposed Green School for Boys

There are good reasons for taking this approach for this particular school:

The Green School for Girls and the Green School for Boys should have similar policies so that families with boys and girls are treated fairly.

We are not seeking to draw boys from the same catchment area as Isleworth & Sion School.

We believe that the difficulty that boys, attending Church on Sundays, have in obtaining places in a number of Hounslow Schools requires some places to be allocated other than on distance.

I hope this helps.

Inigo Woolf

Chief Executive

London Diocesan Board for Schools

From: communications@richmondinclusiveschools.org.uk

Sent: 10 December 2013 12:34

To: Inigo Woolf

Subject: RE: Admissions Policy at proposed Green School for Boys

Dear Mr Woolf,

Many thanks for your explanation of why the admissions policy at the new Green School for Boys in Hounslow is to be less inclusive than Diocesan policy would indicate.

The justification is that the Girls' and Boys' schools should have similar policies. The Green School for Girls' admissions criteria are substantially out of line with Diocesan policy. Of 150 places:

- 110 are Foundation places

- A further 30 are reserved for followers of Islam, Hinduism, Judaism, Buddhism and Sikhism, with priority given to *“Girls and / or at least one parent or carer who desires an education based on Christian values and who worships regularly as a member of another world faith”* where *“regularly”* is defined as attending worship *“at least twice a month over a period of more than two years immediately prior to application”*.
- That leaves only 10 places (under 7%) open on a community basis.

The Boys’ school will be 50/50. Is it therefore the intention to amend the policy at the Girls’ school to 50% faith-based and 50% open admissions “so that families with boys and girls are treated fairly”?

A map launched by the Fair Admissions Campaign last week - <http://fairadmissions.org.uk/map/> - shows the degree to which all the secondary schools in the country have a share of pupils eligible for free school meals (a standard measure of deprivation) in line with the norm for their local areas. It places the Green School in the worst 10% of schools nationally: 13% of pupils are eligible for free school meals (not necessarily claiming them) compared to 22% for the area. In other words, the school offers places to a lower number of deprived local children than it should, given its location.

This is in line with the key conclusion of their analysis, which is that faith-based selection results in socio-economic discrimination. A less sophisticated analysis by The Guardian in 2012 came to the same conclusion. This is not about faith schools per se: church schools that do not have faith-based selection are more or less in line with their local areas. The new analysis therefore strongly supports the Diocesan policy of making its schools more inclusive while retaining their ethos.

It is therefore hard to understand why this enlightened policy, which reflects the Archbishop of Canterbury’s recently-stated preference, is not being implemented in every case where there is an opportunity to do so.

Jeremy Rodell

Richmond Inclusive Schools Campaign

From: Inigo Woolf

Sent: 11 December 2013 00:10

To: communications@richmondinclusiveschools.org.uk

Subject: RE: Admissions Policy at proposed Green School for Boys

Thank you for your email.

The admissions policy is set by the Governing Body of the School and not by the LDDBS. The number of pupils provided with Free School Meals is a separate issue as the admissions policy does not discriminate positively or negatively on matters of deprivation.

Inigo Woolf

Chief Executive

London Diocesan Board for Schools