

MP wants religious schools open to all

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Vince Cable has appealed to the church to allow more community places in religious schools because some schools in his constituency were “bursting at the seams”.

People told him they could not get places and were being passed over for church-goers who lived further away.

He said in his monthly newsletter: “I have always been a defender of faith schools because of the extra choice it gives to parents,

respecting their religion.

“But we are getting into difficult – and nasty – competition for places. In a band from East Twickenham to Teddington there are now five faith schools (three Church of England and two Catholic), and two non-denominational schools that are also bursting at the seams.

“I am appealing to church authorities to be community-minded on admissions.”

The Twickenham MP’s plea comes as fair school policy campaign group, Richmond Inclusive Schools Campaign (Risc) spoke at the launch of

the new National Fair Admissions Campaign, on June 6, which wants all state-funded schools to be open to all children, regardless of religion.

Risc co-ordinator Jeremy Rodell told the meeting: “Parents all over the country share the concerns of Risc’s supporters about faith-based admissions to state schools.”

Other speakers included Rabbi Jonathan Romain, head of the Accord Coalition, Prof Ted Cattle, founder of the Institute of Community Cohesion and Pavan Dhaliwal from the British Humanist Association.