



# Diocese of Westminster

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## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Consultation on new Catholic Secondary and Primary School in the London Borough of Richmond.**

For many years, the Catholic community within the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames has expressed the need for a Catholic Secondary School in the borough. Catholic parents and carers have been able to send their children to a Primary School in the London Borough of Richmond. But at the point of secondary transfer, they have been compelled to send their children to schools outside of the borough, and sometimes outside of the state education system completely, in order to secure a place in a Catholic Secondary School.

The absence of a Catholic Secondary School in the London Borough of Richmond has reduced educational choice to its residents. Additionally, in recent years, demographic pupil projection data has shown that demand for school places in both the primary and secondary sectors will exceed the available number of places.

Based on a clear need for additional capacity in the secondary school sector, the Diocese of Westminster applied to the Secretary of State for Education for consent, under section 10 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, to promote:

- a new 11 - 18 Catholic Voluntary Aided Secondary School, and
- a new 3 - 11 Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School,

within the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames.

On 20 December 2011, the Secretary of State consented to the application of the Diocese of Westminster to promote the new schools. His consent enables the Diocese to commence the informal and formal consultation phases that are required under the Act. However, any final decision on the establishment of the proposed new schools will ultimately rest with the Local Authority.

#### **Informal (pre statutory) consultation phase**

The Diocese of Westminster will now consult with individuals and organisations and seek their comments on the proposal. The results of the consultation will be considered carefully by the Diocese once the consultation is complete. The consultation will run from 20

January 2012 – 17 February 2012 and will be accessed via the diocesan website at [www.rcdow.org.uk](http://www.rcdow.org.uk)

During Stage 1, the Diocese of Westminster, in partnership with the Archdiocese of Southwark, will be hosting two drop-in sessions as follows:

- Tuesday 24 January 2012 at St James Catholic Primary School, Twickenham, TW2 5NP between 16:00 and 19:00.
- Tuesday 7 February 2012 at St Elizabeth Catholic Primary School, Queens Road, Richmond TW10 6HN between 16:00 and 19:00.

### **Formal Statutory consultation phase**

Having reflected on the comments received during the Stage 1 process, the Diocese of Westminster will decide whether or not to publish Statutory Proposals. If the decision is to proceed, a formal notice will be published in the local paper inviting interested parties to register their comments with the decision makers – the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames.

### **Bishop John Sherrington, Chairman of the Diocese of Westminster's Education Commission, said:**

“Catholic parents have long expressed the need for a Catholic secondary school in the London Borough of Richmond. The Diocese of Westminster, together with the Archdiocese of Southwark, have for many years been working hard, in partnership with Richmond Council, to make this aspiration become a reality.”

“Our pre-statutory consultation will allow people to express their views on a new 11 - 18 Catholic Voluntary Aided Secondary School, and a new 3 - 11 Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School on the Richmond Adult Community College (RACC) premises at Clifden Road in Twickenham. The consultation will also include two drop in meetings where additional information on the proposals will be available”

“There are 216 Catholic schools and colleges in the Diocese of Westminster. These schools and colleges provide high quality Catholic education, with 85% judged by Ofsted as good or outstanding. The Diocese of Westminster is sure that a new Catholic primary and secondary school in Richmond would continue the fine tradition of Catholic education which values the uniqueness and contribution of every pupil, aims to enable every child to discover his or her true vocation in life and seeks to provide excellent learning and teaching to provide this.”

**ENDS**

### **Notes to editors**

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