

RUNNYMEDE ST EDWARD'S SCHOOL

Inspire, challenge and support through faith



Chairman of Governors: Mr John McCabe MBChB FRCS (Urol)

24th January 2020

Re: VA update – post consultation feedback

Dear Parents,

Following completion of the consultation period for the proposed voluntary aided school, the governors have now had opportunity to review all feedback with the Trustees and consult other stakeholders in the proposals.

The Trustees have made the decision to proceed with the next stage of the process which, as described in the consultation document, is the publication of a statutory notice.

The Trustees would also like to clarify some specific concerns raised during the consultation period:

1) Why does the transitional admissions policy not include a guaranteed place in the proposed new school for current pre-school pupils?

Under the proposals, Runnymede Independent School would close and a new school with a newly established governing body would open. The new governing body will need to produce an admissions policy which is legal and compliant with the School Admissions Code. The Trustees have been advised that it would be a breach of the Code to offer preferential places to current fee paying children of a non-statutory school age.

This is not the preferred course of action for the Governors or Trustees but it has unfortunately been deemed to be the only course that could be taken without risk of disrupting the proposal in its entirety. Any attempt to adjust the opening date of the maintained school to potentially circumvent this issue, as has been proposed by some parties, would likely not be viewed favourably by those making the final decision. It is the view of the Trustees that such an engineered move could be highly detrimental to the process.

An extraordinary admissions process will take place for Reception places at the proposed new school. This process will commence on 1st February 2020 and be coordinated by a shadow governing body. It is hoped that the current pre-school parents will submit an application via this process.

2) Why are pupils in year groups Reception to Year 5 guaranteed a place in the proposed new school?

If Runnymede Independent School closes then Liverpool City Council would be required to designate a school place for all children of a statutory school age. The designated school, for those children who were



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Runnymede St Edward's School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

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pupils in year groups Reception to Year 5 on 4th November 2019 (and continued to be pupils on 31st August 2020), would be the newly established Runnymede voluntary aided school.

3) Will structural work need to take place to accommodate a two form entry school at Runnymede?

The current school buildings have been deemed to meet the statutory requirements required for a two form school (reception to year 6). This does not mean that some relatively minor alterations will not be made or that the new governing body would not be continually reviewing the accommodation.

4) Will access to the school require alteration?

The current governing body are already working closely with St Edwards College and the Trustees to appraise options for improving access to both schools. It is envisaged that this will lead to the creation of enhanced staff parking across the shared campus and more efficient parental drop off areas. The proposed school would also continue to utilise the CI car park at the start and end of the day.

5) How will the staff be prepared for the new challenge of working in the maintained sector?

Permanent staff on 31 August 2020 will transfer employment from the existing independent school to the proposed new school. There will be many challenges expected during the transitional period and the school will require experienced leadership. The new school would be able to draw on strong support from the Archdiocese and access (as it already does) a School Improvement Partner and Learning Network. Staff, within a maintained school, would also have access to numerous learning resources through the City Council.

As stated in the consultation document the Governors and Trustees maintain that the proposal offers wide ranging benefits through the delivery of new Catholic school places to the City. This would be achieved without disrupting the traditions and ethos of the current Runnymede, ensuring wider access to the Metropolitan Cathedral Choir and enabling the new Runnymede to establish a closer relationship with St Edwards College.

Further details concerning the statutory notice period and the extraordinary admissions round will appear on the Runnymede website in the coming days.

Yours sincerely,

John McCabe
Chair of Governors
Runnymede St Edwards



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