



PRESS RELEASE

Wednesday 9 November 2011

For immediate release

ST BENEDICT'S SCHOOL MOVES IMMEDIATELY TO IMPLEMENT CARLILE REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

An independent report into safeguarding and child safety at St Benedict's School, Ealing, London, has today been published by Lord Carlile of Berriew QC. The report follows historic incidents of abuse within St Benedict's School by lay teachers and members of the monastic community at St Benedict's Ealing Abbey.

The report recommends that governance of the school should be made independent from the governance of the Trust of St Benedict's Abbey. To date, the School has been part of the Ealing Abbey Trust and governed by the Abbot and monks of Ealing, supported by an advisory board of lay people. The report recommends a new governing body that:

- Creates clear accountability between school management, governors and trustees.
- Provides governance that is transparent and understandable to outsiders.
- Delivers effective monitoring, safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Includes representatives from constituent parts of the school community and diaspora, alongside qualified individuals from outside the school.

Chris Cleugh, Headmaster at St Benedict's School, said:

“Past abuses at the School have left a terrible legacy for those affected and have tarnished the reputation of St Benedict's. On behalf of all at the School, I offer my heartfelt apology for past failures. The School could have, and should have, done more.

“Creating a safe environment in which our pupils can develop academically, socially and spiritually is our number one concern. Consequently, St Benedict's will move immediately to put into action all the recommendations of this report in order to meet Lord Carlile's suggested implementation date of 1st September 2012. This will include establishing a new system of governance that will separate the Abbey from the running of the School.

“The School has worked hard over the last year to make sure processes are much more robust and we have already updated our safeguarding protocols. These commit St Benedict's to take seriously every complaint or suspicion of abuse, current or historic, from within or outside the School and to refer it to the appropriate external authority.

“We know that the School made serious mistakes. We are determined that safeguarding procedures at St Benedict's should in future be exemplary and the appalling abuses of the past should never happen again.”

- ENDS -

NOTES TO EDITORS

Background to the Carlile Review and review process

- Lord Carlile of Berriew QC was briefed to carry out his independent inquiry in August 2010.
- The inquiry follows and arises from disclosures of proved (and some alleged, but not proved) abuse in past years mainly by monks who were members of the monastic Community at Ealing Abbey's Benedictine Monastery.
- The victims of abuse were pupils at St Benedict's School, to which the Abbey is linked.
- After the inquiry was announced a call for evidence was issued and published, locally and nationally. As a consequence of that, and of more general publicity, Lord Carlile was contacted, mostly in strict confidence, by around 100 individuals who felt they had a contribution to make to the process.
- Lord Carlile also met the administrative and teaching staff of the School as a group and a few individually; also some parents, and the Headmaster and Abbot. He held an open meeting for current parents and met the Department for Education, the Independent Schools Inspectorate, the monastic community, and several of the lay advisers.
- The purpose of the Report, is to use the lessons and failures of the past to ensure that such problems are avoided in the future; and to provide structures to give confidence to pupils, parents and guardians, staff, and anybody else with a legitimate interest in the School in the future.

The full report by Lord Carlile QC is available on the St. Benedict's School website here:

<http://www.stbenedicts.org.uk/>

Lord Carlile of Berriew QC can be contacted at:
9-12 Bell Yard, London WC2A 2JR
Tel: 02074001800

St. Benedict's School

St Benedict's is a private, independent Catholic School in Ealing, West London. Its Senior School currently has 770 pupils on roll .The Junior School caters for some 300 pupils aged 3- 11. More information about the School can be found at www.stbenedicts.org.uk

For more information and interviews with the Headmaster, Christopher Cleugh, please contact:

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Ealing Abbey

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