

ST. GEORGE'S RC HIGH SCHOOL

A Specialist Technology College

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10 MAR 2009

Statement from the Governors of St George's RC High School, Worsley.

- We oppose the bid by the City of Salford in conjunction with the Diocese of Salford to close St George's RC High School.
- The Diocese of Salford as a registered charity has a duty to work for the alleviation of poverty. It achieves this mission by working within a community to transform that community.
- Since 1961 the Diocese has fulfilled this mission in Little Hulton and Walkden through St George's RC High School. Little Hulton is in an area of high social deprivation and known to be at the top end of Inner City areas. To close this school is to walk out on a Community where the church needs to be. It is viewed as an abandonment of a poor part of the city in order to develop facilities in the more affluent areas.
- Through the education that St George's has provided many young people have been enabled to rise out of poverty and achieve their ambitions in life. Enabling this social mobility is an important part of the work of St George's.
- St George's is a socially integrated faith school where children from different faiths and no faith mix together and learn from each other. It fulfils the desire of many non Catholic parents from Little Hulton & Walkden for a faith education for their children. The proposed plan would deny them this choice since what is proposed is a mono faith school with no room for children who are not Catholic. We also notice that one Catholic High School in Salford similar in size to St George's is being rebuilt for all its present pupils – Catholic and non Catholic. So why must the children of Little Hulton miss out on the school of their choice?
- Because it takes children from the local community St George's works for social cohesion in Little Hulton encouraging the pupils to work together for the good of the community. This important element is in danger of being lost. A beacon of hope will vanish from a community that needs it badly.

Headteacher: Mr P.J. Harte MA, NPQH

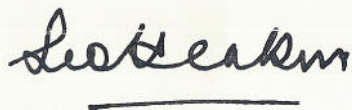
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- St George's gives value for money. It successfully manages its budget while other schools are amassing mounting debts and returning deficit budgets. The price of success in Salford would appear to be closure while underachievement is rewarded.
- The Governors have a duty of care to their staff. With the removal of the TUPE agreement the staff of St George's are left with no guarantee of employment at the new school, unlike the staff of St Ambrose Barlow who are all guaranteed a job. We do not deem this to be just. The assets of St George's would become part of the new school but the rights of the staff ignored.
- Doubts have been raised about the suitability of the Wardley site for a school development of the size proposed. Will the Catholic community be left with even greater problems and costs in the future if the site proves unsuitable to sustain the development?
- We believe we have the right to fight for the survival of our school. It is a much needed asset in our community. We are sorry that the Catholic community, which until recently stood together, is now divided on the proposed plan for Catholic education. We wonder what happened to the "seamless garment of Christ"?



Fr Leo Heakin
Chair of Governors