

REPORT BY LORD CARLILE OF BERRIEW Q.C. INTO MATTERS RELATING TO EALING ABBEY AND ST BENEDICT'S SCHOOL, EALING.

BACKGROUND

1. St. Benedict's is the only Benedictine day school in Britain. It has an excellent academic record, and over 1000 pupils from 3-18. Its mission is described as 'teaching a way of living', to be realised through commitment to the essential characteristics of the Benedictine way of life. The school's objective is to develop young men and women who will aspire to success at school and beyond, understand and live by gospel values, be happy in their personal and family lives, make a distinctive contribution to society and take with them, throughout their lives, a sense of belonging to the community of St Benedict's and that they have 'learned how to live'.
2. St Benedict's was founded as a boys' school in 1902 by monks from Downside Abbey. It is now a part of the Ealing Abbey Trust and is governed by the Abbot and monks of Ealing, supported by an advisory board of lay people. The school site is alongside the monastery, which became an independent community in 1947, achieving abbey status in 1955. The senior school currently has 770 on roll .The junior school, catering for some 300 pupils below the age of 11, occupies part of the same site. The site is in a very pleasant part of West London, and occupies a substantial and handsome estate.
3. The Headmaster is a lay person. He has a proven record in Catholic teaching, having previously been Headmaster of a very reputable school on the Wirral, Merseyside. He has been Head of St Benedict's since January 2002.
4. Until 2007 the school was for boys only from 3-16. Girls have been accepted into the Sixth Form since the early 1970's. The Junior School began to take girls in 2007 and the Senior School in 2008. The School has been progressing towards full coeducation since then: as a result it has increased in size. 60 percent of the students are Roman Catholic, some preference being given to Catholicity and family ties.