



PLANNING FOR THE SCHOOL ESTATE SHARED CAMPUS ARRANGEMENTS

BACKGROUND

In 2002 the Catholic Education Commission first published advice for Dioceses on proposals to build or upgrade those Catholic schools which would share some facilities with non-denominational schools located on the same (viz “shared”) campus. While there had been a few such shared campus arrangements developed as early as the mid 1960s, it was only at the start of the new century, when significant new investment was being made in Scotland’s school estate, that a few local education authorities began to propose some shared campus arrangements.

PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

This document is intended to provide advice which has been developed in the light of recent experience of shared campus provision in Scotland. It has been published for use by Diocesan representatives in their discussions with those Council officials and elected representatives who are responsible for developing proposals for local school provision. It may also be helpful to school staff, to Parent Council members and to all parents who wish to consider the various factors which can contribute to the planning and design of buildings which are appropriate to the purpose of providing Catholic education in the 21st century.

SUMMARY

It is the firm view of the Catholic Education Commission and of the Bishops of Scotland that the most appropriate arrangement for Catholic school education is served by the provision of distinctive, discrete school buildings located at the heart of the communities which they serve. Such arrangements fully support the distinctive vision of Catholic education which has been developed over many years:

The mission of the Catholic school is to develop as a community of faith and learning, providing the highest quality of education, and offering formation through the promotion of Gospel values, through celebration and worship, and through service to the common good.¹

However we acknowledge that, in a small number of exceptional circumstances, the provision of a Catholic school, co-located on a campus with a non-denominational school, may be accepted by the Church as the only viable context for the provision of Catholic education in the local area. In each and every case, the agreement of the local Bishop will only be forthcoming after significant discussion and reflection, and following proper and meaningful consultation by the local education authority with parents and with others affected by the proposal.



1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Catholic Church in Scotland places the highest value on the continuing existence of Catholic schools in Scotland. We recall the origins of these schools in the establishment of parish schools across Scotland in the 19th century. At that time, the determination of Catholic communities to have their children educated according to their own religious convictions required great financial sacrifice for communities which were already significantly impoverished. In the early years of the 20th century, there was considerable debate in the Catholic community about the merits of transferring Catholic schools into the public school system until the Hierarchy finally gave consent and a 'concordat' was agreed between Church and State which governed the nature of Catholic education in Scotland.
- 1.2 The principles and underlying intentions of the Education Act of 1918 - and enshrined in subsequent legislation - were designed to ensure that denominational schools would be held, maintained and managed as public schools, subject to certain special provisions which recognised the rights of the Roman Catholic Church "in whose interest the school is conducted."² We contend that the original legislation was designed to protect the legitimate interests of the Catholic community in all substantive issues which affect the maintaining and development of Catholic schools and that any proposed change which might significantly affect the nature of educational provision in any Catholic school must meet with Church approval. Thus the Scottish Hierarchy, on behalf of the Catholic community, were given certain safeguards, including a statutory right of appeal to Scottish Ministers if they considered that any proposals on school provision would lead to any "significant deterioration" in the provision of Catholic education.

2 DISTINCTIVENESS OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION

- 2.1 While being expected to provide education of the highest quality, the Catholic school is intended to offer, within a community of faith and learning, a form of education which uniquely integrates learning and human formation in all its activities, as defined in *A Charter for Catholic Schools in Scotland* (Appendix 1). It offers a view of the world which is based explicitly on the values of the Gospel and encourages young people to offer themselves in service to their families and to the wider community:

*The Catholic school is an institution where young people gradually learn to open themselves up to life as it is and to create in themselves a definite attitude to life as it should be.*³

- 2.2 The Church universally recognises the significant role of the Catholic school as having a specific purpose, in terms of its own "saving mission" and in terms of its contribution to society. It defines the mission of a Catholic school as offering:

*a critical systematic transmission of culture in the light of faith and the bringing forth of the power of Christian virtue by the integration of culture with faith and faith with living.*⁴

- 2.3 In line with Christian anthropology, the Catholic school is expected to address itself to the holistic formation of the whole person and to promote all of her/his unique talents and capacities: intellectual, physical, emotional, moral and spiritual:

*The person of each individual human being, in his or her material and spiritual needs, is at the heart of Christ's teaching: this is why the promotion of the human person is the goal of the Catholic school.*⁵

- 2.4 The Catholic school, in offering a synthesis of faith and culture, does not locate its faith mission solely within the context of religious education courses. Rather, throughout the provision offered in the Catholic school, there is expected to be "no separation between time for learning and time for formation, between acquiring notions and growing in wisdom."⁶ The whole curriculum of the Catholic school should offer not only "knowledge to be attained, but also values to be acquired and truths to be discovered."⁷ This uniquely distinctive approach is the essential *raison-d'être* for the existence of Catholic schools.

- 2.5 Given such a perspective, it should be clear that the Catholic community opposes the view that the Catholic school's faith dimension and its responsibility for the religious, moral and spiritual formation of young people can be separated from its overall educational provision.

- 2.6 Indeed, this approach provides the very rationale for requiring, and continuing to require, all teachers who are appointed to Catholic schools to be approved by Church authorities - a statutory right established in recognition of the fact that the faith mission of the Catholic school is addressed across the life of the school and not merely in religious education:

*By their witness and their behaviour, teachers are of the first importance to impart a distinctive character to Catholic schools.*⁸



3 PROMOTING A SENSE OF COMMUNITY

3.1 In various documents the Catholic Church has made explicit its expectation that every Catholic school community should show the distinctiveness of its identity, its culture and ethos, and its values and beliefs, through the delivery of its teaching programmes, in its promotion of loving relationships and commitment to service for the common good, and in the opportunities it provides for prayer and worship. This identity is expected to be visible throughout the school building, in various forms of display and in various activities appropriate to the liturgical calendar, eg in Lent, Advent etc. Such displays are not mere forms of ornamentation but are regarded by the Catholic Church as 'sacramental' signs and symbols which mediate the unseen presence of God in the world and support the promotion of Christian values. These traditional practices have contributed significantly to the development of that unique climate and ambience which is the hallmark of the distinctive educational approach offered by Catholic schools.

3.2 In particular, the close involvement with parents and with the local parish community, in various efforts to provide young people with adequate formation in a Christian environment, is expected to be reflected in distinctive programmes of Sacramental preparation and ongoing spiritual development which go well beyond the confines of the school's religious education programmes. To support this formation, wherever possible, the Hierarchy provide schools with the support of the local clergy and of school chaplains who are important members of the school community, ministering to the needs of pupils, parents and staff. In all these ways, the distinctive ethos of the Catholic school should be immediately and visibly evident:

From the first moment that a student sets foot in a Catholic school, he or she ought to have the impression of entering a new environment, one . . . permeated with the Gospel spirit of love and freedom.⁹

3.3 Recognition of the positive impact of such a distinctive ethos has rightly been given to Catholic schools by educationalists, community leaders and politicians. A notable tribute was made by Scotland's First Minister, when he said that:

children in Catholic schools gain a wider sense of responsibility and identity – and a desire to help improve the community in which they live.¹⁰

4 SCHOOL ETHOS

4.1 Ethos is not a fixed, inanimate appendage to a school building; it is a living and growing spirit which imbues the life of the school. While it is clear that every school has an ethos which reflects its vision, values and aims, the distinctive ethos of a Catholic school, with Jesus Christ at its centre, will emerge directly from the promotion of its identity, the celebration of its mission, the modelling of its values and the active pursuit of its aims.

4.2 In a Catholic school, ethos is formed within a learning community founded on the Christian faith - a faith which is taught, celebrated, prayed and lived - and is reflected in all of these features:

- our celebration of faith in God as the source and the destiny of human life
- our accompanying of young people on their journeys of faith
- our commitment to religious education and faith formation
- our nurturing of the prayer lives of our students
- our recognition of parents as the 'first educators' of their children
- our partnership with parents
- our partnership with local parish communities
- our respect for the dignity and worth of each individual
- our commitment to the full development of each person
- our welcoming and inclusive approaches
- our caring and supportive relationships
- our approach to discipline which respects the dignity of each person
- our provision of pastoral, moral and spiritual care
- our high expectations and commitment to excellence
- our shared values, attitudes, commitments and practices
- our sense of pride in community identity
- our efforts to promote high morale among staff and pupils
- our commitment to work for a more just and caring society
- our commitment to the underprivileged
- our honouring of the sanctity of life.



5 SCHOOL BUILDING DESIGN

- 5.1 While it is clear that ethos is not a constituent part of the bricks and mortar of any school building, there can be no doubt that its manifestation can be significantly affected by the particular restrictions imposed by a building. The particular design of any building can have a significant impact on how the community which inhabits it will be able to reflect its purpose, values, mission and identity. Thus, it can be seen that a school is more than a collection of classrooms. The detailed attention given to the careful design of public and private buildings indicates the importance accorded by society to the impact which a building can have on the public consciousness and on the identity and ethos of the corporate body which resides there.
- 5.2 We see the school as an extension of the community of the family, respecting the role of parents and supporting the values of family life. We also see that the school exists within the community of the Church. So, responsibility for the education and formation of children and young people is shared across various communities - with the family first of all, with schools and with local parishes.
- 5.3 It is our view that a school community, like a family, will grow and develop more effectively within its own home rather than in shared, communal premises. This does not imply any sense of detachment from the wider community, but simply recognises that, while most families are happy to live alongside their neighbours, they would not wish to be constrained by the compromises which would be required if they were forced to share the same household with their neighbours. Every family should be free to lead their own lives, without compromising their own values and beliefs and without diluting their own identity and culture.
- 5.4 When two school communities come to live together under one roof, there is a danger that both school identities can become blurred, that the distinctive mission and ethos of each school can be lost. To promote social cohesion in this shared context, it might be argued that distinctiveness of identity should be discouraged. Pupils, parents and staff might then become confused and lost in this new 'household' where protocols, policies and procedures might converge and become less effective as they become more common. Any dilution of identity and purpose is unacceptable to us, as it defies the very purpose of the Catholic school - ie to provide a form of education reflecting a distinctive vision of life, based on the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

- 5.5 In the context of a Catholic school operating as a community of faith, the restrictions imposed by the need to 'secularise' the shared areas in any shared campus model could adversely affect the normal daily practice, routines and observances of teachers and pupils who will be inhibited from experiencing the normal learning environment of the Catholic school - such as using iconography and displays to support the liturgical and prayer life of the school community. We contend that the enforced secularisation of any part of a Catholic school building would constitute a "significant deterioration" of educational provision when compared to discrete, self-contained schools which are not required to alter their practice, to set aside their traditions, to deny their defining characteristics and identity.

6 JUSTIFYING SHARED CAMPUS PROPOSALS

- 6.1 We reject the argument of those who see the development of shared campus schools as a means of social engineering - a significant step on the road to schools being used as a means of integrating "divided" communities. There is significant evidence of the work undertaken by Catholic schools and parishes across Scotland to promote tolerance and respect for all people, whether in the form of initiatives designed to counter racism and sectarianism or in activities which promote ecumenical and inter-faith understanding. There is no evidence which supports the contention that Catholic schools contribute to a lack of social cohesion.
- 6.2 It is ironic that some who use the above argument would be prepared to set aside the rights of those parents who, in accordance with their religious or philosophical beliefs, wish to choose denominational education for their children. Such rights are, of course, enshrined in statute, nationally and internationally.
- 6.3 The 'integrationist' view also appears to ignore the fact that many parents who are not Catholic choose Catholic education for their children precisely because they value the ethos, vision and values provided in the Catholic school. For these parents - and for many others - the availability of the choice of Catholic education is a sign of a healthy mature society which is at ease with itself and which values choice and diversity of educational provision.
- 6.4 It has been argued that, for financial reasons, the development of new school buildings can best be afforded where some facilities are shared across



schools within the community. The logic of such an argument could, of course, lead to the building of 'factory schools' of massive proportions, designed to reduce the 'per capita' running costs of each school. Such a proposal would be rejected as running counter to the interests of local communities where parents wish to see their children being offered a high standard of education, appropriate to the needs of their own communities. Any 'Best Value' consideration should also include the costs of additional pressures on school teaching and management staff whose responsibilities can be significantly increased in a shared campus context where new protocols have to be developed, agreed and observed.

- 6.5 If financial considerations are imperative, we suggest that alternative models of shared provision should be explored. For example, the provision of a primary school on the same site as a secondary school can provide certain savings, in terms of land-use, road infrastructures etc. Other models have located a school which is designed to offer specialist provision, suited to meet the Additional Support Needs of young people, on the same campus as a mainstream primary or secondary school, often leading to considerable benefits to both school communities.
- 6.6 One particular benefit which could accrue in the shared arrangement described in 6.5 would be the opportunity for those ASN pupils who are Catholic to receive additional support in terms of religious education from staff in the denominational school.

7 EXCEPTIONAL AGREEMENTS

- 7.1 It is our expectation that most Catholic schools will continue to be provided as free-standing institutions serving local communities - ie the present arrangements which are provided by most education authorities in Scotland.

7.2 However, we acknowledge that, in a small number of exceptional circumstances, the provision of a shared campus, may be accepted by the local Bishop as the only viable context for the provision of Catholic education in some communities. In situations where the numbers of parents who wish to have access to Catholic education for their children is small, shared provision may offer a pragmatic means of ensuring such provision.

7.3 We recommend that any such proposal should be considered individually, within its local context, so that agreement can be reached to suit all parties. We strongly advise that the local Diocese should be involved in early discussions with a Council which is considering such an option - long before any formal proposal is made. We expect Councils to engage in meaningful consultation, to listen to, and to respond to, the views of the local communities which they serve. In all discussions, the Church will require to be assured that any arrangement proposed would recognise and protect the identity, distinctiveness and ethos of the Catholic school operating autonomously, albeit co-located on a shared campus with a non-denominational school.

7.4 Recent experience has shown that, where attempts have been made to engage in meaningful dialogue, with Church representatives at an early stage, and in a spirit of trust, respect and genuine partnership, the outcomes have been positive for all involved.

7.5 Of course, any proposal for a shared campus development, which might affect the location or the nature of a Catholic school, or arrangements for pupil admission, are always subject to formal consultation with the local Bishop, as set out in Sections 22D of the Education Scotland Act (1980), amended by para 5.6. of the 1981 Act. This legislation also enshrines the right for such a proposal to be referred to Scottish Ministers, should the local Bishop not be able to agree to it. (Pending legislation on Schools Consultation is expected to honour these rights.)

REFERENCES

- 1 *A Charter for Catholic Schools in Scotland*, Scottish Catholic Education Service, 2004
- 2 Education (Scotland) Act 1980 s.22D (2)(c)
- 3 *The Catholic School*, Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education 1977
- 4 *ibid.*
- 5 *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, Congregation of Catholic Education, 1998
- 6 *ibid.*
- 7 *ibid.*
- 8 *The Catholic School*, Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977
- 9 *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School*, Congregation for Catholic Education, 1988
- 10 *Celebrating Catholic Education in Scotland*, Cardinal Winning Lecture, University of Glasgow, 2 February 2008



Appendix 1 A Charter for Catholic Schools in Scotland



Scottish Catholic Education Service

A Charter for Catholic Schools in Scotland

The mission of the Catholic school is to develop as a community of faith and learning, providing the highest quality of education, and offering formation through the promotion of Gospel values, through celebration and worship, and through service to the common good.

All Catholic schools in Scotland, in honouring Jesus Christ as the Way, the Truth and the Life, will feature the following characteristics:

- a commitment to the integrated education and formation of the whole person, in close partnership with parents as the first educators of their children;
- an inclusive ethos which aims to honour the life, dignity and voice of each person, made in the image of God;
- a commitment to the search for wisdom in life and to the pursuit of excellence, through the development of each person's unique God-given talents;
- a commitment to the spiritual formation of the school community, through the shared experience of prayer and liturgy, and in partnership with local parishes;
- the provision of religious education programmes which will enable young people to develop their understanding of Gospel values and of how to apply them to life;
- a commitment to uphold the moral teaching, faith tradition and sacramental life of the Catholic Church;
- a commitment to communicate Catholic social teaching and thereby to promote social justice and opportunity for all;
- a commitment to ecumenical action and the unity of Christians;
- the promotion of respect for different beliefs and cultures and for inter-faith dialogue;
- a commitment to support the continuing professional and spiritual development of staff.

All staff appointed to a Catholic school are expected to support and promote the aims, mission, values and ethos of the school, as illustrated in this Charter.



Published by the Scottish Catholic Education Service on behalf of the Bishops' Conference of Scotland



Appendix 2 EVALUATING SHARED CAMPUS PROPOSALS

1. Are the circumstances exceptional?
2. Has the Local Authority offered a convincing educational justification for its proposal, indicating clear advantages and improvements for both schools?
3. Will the plans preserve the identity of each school?
4. How does the proposal affect the availability of Catholic education in the area?
5. What is the impact of the proposal on the pupil roll of the Catholic school?
6. How does the proposal affect the school's location and its proximity to a local parish?
7. Has the Council involved the local Diocese in early discussions, prior to formal consultation?
8. Have the formal consultation arrangements been timely, adequate and meaningful?
9. Have the practical implications of the proposal been clearly explained? (e.g. the effects on pupils, staffing, management, curriculum, accommodation, transport)
10. Have school staff /Parent Council /Diocesan representatives been meaningfully involved in the planning and design of the school?
11. Will each school have ownership of its own space in which to develop as a community with its own distinctive ethos, with which pupils, staff, parents and the wider community can readily identify?
12. Will the school's core accommodation (teaching areas, assembly areas, social areas) be adequate for its purpose?
13. Will each school be free to shape its own curriculum and the nature of the learning and teaching it wishes to provide to all pupils, without compromise necessitated by the sharing of facilities?
14. Will each school be able to operate autonomously, with its own staffing, curriculum, management structure, resources, budget, policies, improvement plan?
15. Will 'open plan' Primary schools have adequate quiet areas which allow for prayer and circle time?
16. Will a Secondary school have its own dedicated Oratory / Chapel, consecrated for worship?
17. Will the road infrastructure and traffic management arrangements be adequate to cater for the population of pupils, staff and parents?



Appendix 3 Individual & shared facilities in a shared campus school

NB While the following lists are provided to guide discussions at the design stage, it is recognised that the needs of each school will vary in its local context. Thus, some items below may be more appropriate to a primary school than to a secondary, and vice versa. It is recognised that clear protocols must be established to guide the operational management of these facilities, specifying the roles and responsibilities of staff involved.

1 Each school, within its own area of the campus, should be responsible for its own:

- Pupils
- Teaching and support staff
- Classrooms & teaching areas
- Curriculum
- Management structure and Leadership style
- School office staff
- School medical services
- Budget and resources
- Policies, plans, newsletters & other documentation
- Name and external signage
- Entrances and foyer to retain identity, reduce congestion and ensure security and safety for pupils, staff and visitors
- Uniform dress code
- School crest/badge/logo
- Pupil toilet facilities
- Parent Forum and Council
- Guidance offices
- School Library
- Medical room
- Classrooms / practical rooms
- Staff common room
- Staff work bases
- Learning Support base
- Chaplain and Oratory
- Iconography and display facilities
- Pupil social areas

2 The following facilities might be shared between two schools:

- Assembly hall
- Games Hall/Gyms with changing facilities
- Kitchen
- Dining area
- Pupil playground
- Computer network hub
- Heating plant
- Specialist services, eg psychological, audiology etc.
- Community Social Work office
- Community Police office
- Nursery
- Careers service
- Car parking
- Areas for drop-off and pick-up by school buses and cars
- Refuse collection
- Ground Maintenance

3 The following facilities might be shared on a community campus:

- Theatre
- Recording studio
- Conference facilities
- Swimming pool
- Pupil playground
- Outdoor all-weather sports facilities
- Dance studio
- Fitness suite
- Community library
- Sports centre
- Crèche facilities
- Welfare services

Appendix 4 Relevant legal references

1980 Education (Scotland) Act – Sections 16, 21 and 22
1981 Education (Scotland) Act – Sections 6 and 7
1981 Statutory Instrument No 1558 (S.159)
1998 Human Rights Act – Section 6(1)
European Convention on Human Rights – Article 2 Protocol 1