

Archdiocese of Southwark Commission for Schools and Colleges

Statement of Planning Principles

The Archdiocese of Southwark affirms its commitment to work in partnership with LEAs to ensure there are enough schools in number, character and equipment to meet the needs of the pupils in the area.

The following principles will inform decisions on school places:

- Catholic voluntary aided schools are rooted in the Catholic community of the local parishes and the Diocese;
- Catholic schools are part of the Church's educational mission and must be able to sustain their identity and mission in their particular circumstances. Their distinctive identity is recognised by law and demonstrated in their Instrument of Government. The land on which the schools are built is owned by the Trustees of the Diocese or by a Religious Congregation;
- The educational mission of Catholic schools includes care for the poor, the disadvantaged and those with special educational needs; this care must be evident in decisions on school places;
- The Church is committed to comprehensive education in all the LEAs of the Diocese. Comprehensive education expresses Gospel values, based on the belief that every individual is created by God and given talents which should be nurtured and developed;
- Catholic parents should have their choice of a Catholic education for their child met by Catholic school provision, wherever reasonably possible;
- Catholic parents' right to choose Catholic education extends both to nursery places and to sixth form provision;
- Catholic voluntary aided schools must offer standards of education which are at least as high as those offered by community and foundation schools.