



Vaughan Parents' Action Group

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The Most Reverend Vincent Nichols
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Your Grace

We write to express our grave concern at the turn of events during last Wednesday night's meeting of the Cardinal Vaughan Governing Body on 6th April 2011, witnessed by a large number of parents and pupils who had gathered in the School car park at the culmination of the Candlelit Vigil of prayer and hymn singing, held outside the School gates.

At the end of the Vigil, parents and pupils processed into the car park, and were gathered under the window of the library where the meeting was taking place. We have received a number of witness statements which describe what took place, but the salient facts are these:

- Mr Eynaud, the Acting Headmaster, was seen sitting at the desk in the Head's office, directly below the library.
- Parents were singing 'Faith of Our Fathers'; it was observed that someone closed the library windows, presumably to shut out the sound.
- Mgr Curry (identified by parishioners of Our Lady of Victories and Our Lady of Grace, although he was not wearing clerical attire) entered the Head's office and approached Mr Eynaud; clearly very angry, he was gesticulating with his index finger very close to Mr Eynaud, even appearing to prod him in the chest.
- Mr Stubbings, the Deputy Headmaster, and Mr O'Donnell entered the room; at one point both Mgr Curry and Mr O'Donnell both appeared to be shouting at Mr Eynaud, while Mr Stubbings was trying to interpose himself between them.
- It appeared that no one in the room was aware of the large number of adults and children who were watching this scene with a sense of mounting shock and dismay. The hymn singing had ceased and a section of the group was demanding the removal of the Director of Education from the Board of Governors; at this, Mr Eynaud emerged into the car park. He asked that the gathering should disperse and appeared pale and very shaken. He spoke to parents and his words implied that he had been given the impression, by Mgr Curry's words or behaviour, that his career was now 'finished'.

Our Patrons

Professor the Lord Alton, Professor Philip Booth, Professor David Crystal, Professor Felipe Fernandez-Armesto, Patti Fordyce, Professor Luke Gormally, Michael Gormally, Lord Grantley, Paul Johnson, Edward Leigh MP, Lord Lexden, Colin Mawby, Charles Moore, Professor Judith Mossman, Cristina Odone, Professor Thomas Pink, Piers Paul Read, Dr John Martin Robinson, Anthony Speaight QC, Dr Ralph Townsend, Professor Mark Watson-Gandy, Ann Widdecombe



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- As the group was beginning to disperse, Mgr Curry, followed by Mr O'Donnell, moved towards the door opposite, leading into a corridor. At this, a number of parents began to shout comments such as, 'Why won't you come and talk to us?' They both left the room, leaving Mr Eynaud and Mr Stubbings behind. As the shouting continued, one of the organisers announced that proceedings were at an end and asked everyone to leave. The car park was cleared within two minutes.

We believe that what occurred represents an irretrievable breakdown in the relationship that must exist between a Head and a member of the Governing Body. The Head had no responsibility for the presence of the parent group in the car park; no official notification had been given by the Governing Body that parents were barred from the School grounds (although a request that the Chairman of Governors should meet with parents in the School Hall before the Governors' meeting had been refused). In any case, there can be no excuse for the bullying and intimidation to which Mr Eynaud was subjected.

Mgr Curry's continued participation on the appointments panel for the new Head is obviously now out of the question. We believe that his membership of the Governing Body is also now untenable and we request that you replace him as your representative immediately. We also request that Mr Eynaud be given an immediate written apology.

Your Grace, a very large number of Cardinal Vaughan parents have written to you over recent months, asking a great number of questions; none has received a reply from you. On this occasion, we believe that a direct response from you is necessary.

We continue to hold your intentions in our prayers, and would ask you to pray for us as well.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Anna Brown
Chairman of the Vaughan Parents' Action Group
8 April 2011

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