

New Chelsea school celebrates first day of term

7th September 2009: 162 new pupils were today welcomed to the Church of England Chelsea Academy with a special assembly attended by the Bishop of Kensington, the Rt. Revd Paul Williams, Councillor Merrick Cockell, Leader of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and Councillor Timothy Coleridge, Mayor of Kensington & Chelsea.

In addition to addresses given by both the Bishop and the Leader of the Council, prayers were led by the Bishop and Principal and there were readings by three of the new students: Shannon Lienert; Molly Louise Wells and Christopher Carr-Jones. Following a photograph of all of the students, staff and guests, students were then presented with a commemorative gift from the Academy's sponsors, marking the Academy's first day. An October inauguration ceremony, led by the Archdeacon of Middlesex, Stephan Welch, will provide an opportunity to officially celebrate the opening of the new school. Specialising in the sciences, Chelsea Academy, jointly sponsored by the London Diocesan Board for Schools and the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, is the first secondary school to be built in the Royal Borough since the 1950s and is the fifth Church of England Academy to be set up in the Diocese of London. Upon completion, the school will eventually offer places for 1,060 pupils, including 250 Sixth Form places.

The Academy is currently in temporary accommodation in Hortensia Road in Chelsea and will move to a brand new building in nearby Lots Road in September 2010.

The Principal, Andy Yarrow said:

"It was a great honour to have both the Bishop of Kensington and the Leader of the Council with us for this special assembly on our very first day and served to reinforce the high expectations that we have for our students. Cllr Cockell, in particular, has worked tirelessly to bring this Academy into being, so I am delighted that he was able to share in the excitement of our very first day."

Councillor Merrick Cockell, Leader of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, said:

"This is a much-needed school in the south of the borough and one that the Council has worked tirelessly to deliver for over fifteen years. We have provided a prime site for the school on Lots Road, just off the King's Road, and backed the project financially to ensure that it would become a reality.

"Kensington and Chelsea is well known for the high standards of its schools. While this is something the Council can be proud of it has also created its own problems and disappointments for pupils who are unable to secure a place in one of our heavily oversubscribed schools. From now on over 150 more children a year will be able to be educated locally to the highest standard.

"I am confident that the Chelsea Academy, with its high calibre staff, will be a fine school and I look forward to its successes in the years ahead".

The Rt. Revd Paul Williams, Bishop of Kensington, said:

"Today we celebrate the birth of a new school. In the days and years to come the Chelsea Academy will be a place where young lives are shaped by a compelling vision of a world in which every person matters to God. I am delighted to share in what today means for the future of education in the borough. I congratulate all who have worked so hard to bring us to this point."

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