

Why an Inquiry?

Why an Independent Inquiry?

How the Inquiry was conducted

Chairman's Report

Statement from the Governing Body

The School of Economic Science

Independent Inspection Reports

The Schools Today

Governors Follow Up

Reconciliation

Clarification on Key Questions

Some Clarification on Key Questions

As the reconciliation process between former pupils and teachers gets underway, the Governors felt they might help the process by stating where they stand on a number of important questions.

1. The current parent body is generally supportive of the Governors in the manner in which the St James schools have undertaken an Independent Inquiry into past discipline policy and practice, and the transparent manner of the publication of its findings. All parents have been written to giving information and access to this website ([iirep.com](#)) and those without electronic communication have been offered hard copies of the Townend Report.
2. The Friends of St James is a strong, largely fund-raising, body of parents and supporters. It meets regularly and holds numerous events. Parents from all the schools are the driving force and have raised thousands of pounds to help the schools modernise, especially with IT equipment.
3. There are regular parent-teacher meetings and most pupils will be the subject of parent and school assessment at least twice per academic year. The Headteachers also hold several meetings with either particular groups of parents, or the whole parent body. These are to discuss academic programmes, various curriculum issues , plus meetings introducing philosophy and meditation. The Governors are not aware of a demand for a 'traditional' PTA. This is not unusual in the independent fee-paying educational sector where parental involvement is thoroughly encouraged in monitoring the progress and welfare of pupils.
4. All new parents are informed during their introductory meetings with Headteachers of the St James schools about the connection with the School of Economic Science (SoES). This connection is also made clear in prospectuses and websites, where there is a direct link to the website of the SoES. Allegations that this is a link which the schools would prefer to be hidden are part of a continuing attempt to 'smear' the SoES and its extraordinary contribution to the development of this educational initiative. Leon MacLaren, as founder, and many students at the SoES were pivotal in the development of this philosophically inspired education. Without them, it could not have happened. Today, more than 30 years on, the relationship between the St James Schools and the SoES has matured considerably. The happiness, brightness and ethos of love and service, experienced by the pupils, are however the consequence of Headteachers and staff who understand the value of a spiritual dimension in education. The Headteachers are appointed by the Governing Body and are members of the SoES. The Senior Tutor of the SoES is consulted on their appointments, along with others in the world of education.
5. There is no 'doctrine' taught at the St James Schools, nor are there hidden agendas.
6. All but one of the Governors is a member of the SoES. This is regarded as a considerable strength. The provision of a philosophically inspired education, where pupils from all the great faiths of the world are represented, as well as many who have no particular faith, is a huge challenge. There may come a time when the composition of the governing body needs to expand to include those not trained in philosophy by the SoES, but it is not at present. The current parent body have chosen these schools because of the distinctiveness of the education on offer and far from wanting to dilute the holistic approach to schooling, they wish to preserve it and where possible, strengthen it.

7. The Governors wish to restate their invitation to any former pupil or parent who would care to see today's schools in action to make an appointment to do so. Comments on educational matters or those relating to the schools' governance are best made from contemporary knowledge and fact, not past opinion and prejudice. The small group of hardened 'activists' who wish to remain anonymous in their criticisms of St James and, in particular, the SoES, are encouraged to step out from behind the shadows of the past and meet the Governors openly. As this group refuses to be named, the Governors are reduced to making this invitation generally via website, rather than in person.

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