



ARCHDIOCESE OF ST ANDREWS & EDINBURGH

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To the Catholics of Edinburgh

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Proposed removal of the Church Representative's voting rights

You may be aware that Councillor David Key of the Scottish National Party, has put forward a motion (addendum) that will be voted upon by elected members of the City of Edinburgh Council. An Equalities Impact Review has been carried out by an independent consultancy firm and representatives of the Archdiocese took part in this consultation.

It is expected that the elected members will discuss the content of this report and vote on whether to remove or retain the voting rights of Church Representatives on the Education, Children and Families Committee at a meeting on **22 June**. If this proposal was passed, it would effectively remove from the Church the ability to influence the running and direction of our Catholic schools.

As such, this proposal presents a serious threat to the identity and Catholicity of our schools in Edinburgh, and is also, in all probability, just the first step in the process to remove faith education from schools in Scotland altogether. To deprive the Church Representatives of voting rights on the Education, Children and Families Committee, where they sit on behalf of us, our children and our families, casts into serious doubt the commitment of some of our elected representatives to the future of Catholic schools.

The decision has not, however, been taken yet and there is still a small amount of time for you to influence your elected representatives, who are very sensitive to local opinion.

If you care about Catholic schools and if you want them to continue to flourish in the future, please write to your local councillor **as a matter of urgency** to ask him or her to vote against this proposal to remove the vote from the Church Representatives in Edinburgh. To assist you, postcards with a draft letter are being supplied to parishes today, although if you write a letter in your own words, it will be even more effective.

Many thanks for your help with this important effort.

Yours sincerely in Christ

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+Leo Cushley

Archbishop of St Andrews & Edinburgh