



**21 March 2014**

## **New opportunities for young choral talent in Liverpool**

St Edward's College, Liverpool which educates the Choristers of the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King, will today announce exciting proposals which will see significant developments and opportunities for prospective Cathedral Choristers.

The proposals will see the junior choir school, Runnymede St Edward's School, abandoning its independent status and joining St Edward's College to create an 'all through Academy' for pupils aged 4 to 18. For the first time seven-year old boys and girls will be able to enjoy a specialised choral musical education without reference to their parents needing to pay school fees – a unique opportunity in the UK for Catholic pupils.

Since the founding of the nation's oldest Choir school at Canterbury in 597, Cathedral schools have provided rich musical and educational opportunities for gifted children. Many of the country's finest musicians were choristers such as Sir David Willcocks at King's Cambridge along with child stars Aled Jones and Charlotte Church. Prominent figures in other diverse spheres of life such as England cricketer Alistair Cook, TV presenter Alexander Armstrong and Guardian Editor, Alan Rusbridger, were all choristers in their youth.

This announcement comes hot on the heels of history made by 11-year old Jack Topping, a Chorister and current College pupil, whose recent engagements included singing at the BBC's Festival of Remembrance before the Queen and performing the National Anthem at the 2013 Royal Variety Performance.

The Dean of the Metropolitan Cathedral, Father Tony O'Brien commented, "The Cathedral is extremely supportive of the plans to merge the two schools. The proposals will enhance the Mission and musical life of the Cathedral and simultaneously provide a unique opportunity for choristers unmatched elsewhere in the UK." Roger Overend, Chair of the Choir Schools' Association said, "This is very good news for choral music in Liverpool."

The proposals are also being supported by local MPs Stephen Twigg, Frank Field and George Howarth.

Principal, John Waszek stated, "The College has educated children in Liverpool since 1853 and has been the Cathedral Choir school since the early 1970s. We remain committed to offering a high quality Catholic education and believe that this proposal will enhance the provision for future generations of College pupils, including our Cathedral Choristers."

**Further details can be found on the College website: [www.st-edwards.co.uk](http://www.st-edwards.co.uk)**

*St Edward's College is a co-educational, Catholic Academy school of 1150 pupils and is Choir School to Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral. In all inspections by Ofsted, the College has been rated 'Outstanding' – a feat only achieved by the UK's top schools.*