

# Need to up game'

at the cost of diminishing outreach, Lord Patten said.

He called Pope Francis an "extraordinary communicator", who "makes us realise how much the rest of us have to do – to use a sporting phrase – to up our game!"

The Vatican has nearly a dozen separate communication outlets and offices, many of which operate independently of one another.

They include the Pontifical Council for Social Communications; the Vatican newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano*; Vatican

Radio; the Vatican television production studio, CTV; the Vatican Information Service; the Vatican press office; the Fides missionary news agency; the main Vatican website; the news.va news aggregator; the Vatican publishing house LEV; and the Vatican printing press.

A reorganisation of the media structures has been a long time in coming.

A papal commission kick-started the process in December 2013 when it hired the US-based global management consulting firm McKinsey & Company to provide

recommendations for making the Holy See's communications' outlets more "efficient and modern".

Lord Patten said the commission wants to hear from everyone, including the Vatican's own media operations, as well as bishops' conferences and outside journalists who cover the Vatican.

He said he hoped the commission would have proposals ready by early April to give to the Vatican's Secretariat of State and the Secretariat of the Economy.



Challenge – Lord Chris Patten

# 'Don't scapegoat private schools for society's ills'

Tara Holmes

A PROMINENT figure in Catholic education has backed a plea for private schools to be celebrated for their contribution to society rather than scapegoated for its ills.

John Shinkwin, general secretary of the Catholic Independent Schools' Conference (CISC), said this week: "The excellence of many independent schools does indeed play a crucial role in the raising of our nation's academic profile globally."

Mr Shinkwin, a former headteacher who has taught in both the Catholic maintained and independent sectors, added: "Perhaps the most important yet least recognised contribution made by independent schools to

the 'general good of society' is in the wide range of partnerships offered to communities in the poorest areas with the most paralysing social problems."

His comments followed a keynote speech this week by Richard Harman, chairman of HMC – the Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference.

In a thinly-veiled attack on politicians who criticise independent schools, despite having been privately educated themselves, the headmaster of Uppingham School in Rutland, said: "Stop using them as lazy shorthand for the social ills of our country."

"Move beyond envy and take collective pride in the fact that a small country like Britain has created some of the very best schools in the world."

Mr Shinkwin said there was

much to "applaud" in Mr Harman's speech at the HMC's annual conference in South Wales this week.

He added that the HMC chairman was particularly right to emphasise the contribution of independent schools to the country's economy, currently adding £12 million to the UK's GDP each year.

Turning to Catholic independent schools, the CISC general secretary, explained that these, too, exist for "the common good" by drawing on the charisms of their founder orders and dedicated educationalists.

He said: "Our policies provide for the generous awarding of scholarships and bursaries."

"We welcome pupils of all faiths and none to share in our message of excellence, of striving and of compassion."

"We work alongside neighbouring state schools in partnership, never in condescension."

Mr Shinkwin pointed to Stonyhurst College near Clitheroe, in Lancashire, which has formed "a relationship of equals" with a faith primary school in one of the most deprived areas of Everton, Liverpool.

He added: "This is just one of many examples. Our teachers give their services free to other schools. Most of our schools work in their communities, running food banks, visiting and helping older people in distributing food and soup to the homeless."

"CAFOD and other charities inspire our pupils to mad, hilarious and effective fundraising activities."

"We pray for the day when our common goals may destroy barriers."