

BOARD OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL PAMPHLETS

AN
EXPERIMENT IN RURAL
REORGANISATION

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LONDON

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PREFATORY NOTE

This pamphlet gives an account of the scheme which is being carried out by the East Suffolk Local Education Authority for the reorganisation of their schools for older children on the lines of the Report on the Education of the Adolescent. It appeared to the Board that many features of the scheme were likely to be of general interest, and they therefore decided to publish this account of it.

It will, of course, be understood that the methods adopted in East Suffolk, admirably adapted as they may be to the circumstances of the area, are not necessarily the most suitable for use elsewhere. It will also be obvious that in present circumstances the Board could not be expected to give any general endorsement of recommendations or suggestions which would involve increased expenditure from public funds.

While for these reasons the Board do not accept responsibility for any views or suggestions which the pamphlet embodies, they think that a study of this account of an actual reorganisation scheme can hardly fail to provoke a thoughtful approach to many of the problems of reorganisation in other areas.

The thanks of the Board are due to the Local Education Authority for the material which was generously placed at the Board's disposal, and in particular to the Authority's Education Secretary.

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AN EXPERIMENT IN RURAL REORGANISATION

“ There are three great ends of human life and activity which we trust that our scheme will help to promote. One is the forming and strengthening of character—individual and national character—through the placing of youth, in the hour of its growth ‘ as it were in the fair meadow ’ of a congenial and inspiring environment. Another is the training of boys and girls to delight in pursuits and rejoice in accomplishments—work in music and art ; work in wood and metal ; work in literature and the record of human history—which may become the recreation and the ornament of hours of leisure in mature years. And still another is the awakening and guiding of the practical intelligence, for the better and more skilled service of the community in all its multiple business and complex affairs”
—(“ The Education of the Adolescent,” p. xxiii.)

PART I.—ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS

1. Introduction : the scheme in general.

The Hadow reorganisation scheme for the County of East Suffolk was drawn up and presented to the Education Committee in 1929, and forwarded to the Board of Education after its adoption by the Local Education Authority. The scheme was, like many others presented by County Education Authorities, based on progression by stages until the whole of the County area was brought under reorganisation. The scheme proposed that the County area should be served by 56 "Area Schools", the term "Area School" being the one adopted by the Authority as the best description for a school of the Hadow type serving a specific area.

The actual selection of the Area School (except in those cases where a completely new school site was provided) was based mainly on what can be described as geographical principles, inasmuch as the Area School must be the school most suitably placed in relation to its satellite schools. Some account had of course to be taken of the suitability of the buildings for conversion to a school of the Hadow type. The selection of the Area School was further controlled by the method of conveyance which the Authority proposed to use. In a county where the climate is generally dry and where the terrain is flat, the pedal bicycle has been adopted as the standard form of transport for the conveyance of senior pupils. It was thought that a journey of not exceeding $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles to the Area School, i.e., a total ride of 9 miles per day, was not making unduly heavy calls upon the strength and vitality of the children, and the area served by the School was normally, therefore, an area within a radius of $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles. Obviously, in a county where the density and distribution of population vary considerably,

the fixing of an area of this size was bound to determine the number of pupils who would go to each particular school. There is, therefore, in the reorganisation scheme, nothing approaching a standard size of school; nor is there any attempt to achieve a one-form, two-form, or three-form entry, such as is possible in Urban Schools. Their experience of the working of Area Schools of various sizes has led the Authority to the conclusion that there is a very great deal to be gained by this variety of size, since it offers a variety of problems for solution and creates a variety of technique in the control and organisation of the schools.

Much of the success of the reorganisation scheme has been due to the comparatively restricted area from which the schools draw. It is much more easy to arouse local interest in a school which is easily accessible to Managers and parents. Further, the Authority had definitely in mind from the first the probability of opposition from parents to any wholesale removal of children from the village schools to a centre. For these reasons the Authority have felt it wise to approach the question of larger reorganisations cautiously, and by stages, leaving the amalgamation, where this was desirable, of adjacent areas, and the larger concentration of pupils, until the initial reorganisation was complete.

It has not been the general policy of the Authority to convey junior children to the Area School of the district. It has, however, usually been necessary to provide for the junior children of the village in which the Area School is placed, and accordingly many Area Schools have a Junior Division, which, of course, is generally small. The Head Teacher of the Area School, therefore, while he has to plan mainly for the senior children of his area, has also the task of supervising a small junior section of his own. In every case there is a clear line of demarcation between this junior section and the senior division. No children are retained in

the junior section beyond the normal age of promotion. The junior section is, therefore, for all practical purposes, a distinct school and the staff is specially chosen with this point in view.

An interesting development has been the gradual increase in the size of the site for the Area Schools. The Authority have found that within obvious limits, there is nothing which acts as a greater stimulus than to give the school a large site. In fact, one of the factors of success in the County's reorganised schools has been the conception of the school as a social unit, as nearly as possible a self-sufficing community, and of its site as an estate to be developed. It is the Authority's conviction that this principle is the key to success in rural reorganisation. As a rule, land in East Suffolk is not expensive, and it is usual for the Area Schools to possess or to have the use of sites of 5 or 6 acres.

In 1925 the Authority adopted bye-laws making 15, subject to exemptions, the upper age limit of compulsory school attendance. It is found that about half the children in the 14-15 age group leave school during the first four months after reaching the age of 14; about 25 per cent. leave between the end of the first four months and the end of the year, while 25 per cent. remain in attendance for the full year. While the higher leaving age is not regarded by the Authority as in any way an essential element in the success of their reorganisation scheme, it is indubitably an advantage to the Area Schools to retain a proportion of children over 14.

2. Stages in reorganisation.

The reorganisation scheme consisted of two parts, one dealing with possible Council Area Schools, and the other defining the Voluntary Schools which would in all probability become the Area Schools for their respective districts. This careful definition of functions between the Local Education Authority and the Church Authorities helps to make clear to both parties where their best endeavours

should be made. In all cases there has been an excellent understanding and working arrangements with the Diocesan Authorities. Thus, where a Voluntary School fell within the area prescribed for a Council Area School, the transfer of senior pupils from the Voluntary School to the Council Area School has been facilitated. Similarly, the Authority in their turn have agreed, in those districts in which a Voluntary School was deemed to be the Area School, to raise no opposition to the transfer of senior pupils from Council Schools falling within the district of the proposed voluntary Area School. With this difficulty, so often a vital one, out of the way, there has been no single instance in which the reorganisation scheme has been held up by any difficulty over this particular point. Progress has no doubt been made easier by the amicable arrangements which exist between the Voluntary Schools and the Authority regarding Religious Instruction ; some years ago an agreed syllabus was put into force over the whole of the County Schools with but one or two exceptions. This syllabus was the result of conferences between the various religious bodies in the County, the Education Authority and the teaching staffs.

In carrying out their scheme, the Authority have not only secured the reorganisation of the schools concerned, but have also cleared away a considerable number of schools the premises of which were noted as defective in the reports of 1925.

The reorganisation report indicated that the three years, 1930-33, would certainly not be adequate in a rural area for a complete reorganisation. The report therefore suggested certain definite portions of the scheme to be proceeded with in the three years 1930-33, and anticipated that the completion of the scheme would probably require at least another three-year period. A very important decision of the Education Committee that it would definitely undertake so much of the programme in each year, and carry

it out with precision, had considerable effect ; and in fact, up to the autumn of 1931, when the economy crisis came, the Authority's rate of progress had been strictly adhered to. The present position, i.e., at the end of 1932, is that the Authority have 12 Area Schools which may be stated to be fully equipped, and 6 others where the scheme has been partly completed. Three are Voluntary schools, and in one instance, the Managers of the school have spent considerable sums upon the equipment of their premises which are now reasonably up to the standard of a Council Area School.

3. The relationship of the Junior School to the Area School.

It was found necessary at an early stage to define the functions of the Junior School in relation to those of the Area School. There was and still is some risk that the Junior School would try to develop on the lines of the Area School.

In 1928 the Authority issued a memorandum on the Junior School curriculum in which it was pointed out that under the reorganisation scheme the Junior School would be responsible for the education of the children from the ages of 5 to 11, and that the schools should aim at reaching a standard of attainment equivalent to that reached in Standard IV of a good full-standard school. The memorandum goes on to say that this is approximately the standard required for the Authority's Minor Scholarship Examination, but that it is not the Authority's intention in any way to impose on the Junior School a narrow path of instruction, designed specially to produce successful candidates in the Examination. The strongest emphasis is laid on the undesirability of so narrow a conception of the Junior School curriculum as this would imply.

To consolidate the relationship between the Junior Schools and the Area School within the reorganised districts, it is customary to have conferences between all the Head

Teachers concerned. These conferences give opportunity for the discussion of the respective aims of the two types of school, and do much to facilitate the transition from the Junior to the Senior school. They are concerned with securing a common policy in the earlier stages of the teaching of such rudimentary subjects of instruction as reading, writing and arithmetic.

The reorganisation scheme envisages the transfer of pupils who subsequently develop on the more academic side from the Area Schools to Secondary Schools, and proposals are at present under consideration providing for this.

4. School Buildings.

The low costs of building in the County, in which the wages factor is the most important, have undoubtedly aided the Authority greatly by making it possible for them to build their schools economically. The schools are built of brick and tile, and their construction is inexpensive but sound. The ample building sites permit of a good setting. The classrooms are in most cases of the semi-open-air type in which both sets of windows, on either side of the room, can be folded completely back. On both sides the brickwork merely consists of a low wall, about three feet high, the rest being windows. All heating is by low pressure central heating, and all new buildings are wired for electricity, even in areas where it is not at present available. The grid-system is, however, well advanced in Suffolk. The cloak-rooms are specially heated to give good facilities for the drying of clothes.

The cost per place of the new Area Schools that have been provided has in no case exceeded £33, and for all these schools it averages approximately £30. In one interesting case, a junior school of similar type of construction, but without the special subjects rooms, was built at a cost of £17 10s. per school place. In the face of building costs of this kind, there appears to be little advantage in building

in any alternative construction. It should be remembered too that there is only a small proportion of solid walling in these school buildings and the saving to be obtained by the use of timber-framed buildings is therefore likely to be small.

The new Area School buildings in practically every case contain classroom accommodation for the total number of children on roll, and in addition full provision for Special Subjects.

Experience has shown that it is advisable to equip even the smaller schools with two separate rooms for practical instruction. Practical work, whether for boys or girls, requires its own atmosphere if it is to be effective ; where a single room is equipped for all the purposes of wood and metal work, and of cookery and laundrywork, the efficiency both of the handicraft and of the domestic work is impaired. Children as well as adults are very susceptible to environment, and the increased efficiency which comes from the use of rooms adapted for a single purpose is well worth what it costs.

The standard rooms now adopted for Special Subjects—one for Handicraft and the other for Domestic Science—are both of 1,000 square feet, and the large floor space allotted to these rooms has, in the Authority's experience, proved to have many advantages. The provision of a separate Science Room, for example, has in most cases not been considered, since it is possible, and in times of financial stringency necessary, to teach both Handicraft and Science in a room of this size. Financial considerations, too, have led to the omission of Halls from the new Area School buildings, and in such cases the large Special Subjects rooms have therefore to serve not only as dining rooms where the mid-day meal is taken, but as common rooms as well. In the majority of the schools, in addition to the Domestic Science Room, there is a Canteen Kitchen of suitable size for the provision of meals.

There are in the County area 186 School Gardens, and the Area School Gardens have been specially developed. It has been found very desirable to provide at each of the new Area Schools a large and substantially built shed of brick and tile for the storage of garden produce and tools, for potting shed activities, and so on. Hitherto, a small wooden hut had been provided, but this proved altogether inadequate for the purpose.

Further developments in the curricula of the Area Schools will no doubt bring about modifications in the schedule of accommodation. In the scheme of reorganisation for the area of Wickham Market, where a new school was being planned early in 1931, it was proposed to include, in addition to the normal accommodation, a Model Dairy for instruction in butter and cheese making, the hygienic handling of milk supplies, etc., etc. A further addition proposed was a Motor Mechanical Workshop in which instruction would be given in the care, maintenance and repair of all types of petrol engines used on the farm, i.e., motor tractors and the like. Both proposals were sympathetically considered, but had to be abandoned for the time being, owing to the urgent need for economy. There is, however, little doubt that opinion in favour of such additions is likely to grow.

5. Arrangements for Conveyance.

The cost of conveyance of senior children in reorganised areas has been a stumbling block in many county schemes. It was estimated that to provide 'bus conveyance for senior pupils under the Committee's complete scheme would probably amount to an annual sum of £40,000 to £45,000, and this estimate was made before the passing of the Road Traffic Act, which has generally operated to increase costs under this head. Having in view the high cost of conveyance by motor bus, and the fact, already referred to that the County is generally flat and the rainfall light, the

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Committee introduced its scheme of transport of senior pupils by cycle. The scheme was introduced in 1925, and from 1925 to 1929 its working was so uniformly successful, there being a complete absence of serious accidents and complaints, that the Authority decided to use it as the standard means of conveyance for senior pupils under the reorganisation scheme. So far the arrangement has worked satisfactorily and economically. The parents of children transferred from Junior Schools to Area Schools are offered the following alternatives :—

(1) The loan of a cycle together with waterproof cape and leggings, or

(2) A cycle allowance of £1 5s. per annum, out of which parents must undertake to provide a cycle.

At present there are approximately 750 cycles out on loan, and there are 90 cases where cycle allowances have been drawn instead of the cycle. The approximate life of a cycle is four years, and the annual cost of a reasonably good machine works out to the Authority at approximately £1 per annum. Under the scheme the parent signs an undertaking to keep the machine in good running repair, and there is a schedule in the agreement whereby the parent may purchase the machine at any time during the school life of the child for sums graded according to its use.

Investigation has been made from time to time into the effect of this daily cycling journey to school upon the health of the school child. The results of such investigation have shown that there is no doubt that the child benefits by the daily journey. There is certainly no evidence of any kind that the children who cycle are more likely to catch cold or to suffer from epidemic disease than the children who walk to school. It is noticed that the children who cycle to school are less tired when they arrive than many who walk. Enquiry has also been made from time to time whether the provision of a cycle does not affect the attendance of the child, since it was thought possible that the incidence of

wet days might have a bad effect on school attendance. Contrary to expectation, those schools where a large proportion of the children cycle to school compare very favourably indeed in this respect with the schools where the children have but a short journey on foot. The figures show that even on the wettest days the proportion of absentees among the children who come by cycle is smaller than the proportion among children whose homes are less than two miles from school.

6. School Canteens.

It has already been stated that the School Canteen is now a normal feature of the Area Schools of the County. There have been Canteens running in the County Schools since the end of the war, but the more complete and precise organisation of the work really dates from the inception of the Area School. In 1930, the Education Committee adopted a scheme for the provision of school canteens which covered not only the Area Schools, but every school which wished to run a Canteen. Broadly, the principles of the scheme are that the Authority provide where necessary land, buildings, furniture, and apparatus, for the setting up of a Canteen ; each Canteen has its own Canteen Committee, of which the Authority's Organiser of Domestic Science is a permanent member, and on which the School staff and the Managers are represented. The Authority, besides giving advice and general supervision, pay the wages, where necessary, of the Cook and her assistant ; the Canteen Committee of the school, on the other hand, undertake the purchase of the whole of the food and fuel and are responsible for all replacements of crockery, tableware and other charges. The Education Committee fix the price of school meals. In the Area Schools, the charge for a dinner is 3*d.* or 1*s.* per week per child ; it is reduced to 10*d.* per week per child if two or more children of the same family take dinner. Normally, Canteens run during the winter months, but any school may continue its Canteen during the summer

if it so wishes, and in fact several do. All profits of the Canteen are ascertained on the basis described above, and the school is allowed to retain 75 per cent. of the profits certified by the County Accountant, to be spent in any manner approved by the Education Committee on the development of the school activities. Some statistics relating to School Canteens and a typical school menu are included as an appendix to this pamphlet. The appendix quotes also some reports on the health of the school child in those schools where Canteen dinners are regularly taken. These reports form an admirable commentary on the part which the School Canteen may play in connexion with reorganisation schemes.

PART II.—THE SCHOOL AND THE CHILD

7. The School as an Estate.

The most marked influence of the new Area School on the adolescent child is the spacious planning and disposition of the school premises. The entrance of the children to the new school life is as the entrance to a new world, a world which they themselves can help to create and beautify, "a fair meadow" in the words of the Hadow report. The first step in directing the minds of the teachers towards the creation of this new environment was taken in a circular which the Secretary of the Local Education Authority sent out some two or three years ago. It was then suggested to the teachers that the gardens should be extended to include the whole of the school premises with a view to putting the school in an attractive setting. This circular has not only greatly influenced the care of the premises of the older schools; it has provided knowledge and technical experience for the lay-out of the new Area School. The only instruction given by the Authority has been that the school and its premises should be regarded as a small estate to be developed and kept in good order. The lay-out has then been left to the individual planning of the Head Teacher, with assistance from the Authority's Organisers of gardening. Marked individuality has been shown and the results have not only been attractive in themselves, but, as explained below, have led to a great extension of many forms of practical activities. Plans of a typical lay-out are appended to this pamphlet.

In order to obtain decorative effects there must be an initial outlay for trees, shrubs and plants which take some time to mature. Towards this outlay the Authority have made an allowance, but the greater part of the money has

been raised by local effort. Managers and others are proud of their schools. They not only back up the Headmasters in obtaining the requisite funds; they give help in the care of grass on the playing fields, and they give advice on local soils and on general maintenance. One Area School has raised more than £100 during the last twelve months. Local interest in the schools has been stimulated by the creation of augmented bodies of Managers, representing the whole district served.

Both boys and girls take part in the gardening activities. In one school where the soil is clayey and worked with difficulty, the boys have worked early in the morning as well as during the mid-day interval and after school hours in order to see their garden develop quickly. Rarely, indeed, is this care for the estate confined to school hours.

In addition to the decorative setting, general gardening is prominent in the curriculum. Large gardens are essential in order to allow of a progressive course with increasing responsibility for the older pupils, and already many of the gardens exceed an acre. The first two years of the course are spent in general training. After that, the boys have special responsibilities. In one school they have made three model cottage gardens each with an individual design; and each of these gardens is kept in order by a team of boys in their third year. Another school aims at devoting a considerable portion of the third year to a study of fruit culture.

It is obvious that gardening upon this scale allows of very great variety in practice; e.g., it includes not only the grafting of fruit but also the propagation of ornamental shrubs, the special attention needed for the cultivation of early crops and so on. The presence of a woodwork room within the school has enabled the boys to make garden frames and to plan and shape ornamental trellis and supports. At one school a small greenhouse is in course of erection and an ornamental pond with a bridge is almost

completed. Other features which may be mentioned are the use of local woods and materials in garden design. Some schools have established a practice of throwing open their gardens to parents on summer evenings, an extension of the parents' day which is much valued. The parents are greatly interested in all that they see and it is clear that there will be a future home for all the stock propagated by the children.

8. A Unified Curriculum.

The second important feature of the Area School is that the whole of the children's education is brought under one roof and under one direction. So long as practical activities were taught in Centres they were isolated from the general curriculum and from one another. The teachers of wood and metal work, and the teachers of Domestic Science, tended to develop their own technique. They worked in isolation not only from one another but from the Head Teachers and class teachers of the children whom they were instructing. Further, the influence of any Art or Craft work within the school was not really felt in the work of the Centre. The Area School has changed all this. Mention has already been made of the influence of the gardening upon the wood and metal work. The influence of the school garden extends also to Domestic Science, for the garden produces an excess both of vegetables and fruits which are preserved profitably to add to the variety of food in the canteen.

The difficulty of providing for full-time teachers both of Manual and Domestic instruction is being got over by allotting to these specialist teachers such other duties in connexion with the general instruction of the school as fall within the orbit of their principal subject.

Special skill either in art or in general craft work on the part of the men or women teachers of practical subjects can readily find an appropriate outlet in the Area School

and great variety can be brought into the school routine. These larger activities and points of contact between one part of the school work and another are found in practice to be of very great value.

The workshops themselves are being equipped much more in conformity with realistic practice in traditional crafts than ever before. This extension and modification of equipment sometimes includes a small electrically-driven lathe for wood and metal work together with a forge and a small equipment of the common and more useful appliances for metal work.

It is surprising not only how much can be accomplished in this direction, but how economically it can be accomplished by departing from formal work involving small and often useless exercises and by engaging upon bigger projects and more realistic activities. Experience has shown that there need be but little or no waste of materials; in several schools the making of small models and the performance of formal exercises have given place to the construction of good saleable articles for the home, and useful fittings and appliances for the school and garden. In one school in particular, the profits obtained by the adoption of really purposeful work have enabled the instructor to extend his workshop equipment very considerably.

In an increasing number of schools other practical crafts are making headway, e.g., Printing and Bookbinding—three schools print and publish their own magazine—Weaving, Pottery, etc. Stress is being laid only upon such crafts as have a traditional and well-defined craft history.

The increased respect shown towards practical activities and the enlarged knowledge of their possibilities are clearly reflected in the school Time Table. Opportunities both for English studies and Arithmetic arise naturally during the "Practical" lesson, with the result that less time need be spent upon formal Arithmetic and formal English. In

consequence, although practical activities occupy roughly one-half of the school time, other pursuits like literature, history and music, which may become "the ornament of hours of leisure in mature years," receive approximately the same number of hours as they did in the older regime. Further, as the teachers are developing a different outlook, they are attaching less and less importance to the type of class exercise which is merely sterile and academic. In other words, there is evidence of a greater determination to treat the English and the Arithmetic as the tools or instruments of all learning. A specimen summary Time Table is given in Appendix II.

The Head Teachers, impressed by the value of Practical Instruction, have determined that it shall not be of a lower standard than that reached hitherto in subjects of the older curriculum. There can be no good craft work where the principles of art are lacking. Hence, all types of teachers are demanding and obtaining, either through the local Schools of Art or sometimes in classes organised by the teachers themselves, the training necessary to acquire the requisite outlook and skill.

9. The problem of grading.

The great increase in the provision of Practical Instruction is throwing light upon a question of much importance, whether from the point of view of administration or of the actual organisation of the schools. The school work, by virtue of its approach to "real life", provides a common factor which makes it possible to teach within a single class children varying greatly in capacity and attainment. It is as yet early to make a definite pronouncement; but it seems as though the provision of two or more classes for children of varying ability but of the same year of age is not indispensable, and that children of the "A" and the "B" type can benefit from being taught in common. This is not to say, of course, that all the children will be expected to progress at the same pace. It means that the duller

child is enjoying and benefiting from the lesson which appeals to the brighter, and that the difficulties arising from the varying rates at which individual children develop can be met by varying the standard of achievement expected of them within the limits of the same, or much the same, class exercises. If this solution of a well recognised problem proves to be sound, the administrative difficulties associated with the organisation of Hadow schools in rural areas should be considerably diminished.

The Area School should, of course, be large enough to allow of a separate class for the children of each year.

The conferences between the Head Teachers of the Area Schools and the Heads of the Junior Schools in the area have already been mentioned. Even when a good general understanding has been secured between the head teachers and the groundwork is well planned in the junior school, it happens from various causes that some children reach the Senior school with a poor command of the elements. The mere repetition in the Senior School of the methods previously employed will not in itself necessarily produce improvement ; often the trouble is that a particular scheme of teaching, however well designed in general, has not met the needs of individual children.

An interesting example of variety in the treatment of difficult or backward children came to light in one of the Area Schools. The Head Master noticed that the boys were heavy in their bodily movements, and he experimented to see whether an agile body would produce an agile mind. He caused special attention to be given to exercises designed to produce agility such as jumping, leaping, turning somersaults, and so on. No special apparatus was employed, but the school mats were all brought into requisition. A very high standard of proficiency in these movements of the body was aimed at and secured. The boys exerted themselves to the full, and the power of concentration which they acquired in these exercises has

proved to be transferable to the activities of the classroom. There are possibilities in the further development of these methods. So far, there has been very little attempt in schools to deal with the clumsy finger movements which characterise "bad writers", although musicians and others have experimented with good effect on similar lines in musical training. If the inhibitions leading to clumsy movement could be removed, children would by the very increase of confidence find a new interest in what has always been to them an irksome task.

10. Games and Physical Activities.

One of the most marked influences of games and physical exercises, an influence not of course limited to the Area School but more quickly brought about under its general environment, is that on personal cleanliness and dress. A child who is unsuitably clothed cannot enjoy physical activity to the full, and he very soon becomes conscious of his disadvantage. It is, however, not only in the dress, but in general bearing of the children, that a change is noticeable. Freedom of space has given them a new poise of body and ease of movement. A visitor to one of the Area Schools observed that the children "walked about as if they belonged to a good boarding school".

Another very valuable feature in the general training is the wholesome rivalry in field sports. Sports are well organised and the children practise and train of their own accord. There are no prizes even at the County Meeting. It is sufficient that the children compete for the honour of their House, their School or their Area.

At the same time, it is felt that the Authority have not gone as far in their provision for physical education as may be possible in the future. They have deliberately built no halls in their new schools. They have refrained from doing so on grounds of economy and in the knowledge that the omission of the hall has made it possible to build a larger

number of schools out of limited funds. Without a hall, however, many of the exercises are impossible in the colder months of the year and there is a definite break in the continuity of the training. If physical exercises were merely movements of the body designed to promote general health, some form of appropriate activity could be improvised in the playground. If, however, physical exercises are to be a weapon in conquering slowness or lethargy of mind they will fail of their effect if the mental concentration which they require is lost by disuse.

11. The School as a Social Centre.

The provision of school halls would obviously also help the Schools to rise to the possibilities that lie before them as Social Centres. The addition of halls with the enlarged activities, both in and out of school hours, which this would make possible, would be a very great boon.

In the absence of school halls, in which the schools can meet together and realise themselves as corporate communities, valuable opportunities of training are lost, and grouped activity, what for want of a better term may be called "mass" instruction, is seriously curtailed.

Especially in some of these rural areas a school hall would meet a much felt want. Every school has a canteen, good cloakroom accommodation, and provision for housing bicycles; moreover, the playground is a good parking ground for cars. Unless there is a hall, however, there is no room readily available for comparatively large groupings for music, dancing, choral practice, lectures and the reception of wireless broadcasting. It is clear that people will not be induced to remain in country districts without some opportunity of social recreation and human intercourse. In no country in the world do personal riches follow rural pursuits: there is, however, a considerable strain of our population who are willing to suffer economic disabilities provided there are reasonable compensations.

By breaking down barriers and establishing contacts between what were formerly isolated villages, the Area School is already performing a valuable service to these rural communities. The effect of the schools in removing jealousies and promoting active co-operation between the youth of neighbouring villages is already apparent to the Head Teachers. Rural life has in the past suffered much from its isolation; it has suffered also by reason of its dependence on the leadership of a few. These few have given liberally of their time to leadership and social organisation, but there are naturally limits to service of this kind. The great mass of the people have been content to be guests in the countryside rather than hosts, and have felt only the responsibilities of guests. The vigorous community life fostered in the Area Schools should eventually find expression both in an expansion in the number of those able and willing to lead, and in a better mutual understanding.

12. "The skilled service of the Community."

It seems beyond doubt that children who are being educated in these conditions, and with the wider opportunities and fuller life which are possible in the Area Schools, must be acquiring capabilities and attitudes to life which will enable them to give a greater measure of skilled service to the community. People who live in the country must be capable of carrying out for themselves many services which are specialised in the hands of experts in the towns. The improved technical skill and knowledge which the children may be expected to acquire will enable them later on to take fuller advantage of the machinery and equipment which make for a better rural civilisation. In many directions the schools have thus an important contribution to make to the rural economy of the future.

An understanding of the principles and methods of science for example will lead to the choice and cultivation of the right kind of crops, and will adapt production more closely



to market requirements. Again, the schools are already giving a knowledge of the simpler uses of electricity, and of the care and maintenance of electrical appliances, and are preparing the countryside to take advantage of an electric supply. If the rural householder is to make effective use of electricity he must be able to trace and repair common defects with ease and confidence ; otherwise electricity will continue to be restricted in application and dear in price.

Machinery, too, will inevitably become more and more widely used in rural life ; the training in the school workshop is not merely encouraging general adaptability in the pupils, but is giving them command of tools and establishing a sense of confidence in their power of achievement. The more expensive machinery could be adopted in the countryside if it were used in common ; but its effective use and manipulation will be impossible without an adequate training and a sufficient measure of skill. The special workrooms which the Authority have it in mind to provide in selected areas should help to meet this need.

The girls are in various ways developing skill in crafts. The introduction of weaving is not only teaching them an interesting craft : it is giving them knowledge of the correct use of material and pattern. The varied courses in cookery are teaching the use of foods that are already to hand, especially the fresh vegetables and fruit so important in modern dietary. The girls are acquiring a knowledge of the daily routine of a house and they are acquiring it in well-designed and suitably equipped rooms. Such knowledge will clearly be of great value to them, and will be of special utility both to mistresses and to maids, if the girls enter, as so many of them do, domestic service as a future occupation. The Authority are thinking of providing instruction in dairy work, and this will add to the rural interests of the girls, and later on will contribute to the internal economy of farm life.

The sound training which the schools are giving in the care and skilled management of the garden should result in

a more skilled agriculture. What the children are now learning about the rearing of healthy plants can obviously be transferred to an understanding of the crops of the field. Children trained on these lines and equipped with some knowledge of the resources of modern science, should have a surer prospect of obtaining a living from the land and be the better able to enjoy rural pursuits.

One means that the schools have adopted of showing modern horticultural developments has been the cultivation of selected fruit stocks from the East Malling Research Station, which are being grown in selected gardens for general distribution. The experiments in manures and the use of well-known artificials which are already practised in the schools, will contribute to the same end. The increased production already obtained by these means cannot fail to stimulate improved practice in ordinary life. Furthermore, as fruit gardens become established, the schools can take the opportunity to teach crop preservation through spraying and washes.

The greenhouses and cold frames which the children themselves have made in some of the schools will show them how to raise those early crops which at present are so largely imported.

The science teaching is being turned to practical effect in many ways. It is for instance demonstrating the principles of plant culture and the mechanism of machinery. The children are learning from their own experiments not only the method of science but perhaps what is equally essential, the importance of planning and of working to exact directions.

It is not too much to anticipate that the existence of a well-trained and enterprising rural community will in course of time attract new industries, e.g., canning factories to East Suffolk, to dispose of the new products.

With these opportunities the schools may fairly be said not only to be giving the children increased powers of

earning a living, but also to be teaching them how to live. Rural life can indeed provide the sense of adventure and opportunity which country-bred youths are too apt to imagine to belong exclusively to the towns.

13. Conclusion.

It is evident that the results of reorganisation in this county, although the scheme is still a long way from completion, warrant the fullest confidence in the Hadow proposals. This confidence is based not merely on the relatively economical manner in which reorganisation has been carried to its present stage, but also on the overwhelming evidence that those children who are fortunate enough to come within the scope of the reorganisation scheme are benefiting materially as compared with children in other parts of the area. These benefits are seen not merely in the results of the instruction, practical and other, which the children receive, but also in the very obvious improvement in their health, deportment and confidence. Their characters are being developed in various directions, but especially towards a fuller appreciation of their social duties and their individual responsibilities. The experience of this Authority shows unmistakably that if education, and particularly rural education, is to be placed on a reasonably economical basis, while at the same time the rural child is to receive an education suitable to his type and environment, there is nothing better calculated than reorganisation to achieve these ends.

Finally, no praise can be too high for the spirit in which the teaching staffs have undertaken a new and difficult task. The reorganisation scheme has imposed on them heavy responsibilities. The preceding pages are evidence of the energy and initiative which they have brought to their work, and of the large measure of its success. The visitor to these schools cannot fail to be impressed by their atmosphere of happy, strenuous and orderly activity.

APPENDIX I

SCHOOL CANTEENS

1. Some statistics relating to School Canteens.

School.	Average daily number of children attending Canteen.	Fees received. Year 1931-32.	Profit. Year 1931-32.
School A	177	£ 42*	£ †
„ B	108	85	22
„ C	71	54	5
„ D	100	96	29
„ E	75	60	21
„ F	34	45	12

* This is the figure for six months only.

† Fees for March, 1932, not included, otherwise there would have been a small profit.

2. Typical Weekly Menus.

Winter.

Pea Soup, Dumplings and Potatoes, Currant or Currant and Apple Tart.

Savoury Roly-Poly, Greens, Potatoes and Gravy, Baked Bread Pudding.

Chip Potatoes, Butter Beans, Parsley Sauce, Sultana, Fig or Date Pudding and Sauce.

Vegetable Pie, with pastry crust, stewed rice and syrup.

Vegetable Stew, Potatoes (baked in their skins), Ginger Pudding and Custard Sauce, or Jam Roly-Poly†.

Summer.

Fish Pie, Potatoes, Cottage Pudding.

Cheese and Potato Pie, Apple or Jam Tart.

Meat and Vegetable pultus, Salad, Potatoes, Fruit Mould and Custard.

Sausage and Vegetable Rolls, mashed potatoes, gravy, greens, Milk Pudding.

Mashed Potatoes and Carrots, Peas or Beans and Gravy, Sultana or Currant Pudding and Sauce.

3. Notes by Head Teachers.

The following notes consist of—(a) a Report quoted verbatim from one School, and (b) other points collected from a series of Reports by Head Teachers.

(a) "The benefits derived from running a School Canteen in connection with a school can be placed under two headings:—

- (1) Physical.
- (2) Educational.

(1) *The Physical Benefits.*—It is obviously not possible to observe definite results in all cases. Children who are normally well-fed at home naturally show little or no improvement as a result of regular Canteen dinners. It is the underfed child that provides the best case. There have been one or two remarkable instances of this kind in our own Canteen. In one case in particular, a boy whose mother was employed during the dinner time, and whose mid-day meal had previously consisted of bread and dripping, which he had to get himself, has shown a wonderful improvement in health and vitality. He now has a healthy fresh colour in place of pale cheeks, and takes much greater interest in his school activities. There are many other instances of a less marked nature, and in all cases where the home conditions are poor, and regular meals few and of poor quality, the improvement physically has been most marked. In such cases the appreciation shown by both parents and children has been most gratifying.

Two or three cases have come to our notice of boys who, from the money obtained from out-of-school employment, have been able to have regular Canteen meals. Needless to say, we always take special care of a boy of this kind, and if possible, give him second helpings.

The beneficial effects are less noticeable with girls. I think the reason is that girls require less food to maintain them in health than boys. They do not show the effects of poor feeding so much as boys. At Canteen dinners, the girls eat far less per head than boys. It is the boys who are always ready for second helpings if available.

I think it can be safely asserted that the dinners provided at School are better than 90 per cent. of the dinners provided at home, particularly in food value. A local doctor recently informed me that he was amazed at the amount of tinned food used in the poorer homes. Good soups and nutritious puddings are almost entirely unknown. From this point of view alone, School dinners are making up a serious deficiency in the children's diet.

Unfortunately, many of the most deserving cases, and those who require the meals most, are unable to afford them. This applies particularly to the large families.

Another of the physical benefits derived is that children who stay to Canteen dinners are not exposed to inclement weather during the mid-day recess. They remain at school from 9 o'clock in the morning until 4 o'clock in the afternoon, and should the weather be bad after Canteen dinner, they remain in school and amuse themselves with games, reading and dancing under supervision. Hence, colds and illnesses are less frequent.

The improvement in vitality is easily observed. The children who stay to Canteen dinner are able to save the energy which they would otherwise expend on walking or cycling home, and after a short period of recreation, are more prepared for the afternoon session than those who go home to dinner. Our experience is that Canteen children can actually be picked out from a class during the afternoon, solely by the greater vitality shown, and increased interest in school work.

In comparison with children who bring a packed lunch, the difference is most marked. Apart from the fact that the food brought is cold and stale, the element of surprise is missing. To my mind the greatest aid to digestion and the enjoyment of food is in not knowing exactly what the meal is going to be, or what it is going to taste like.

(2) *The Educational Benefits.*—The educational value of a School Canteen is, to my mind, of greater importance even than the physical benefits. The Canteen meal provides an opportunity for an informal School gathering under pleasant, and reasonably unrestricted, conditions. Here the children sit in their Houses with their leaders in charge. House Captains serve the meals on their tables, and are responsible for table behaviour. This is of very real value to the School discipline and organisation. It makes the House system something of real meaning. Even the marshalling of the children for dinner is in the hands of the House Captains. At table, House matters are discussed informally, and the children derive great benefit from that interchange of ideas which comes freely whilst sitting at meals. As one important visitor said:—'This mid-day meal, if run on right lines, gives the atmosphere of a good boarding school.'

The avoidance of colds and illnesses referred to previously naturally results in improved school attendance. If the children can get to school in the morning, and they generally succeed whatever the weather may be, they have no further exposure until they go home again in the afternoon.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize the fact that here a great deal of the School organisation centres round the Canteen. Hence it was that an attempt was made to carry on throughout the year. This experiment has proved successful from every point of view, and the resulting improvement in the children's manners and general bearing both in the Dining Room and throughout the School amply repays the extra work and trouble entailed. I cannot close, however, without paying a well deserved tribute to a willing and enthusiastic staff."

(b) The following further points are taken from other Reports :—

"The meal seems to help children over the period of lowest vitality, i.e., 2-3 p.m. They are less sleepy, more alert, and better able to concentrate. Owing to my Canteen running *periodically*, I have had excellent opportunity for comparative observation on this point."

"During several school epidemics (chiefly measles, whooping cough, and mumps) it has been noticeable to a remarkable degree that children who take the meals regularly either escape altogether, or succumb at a later period than the others. Non-Canteen children take the infection first. It seems natural to conclude that the meals strengthen the child's resistance to infection."

"Parents who have paid for a week's meals want their money's worth and rarely keep their children away except for sickness."

"I have frequently found children who have been unavoidably absent during the morning waiting at the school door at 12 noon in order to get their Canteen dinner. They remain, of course, for the afternoon session."

"I adopt the Rota System of helping to prepare the dinners among the Senior girls. They get used to handling utensils, etc., and employers have told me that these girls on leaving school for Domestic Service show unusual deftness and 'handiness' in the kitchen. I take this as cause and effect, especially as in my former school the girls had no facilities for formal Domestic Science. A large girls' boarding school where a numerous domestic staff is employed, told me that they would be glad to have all the girls I could send them, giving this as the reason."

"During the recent period of widespread sickness (January and February 1933) the percentage of attendance at the Canteen has invariably been higher than the percentage of Attendance at the school. The percentage of average attendance at the school during 6 weeks ending February 17th, has been 74·7: during the same period the attendance at the Canteen has been 82 per cent. of the normal. These figures are strong evidence of the beneficial effects of school dinners."

APPENDIX II
SUMMARY OF A SENIOR SCHOOL TIME TABLE

Subject.	1st Year.	2nd Year.	3rd and 4th Years.	
			Normal children.	Retarded children.
Religious Knowledge ..	2.55 125	2.55 125	2.55 125	2.55 125
<i>Form Subjects.</i>				
Arithmetic ..	6.55 297	3.15 139	3.15 139	2.00 86
English ..				
Composition ..				
Reading ..				
Literature	1.00 43	1.00 43	1.00 43	1.00 43
History and Geography	2.55 125	2.20 100	2.55 125	2.10 93
Music40 28	.40 28	.40 28	.40 28
Art and Handwork ..	2.15 96	2.15 96	2.00 86	1.00 43
Science	2.00 86	2.00 86	2.00 86	2.00 86
Physical Training and } Games	2.00 86	2.00 86	2.00 86	2.00 86
Gardening, practical and } theoretical .. (B.)	3.30 150	3.30 150	3.15 139	3.15 139
(G.)	1.00 43	1.00 43	.30 22	.30 22
Needlework .. (G.)	2.30 107	2.30 107	2.45 118	2.45 118
Domestic Science (G.)	—	4.15 182	4.15 182	4.15 182
(B.)	—	—	—	3.15 139
Manual Training (B.)	—	4.15 182	4.15 182	4.15 182
(G.)	—	—	—	3.15 139

(B.) = Boys. (G.) = Girls.

The first line of figures opposite the subject gives the hours and minutes per week, the line below the hours per annum approximately.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE SUMMARY

In the first year, the time given to Form subjects is considerable, as this period is looked upon as a time of consolidation in such academic subjects as Arithmetic, English Composition and Reading. In both the normal and retarded class an endeavour is made to reach a certain minimum standard of attainment in these key subjects. This is found to be an essential procedure in view of the variety of material being received from the contributory Junior Schools.

In the second, third and fourth years, the time given to the academic subjects is greatly reduced, practical subjects such as Manual Training and Domestic Science, having been introduced. In the Third and Fourth Year Retarded Class, the time for the academic subjects reaches the minimum, and practical work occupies a large part of the Time Table.

Form subjects are taken in Form by the Assistant in charge, and the time devoted to each of the Form subjects is left to the discretion of the teacher. All other subjects are taken by members of the staff who specialise.

It will be observed that until the Third Year is reached there is no difference in the times allotted to the various subjects between the Normal and Retarded classes. As little distinction as possible is made between these groups. The work of the Normal and Retarded classes of the same year runs on almost identical lines. Transfer from one to the other is easy, and possible at any time of the year. It is not until the Third Year is reached that a real break-away is made from academic subjects by those who have shown conclusively that little can be gained by a continuation of such studies.

History and Geography are shown together, the procedure being to devote one week to History and the next to Geography. In this way the pupils can give the whole of their time to the one subject, this being found more satisfactory than dividing the attention between the two subjects during the one week.

The time given to some subjects remain constant throughout. In such cases it is thought that the considerations governing the allotment of time as between normal and retarded children do not apply. For instance, in Literature, Music, Science and Physical Training, retarded pupils are found to respond almost as well as normal pupils.

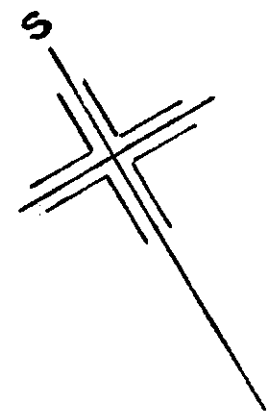
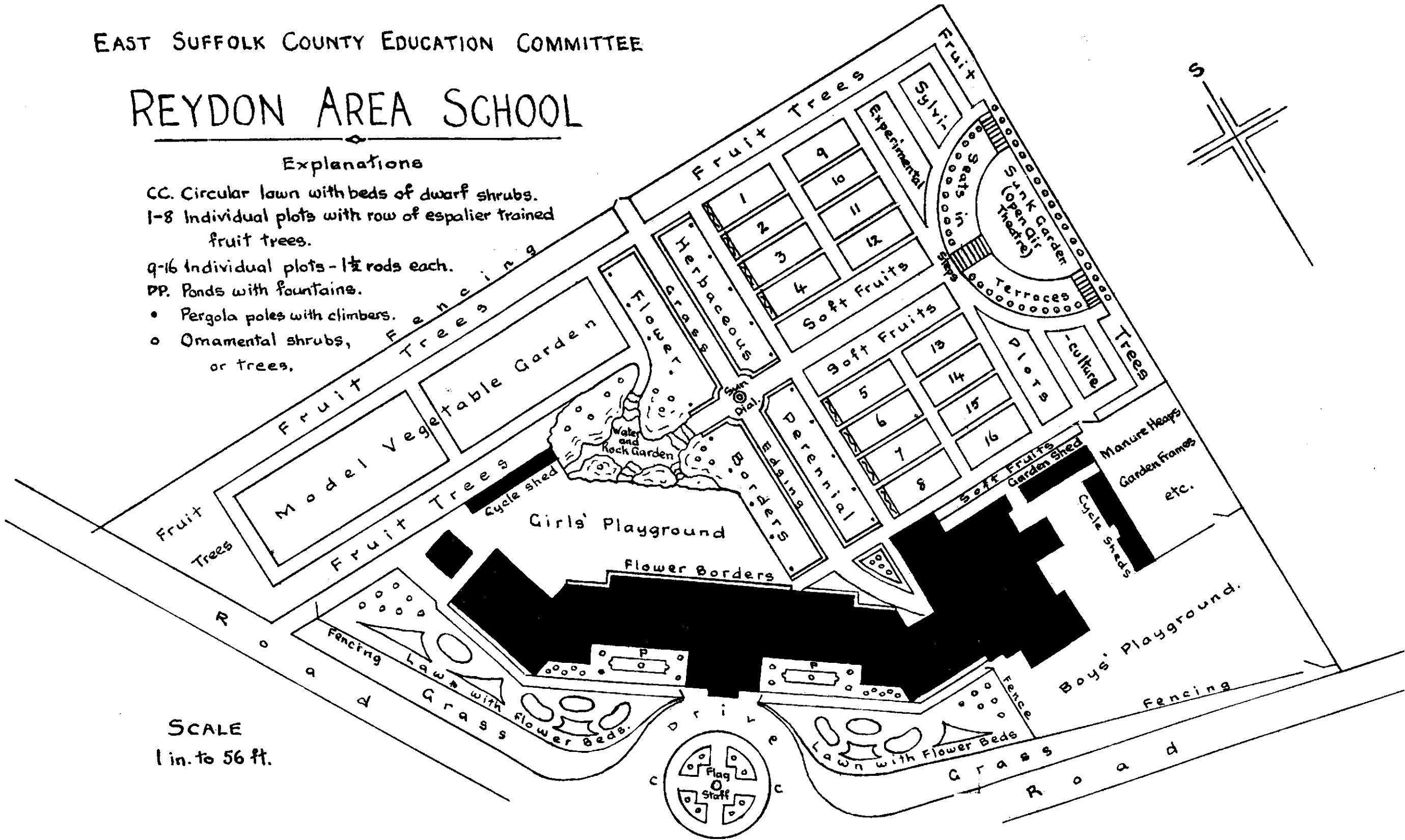
No set periods of Private Study are shown, as most of the longer lesson periods terminate with a short time devoted to this object. The majority of the lesson periods are of 60 minutes duration, and some are seventy-five minutes.

In the Third Year Retarded Class the boys take a Course of Domestic Science, and the girls a Course of Manual Training.

REYDON AREA SCHOOL

Explanations

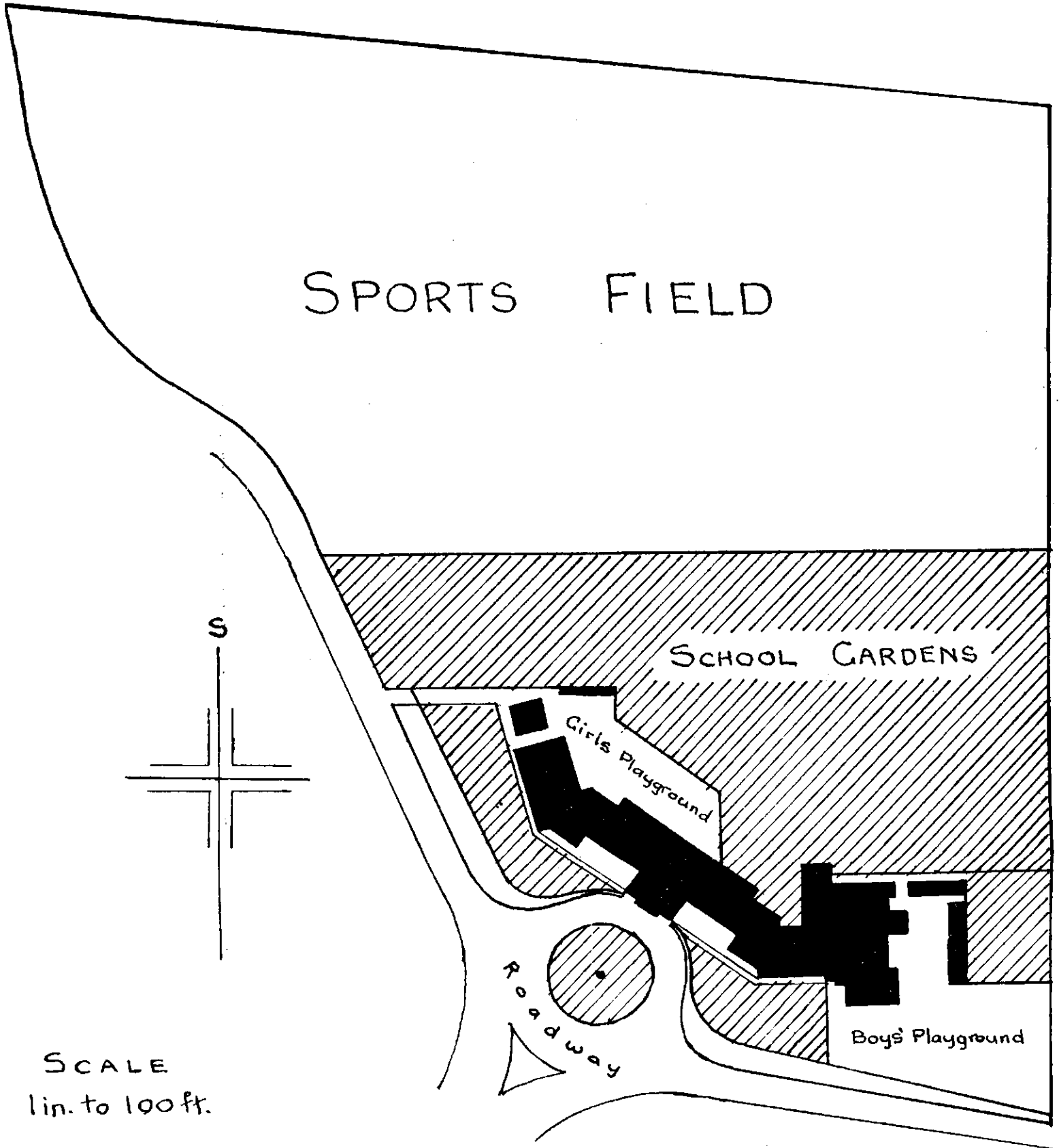
- CC. Circular lawn with beds of dwarf shrubs.
- 1-8 Individual plots with row of espalier trained fruit trees.
- 9-16 Individual plots - 1½ rods each.
- PP. Ponds with fountains.
- Pergola poles with climbers.
- Ornamental shrubs, or trees.



SCALE
1 in. to 56 ft.

REYDON AREA SCHOOL

Plan showing relative areas and positions of
School Buildings, Playgrounds, Gardens
and Sports Field.



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