

## Wrecclesham National School

The notes of meetings held at this school in 1906 detail a number of problems to be addressed. These meetings were chaired by Rev Charles H Keable and recorded by Edgar Kempson. A recurring theme is the need for a drainage system for the school but also repeatedly mentioned is the physical state both of the school and the Headmaster's House. The existing building had no footings or damp proof course.

Money was frequently put aside for remedial work on a number of occasions and the architect called in to inspect the building said that, in his opinion, the statement that the school was slipping down the hill was misleading. Even so the Headmaster, Mr Trim, was given permission to move out of the house and into accommodation he found for himself. Additionally part of one classroom was partitioned off as being unfit for use. Finally it was agreed that the building "might become dangerous at any time."

As a result it was decided that a new school needed to be built. A site was found on land owned by a gravel company and 2 acres were bought at a projected price of £130 per acre which later rose to £150. The land included a right of way through to Shortheath Road. This was on a continuation of Little Green Lane. It sounds very much as though Little Green Lane did not go on past the new school at this time.

The new school was to be built for a school population of 250 pupils and a similarly sized school in Cheam had recently been built at a cost of £2,400. One member of the managers pointed out that this price included the cost of water closets and earth closets would save money.

10 square feet were allocated for each child. Thus a room of 44 feet by 18 feet could accommodate 79 children. The welfare of children does not seem to have been high on the list of priorities. In addition to the suggestion that earth closets would be a suitable, cheaper alternative to water closets, another suggestion that a charitable gift of £15 a year could be usefully spent on "underfed" children was rejected by the managers.

Further the charge of a parent that inappropriate punishment had been meted out to her child was considered by the governors and rejected. She was instructed to withdraw the charge.

The year of 1906 finished early because of an outbreak of scarlet fever in which over 100 children were absent from school.

Equal pay was not considered in any way. The Headmaster, Mr Trim was granted a rise of £5 bringing his salary to the princely sum of £224 a year. The other male teacher received a similar rise bringing his salary to £113 but the female member of staff, Miss Rowlandson was only granted a further £3 bringing her salary to £66/10. Even the caretaker earned £1 week!

A pay rise was offered to one teacher on condition that there would be an improvement in the deportment and tone of the children in their behaviour during drill instruction.