

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

REPORT BY H. M. INSPECTORS ON

*Wymondham College,  
Norfolk*

INSPECTED ON 11th, 12th, 13th and 14th NOVEMBER, 1958

NOTES

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MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, CURZON ST., W.1.

## *Nature and Scope*

The temporary buildings on the site were constructed for the American Forces and used as a hospital. After the war they were converted into an Emergency Training College and after the last course ended in 1950 the Norfolk County Council purchased the buildings and site.

In considering the needs of a scattered rural area the Authority decided that secondary technical education could not be offered except through a boarding school, and the original entry was destined to take a secondary technical course as it was then understood. This entry was made up entirely of pupils who had not obtained a grammar school place, either at 11 or subsequently. The senior forms were made up of about 60 pupils of 13+ who had tried on two previous occasions to enter selective schools. The total entry was 310. At this time the Authority had in being several centres in which a number of children of 13+ years old were being offered a three-year Special Grammar School Course leading to the Ordinary level examination in some subjects. The opening of the boarding school made possible the concentration of these Special Grammar School Courses at Wymondham. Until 1956 the two schools ran separately and there was very little co-ordination between the two courses except at Sixth Form level. When the Head Mistress of the Special Grammar School Course left, the two schools were amalgamated, their curricula were reconsidered, and wider opportunities became available for both the 11+ and 13+ entrants. Entry was stabilised at three forms at 11 years of age and two at 13 years of age.

From the very beginning there has been a steady improvement in the quality of the 11 year old entrants, and in 1958 the whole entry of 105 had been chosen for selective schools and had given Wymondham College as their first choice. The general level of ability of the 13+ entry has not varied much, but the competition for a place is considerable - this year the 62 entrants were chosen from an original field of about 600. There is no longer any question of separation of the two entries, and the College can now be properly defined as "a maintained secondary boarding school offering a wide variety of courses to selected pupils, some of whom enter later than the conventional age of transfer". Among these selected pupils there is a considerable spread both socially and geographically. All areas in the County are represented, and at present no fewer than 63 pupils are domiciled outside the County even though they were resident in Norfolk at the age of transfer. A high proportion of this number are the children of Service parents. There are now 704 pupils on roll, 394 being boys.

From information provided by the School it is possible to consider the career of pupils who have been through the School, most of them comparatively unpromising as far as academic attainment on entry was concerned. Of the 375 leavers over the last three years 18 have entered Universities, 29 have entered Training Colleges, and another 22 have gone on to some other form of full-time education. Fifty-nine boys have entered engineering at one level or another; 11 of them have embarked on Sandwich Courses and another 20 on apprenticeships. On the girls' side 26 have entered nursing. Clerical posts have taken a further 48. A small number of boys - 7 - have gone on to agricultural training. This low figure

is perhaps a little surprising in view of the fact that the School offers a course in Agricultural Science, but discussion with the boys suggests that the absence of what may be termed 'middle' posts in agriculture may be responsible for it. Other work taken up shows an appropriate variety and includes such occupations as food technology, laboratory work, architecture and meteorology. It would seem then that, judged by the criterion of employment, the School has opened a good many doors that might otherwise have been shut to their pupils. If examination results can be taken as an additional criterion of success, then of 307 leavers who sat for external examinations 167 of them gained passes in five subjects at Ordinary level in the General Certificate of Education or achieved something better. It is an interesting and significant fact that of the 24 boys and girls who left in July 1958 with two or more Advanced level subjects six were late entrants at 13 or 14. The School's first State Scholar, who left in 1956, was also a late entrant. There has been little early leaving, only 21 of the 375 having left below the age of 16 without taking any external examination.

The Sixth Form has grown rapidly. At present there are 108 in it and of this number 96 are following courses which can be considered as involving genuine advanced studies. The other twelve are in the General Sixth Form, which offers at present a one-year course in which the aim is, on the whole, rather different. Of this total of 108, 39 pupils entered the School at 13 years of age.

The normal entry at 11+ has varied from 80 to 90 or thereabouts, but this year, because of the extra pressure of a very large age group, the Authority felt bound to admit 105. It is to be hoped that this is an exceptional case, for otherwise, the accommodation of the School will be severely taxed.

Although outside the scope of the present Inspection, it has to be recorded that the Authority maintains here a one-year Commercial Course for girls who have left Secondary Modern Schools at the age of 15. They attend as weekly boarders, and though they come under the general control of the Warden and can join the outside activities of the School, they are in some respects outside the main life of the community. They do not wear school uniform and they occupy a separate boarding hostel. In addition one group of buildings on the site is used by the Authority for adult education - notably teachers' week-end courses - and this again, though the overall responsibility of the Warden, is run directly by an Assistant Warden. It is intended that both of these activities, which are outside those belonging primarily to the School, will be provided for in the final building scheme.

### *Government and Administration*

Until now the College has been governed by a sub-committee of the Norfolk Education Committee, and no Articles of Government have yet been submitted. Because of the unusual nature of the School, and also because of the related adult education block, it was felt that the final pattern of government and Governing Body should not be decided on too quickly. Negotiations on these questions are at present proceeding. The members of the sub-committee concerned have given most valuable and devoted service to the task, and the constitution of the sub-committee has allowed a wide range of interests to be represented.

The complications of the take-over from Emergency Training College buildings, and of the original existence of what were virtually two separate schools, have now very largely been overcome in the general administration of the College. The appointment of a Domestic Bursar with secretarial help has allowed a much more definite organisation to be set up, and general control now appears to be most satisfactory. The Warden, who is Head Master of the School and also responsible for the College as a whole, has secretarial assistance, but the load of work here appears at times to be rather heavy. The domestic side of house life seems very well catered for and very well organised.

One feature that perhaps calls for reconsideration is that of maintenance. It would be a great advantage if there were a permanent resident maintenance officer responsible directly to the Warden: the present maintenance engineer has many calls on his time for other County matters.

## *Premises*

### *1. Teaching accommodation*

Conditions inside the classrooms and specialist rooms are very much better than might be imagined from the outside view of widely dispersed Nissen huts and other temporary buildings. The classrooms are a little variable - some have poor blackboards, some have unsealed concrete floors and some are passage rooms, but on the whole they are adequate. The specialist rooms are surprisingly good. Adaptations have been ingenious and the Authority has equipped the rooms very well indeed; the science laboratories and housecraft rooms are particularly deserving of praise. The technical drawing office has been furnished by the School itself and makes admirable provision for the work done. The Chapel is a very good example of how internally attractive such unpromising looking huts can be made. But, allowing for all that is good, it remains true that there are many disadvantages. The semi-circular roof and wall-space of the huts makes display most difficult; the dispersal of the huts means long out-door journeys, trying in bad weather and at night; noise insulation is not always adequate, and those subjects that require something more than an ordinary classroom and yet do not call for fully specialist rooms are difficult to cater for. The rate of dilapidation appears to be increasing. With what it has the School manages very well, and the pupils face the difficulties with equanimity, but the sooner they can get into properly designed and permanent accommodation the better.

The worst features of the whole of the teaching accommodation are the two gymnasias and their ancillary rooms. The many drawbacks are dealt with in detail in the section of the report on Physical Education, but general conditions are so bad that the building of a gymnasium block with all the necessary adjuncts should be considered as having urgent priority. Since this is planned as a separate unit from the rest of the permanent teaching accommodation it might be possible to consider building this block before all the boarding houses have been finished. A major disadvantage of the buildings used for physical education at present is that good habits inculcated in the Houses are almost impossible to maintain in the gymnasium changing accommodation.

Fortunately the School has excellent playing fields, and the way in which pupils and staff have undertaken the levelling and improvement of the lower field and the reconstruction of the pavilion is most praiseworthy.

The Authority has done well, but the provision of more worthy premises should be made as soon as possible.

## *2. Boarding accommodation*

### *(a) General*

The first two permanent Halls are now occupied. Peel Hall was completed in 1957 and Lincoln Hall in 1958. Each was designed to accommodate 120 pupils, in two Houses of 60 each. They were originally intended for boys, but when it was clear that the total programme was going to be spread out over a number of years it was felt desirable to give the girls the first opportunity of permanent housing, particularly as, with fewer girls than boys in the school, it would be possible to accommodate them all in the two Halls plus an annexe. This was done, and there are now 256 girls in the Halls and 54 in the annexe, which is only used for sleeping. These girls join the Houses for meals, common room facilities and preparation. By reserving the annexe for girls in the Fourth Forms the physically less attractive conditions here are experienced by all in turn for one year only. The third Hall, now being built, will when finished become a girls' Hall and boys will move into one of the Halls now occupied by girls. Some of the implications of this move are considered later.

The generous provision of books by the County Library allows each of the eight Houses to have a very satisfactory library of 250 books which are changed round every half-term.

Some points of organisation and detail concerning the feeding of the College were discussed with the Domestic Bursar and the supervisors. In general it may be said that the meals are well prepared and well served, and adequate in quantity, though more use of fruit, both fresh and cooked, is recommended. The boys continue to feed centrally while they wait for their permanent Houses, and their meals are very efficiently organised. The girls' dining halls are rather crowded at present because of the extra number being carried by each House. The very attractive furniture has been made in the College workshops.

A rather striking feature of House life is the part played by the Matrons, who are all extremely interested in their charges and play a much more responsible part than is often the case.

### *(b) Boys' boarding*

The four boys' Houses are accommodated in Nissen huts. They each have dormitories and day rooms in them, together with small rooms for house prefects and Sixth Formers. The conditions, while spartan, are tolerable, and in fact since the move of the girls into Peel and Lincoln, the boys have had a good deal more room. Each House has a large day room, in which some indoor games can be played, and a smaller reading room. The dormitories are large, most being of the order of 28 beds, and while one or two of them

are as full as they should be, they are reasonably light and airy. Washing and lavatory provision is adequate.

Evening preparation has to be done in classrooms. Although this is well handled it does entail a good deal of movement about the site after dark; there are obvious disadvantages in bad weather and a fairly considerable amount of time must be lost because of it.

*(c) Girls' boarding*

The new Halls are for the most part quite admirable. They are furnished and equipped so as to present high standards to the girls, many of whom would not have the opportunity of living so graciously otherwise. Each House is planned on the basis of four units of 15, and each unit is made up by planning bedrooms for seven, three, and three and two for one, occupied according to seniority. These rooms are extremely pleasant in every way. As a temporary measure the unit has been increased to 16 by putting an extra bed in one of the rooms for three - this is not objectionable as a short-term policy and it explains why the total in Houses is 256 instead of 240.

There are, however, some drawbacks in the working of the Houses now, and there are likely to be others when they become boys' Houses. With the girls in residence there is some evidence of pressure on washing accommodation in the morning and this may well be intensified when the boys take over. There is very little space for storage - particularly for things like tuck boxes. There is no room that can be used as a general utility room, with perhaps some facilities for ironing. The kitchen staff have nothing in the way of a small rest room. Although the kitchen seems a little small - one kitchen serves both Houses - this disadvantage will eventually be put right as a block for the central pre-preparation of food to serve all Houses is allowed for in the final plans.

The most serious difficulty relates to the day rooms. The larger one is excellently furnished as a quiet room and lounge and serves its purpose admirably. The smaller one has to be furnished with small tables and lockers in order that preparation can be done there. Thus during those periods of the day when all the members of the House are present in day rooms there is some feeling of crowding. This will remain true even when the House numbers are reduced to 60. Girls usually sit and read or sew at such times and because of this the accommodation appears, in a sense, more nearly adequate than it really is. Certainly anything in the way of the physical activity that might be expected from small boys is precluded, and this raises a question that must be considered in relation to the over-all accommodation. In the first stages of the take-over by the boys of permanent House accommodation it seems desirable that some of the temporary accommodation should be retained for use by them as play rooms. It seems quite essential that in the final plans the same kind of allowance must be made - there must be somewhere, in addition to the House day rooms, where pupils can go to play games which are inappropriate in the Houses. Only by some such device will the House rooms be large enough and will it be possible to retain present standards of furnishing and comfort. Such additional rooms might be planned partly as constituents of the Physical Education block or partly as additional annexes to the halls; it might be possible even to add them to the existing halls on the flat roof section.

Evening preparation is done in Houses, with the senior girls using their very attractive study-bedrooms and the others using the dining hall as well as one of the day rooms. This arrangement would appear to be quite satisfactory, although the wide age range means certain complications when different age groups have different times for late drinks and prayers.

The final shape of the boarding accommodation may not yet be so fully determined as to make it impossible to consider an alternative to the system as seen in the two girls' Halls. It might be considered whether, in view of the rather different interests and activities of the 11 and 12 year olds from those of the older pupils, some of the Houses yet to be built might be designed as 'Junior' or 'Waiting' Houses for this age range only. Dormitories at this stage could be larger, the furnishing of day rooms simpler and, perhaps, evening preparation might be associated with some parts of the permanent teaching block. The pupils could then move up at 13 to the main 'Houses' with an added sense of responsibility and an easier transition to the more sophisticated life of a Senior house. Such an organisation would go some way to solving the problem of play rooms, since central provision for Seniors only might be more easily organised than that for a full age range.

#### *(d) The Staff*

No mention of boarding conditions would be complete without some tribute to the teaching staff for the way in which they have accepted living conditions which are far from ideal. The chalets lived in by many of the married staff are unattractive externally and not large. The rooms in the boys' houses for the assistant house masters are rather primitive. Much has been done in an attempt to ameliorate the conditions, but once again permanent building is the only real solution. The quarters provided in the new Halls are very pleasant indeed and afford a great contrast to those in the Nissen huts. Equally, it is encouraging to see the first pairs of houses for married staff, and it is to be hoped that the staff not yet so well accommodated can see them as an earnest of things to come.

In spite of the obvious deficiencies and difficulties of some of the buildings that have been used, and are still being used, for boarding, a very genuine feeling of cheerfulness and satisfaction is evident. The boys in no way resent the handsome new buildings that the girls have - although they say they are quite happy in their Nissen huts and are not anxious for a move to something better, this is probably rather an expression of their natural conservatism than of their real feelings. The development of such a good spirit under such conditions owes a great deal to all the staff involved - house masters, house mistresses and matrons.

### *The Library*

The School is well supplied with books. It already has some 5,000 volumes and the annual grant is about £300 a year, of which roughly £25 is spent on periodicals. In addition, each house borrows 250 books from the County Library and these are exchanged by the houses every half term, so that there is a good variety of recreational books in circulation.

The Library itself is part of a hut and is divided into Junior and Senior rooms; only the staff and Sixth Forms may borrow from the latter. Unfortunately the Senior room is not well heated, and the lighting could be improved. The whole Library accommodation is makeshift in character but the rooms are quite cheerful. All new books are bound in polythene jackets and classified on the School's own system. The librarian has put in much hard work and though another member of the staff gives him some assistance he has a heavy task looking after the Library.

The School was fortunate in inheriting a Library from the Training College which occupied the buildings; not all the books taken over were useful and some of the less useful that still remain could well be passed on now, but a most valuable foundation had already been laid. Some very fine books have been added and the money available seems to have been wisely used; it is good, for example, to find really good reference books and books on art. Altogether the boys and girls here have little excuse for not following up their interests and studies, and the evidence suggests that they make good use of the Library.

### *Staff*

The Warden was appointed in 1951 after the School had been running for a term. He is a scientist and has had valuable teaching experience in both day and boarding schools. The qualities of perseverance, of great industry, of decision and readiness to experiment have stood him in good stead, and during this critical period of growth he has been able to give a strong lead based on a very real faith in the qualities of his pupils.

There are at present 45 members of staff: two appointments are outstanding to bring the team up to the establishment figure. Academically they are well suited to the work in hand; numerically they are adequate, but it must be remembered that the teaching week is a long one, that there are many boarding duties and that a very wide range of interests is catered for in out of school activities. When the additional appointments have been made the ratio of staff to pupils will be 1:15, and this is comparable to that of many boys' boarding schools. There is an important difference to be borne in mind - this is a co-educational school a factor which supplements the argument that some extra generosity in staffing will not be misplaced.

There is, naturally enough, some variation in teaching ability, but there is no weakness, and the School is fortunate in having a number of really outstanding teachers. No subject is other than adequately staffed though the strongest teams are to be found in Mathematics, Science and Craft. All the staff are hardworking and conscientious to a degree: it would appear to an outsider's view that they must also be enthusiasts for the particular work the School is doing. Some of the younger members of staff are very promising and should add greatly to the teaching strength as they develop. The recent appointment of a Senior Mistress to act as Deputy Warden has brought a quality of mind and experience that cannot fail to be of great strength to the Warden and the School.



If there are two points that deserve the general attention of the staff as a whole, they are a tendency to over-teach - particularly in the upper part of the School - and the need for concerted action on the general quality of the written work, which does not yet match the oral response. The strong feeling of responsibility for older pupils of somewhat unproven academic ability has probably resulted in the staff doing rather too much for them. Now that standards of industry and seriousness of purpose have been so well established, and now that the quality of the pupils coming through the School is rising, the staff may well consider throwing greater individual responsibility on them.

A striking feature of the School is the way in which so many members of the staff with no previous boarding school experience have accepted the challenge of this side of the life. They have realised the demands they must meet and have appreciated how much their own generosity of time and effort will be repaid by the general health of the community.

Two unusual arrangements are worthy of comment and congratulation. The Authority have appointed a workshops steward who helps the masters in the maintenance of tools and machinery, in the preparation of material, and in doing the many extra tasks, essential in a school like this, that fall on the workshops. It is only because of this help that the masters are able to allow the boys to use workshops so freely out of school. There is an excellent laboratory steward, and just recently the Authority have established a scheme under which he is responsible for the training of three or four fifteen-year-olds who will, it is hoped, eventually take the appropriate City and Guilds Certificate and be available for work in the County, their places being taken by other trainees. If this scheme is harnessed to a suitable salary scale it may be of tremendous value, not only to the School, but to the County generally.

### *Organisation, Curriculum and Standards of Work*

The general pattern of the organisation is determined, in the Warden's view, by three or four essentials. First, he considers that for the 11 year old entrants there must be a broad course for four years during which time there is a sufficient range of subjects to allow particular interests to develop. Associated with this is his feeling that some of the most able children may well, at the end of this course, take some subjects in the external examination at Ordinary level, but not those subjects in which they are likely to be taking Advanced courses. After such a broad course there must be an adequate spread of options in the Fifth Forms to allow both for those whose interests are primarily in academic subjects, as well as those for whom practical subjects offer the best chance of success. But neither must preclude the other and it is clear that he considers that it is the sensible combination of subjects that makes for the best final result. The same general principles apply to the organisation of the two late entry forms.

To consider the organisation in detail it is necessary to separate out the four-year basic course for both fast and slower streams, the Fifth Forms, and the late entry forms.

On entry at 11 years of age the forms are left relatively ungraded until the end of the first year. During this year the curriculum includes English, History, Geography, Mathematics, Science, French or German, Woodwork and Metalwork for boys, Needlework and Cookery for girls, Music and Art. Since Religious Instruction, Physical Education and games continue through all forms and at all stages they need not be further mentioned. At the end of the first year a picked form, IIA, begins to accelerate, though there is still a possibility of promotion to IIIA from IIB or IIC. The curriculum for Form IIA and Form IIIA is:-

IIA

French  
German  
Metalwork or Cookery  
Physics with Chemistry

IIIA

French  
German  
Metalwork or Cookery  
Physics with Chemistry  
Rural Science

together with English, History, Geography, Mathematics, Art and Music. In Form IVA some redistribution is possible, based largely on the subjects likely to be taken at Advanced level. Thus while English, History, Geography and Mathematics remain basic subjects (not necessarily to be taken in an external examination) options do allow of a bias towards Arts or Science thus:-

French or German or Art  
French or Art plus Current Affairs plus General Science or  
General French plus Physics with Chemistry and Biology.

If two foreign languages are retained then General Science must also be taken; if more Science is wanted, then one foreign language, German, will be pursued to an examination level and a non-examination course in French must also be included. Pupils will normally by-pass those subjects they intend to read to Advanced level. Some complications are introduced by the setting of languages and Mathematics, for now that much more able pupils are entering the School, the division between A, B and C forms is much less sharp, and the principle of taking some subjects at Ordinary level in four years may spread. While the general principle involved probably deserves encouragement further experiment seems to be needed on the kind and number of subjects so considered. For pupils with no outstanding linguistic ability there is a good deal to be said for deferring any examination until later; the place and purpose of English Literature as a subject might also be considered.

The other two second year forms also continue with English, History, Geography and Mathematics, one foreign language, practical subjects and Science, Music and Art; the only alternatives occurring in Forms IVB and C where the full curriculum is:-

English  
History  
Geography  
Mathematics or Arithmetic and accounts  
French or German or Art  
Technical Drawing or Cookery  
Metalwork or Needlework  
Physics with Chemistry  
Biology

At this stage, after three years experience, a foreign language may be dropped, and those who intend to enter the Commerce Fifth can take Arithmetic and accounts instead of Mathematics. Not all of them do this and several of the present Commerce Fifth are still taking full Mathematics.

The late entry D and E forms have been working on a curriculum that is a little more restricted for choice - inevitably so since they are attempting a lot in a shorter time. Their subjects are English, History, Geography, Mathematics, French, a craft, Science, Art and Music. The alternatives in the next year are as shown:-

IVD and E

English, History, Geography, Music, plus  
Mathematics or Arithmetic and Accounts  
French or Art  
Woodwork or Light Craft or Cookery  
Physics with Chemistry  
Biology or Technical Drawing

A possible comment on the curriculum of the first two years of the late entrants is that it is perhaps desirable to allow the boys to take Metalwork: many of them will have come from Secondary Modern Schools where they will already have had some experience of Woodwork.

All the Fourth Forms except Form IVA enter the Fifth Forms, so that at this point the two sources of entry meet and work together. The range of subjects available to them is:-

VA, D and E

English, History, Geography, plus  
Mathematics or Additional Mathematics  
French or German or Art  
Technical Drawing or Metalwork or light craft or Needlework or Cookery  
Metalwork or Cookery or Religious Instruction (for examination) plus Music  
(In VA only Metalwork or Cookery with no History)  
Physics with Chemistry and Biology or Technical Drawing  
or  
(VA only) Physics and Chemistry or Physics with Chemistry and Biology  
or  
General Science

VB

English, History, Geography, plus  
Mathematics or Additional Mathematics or Arithmetic and Accounts  
Commerce  
Shorthand and typing  
French or German or Art  
Current Affairs

As far as Forms VA, D and E are concerned a wide and sensible range of options is offered. Some comments on detail will be found in the subject reports, but in general it may be said that this is an

ingenious organisation giving very many opportunities. Pupils in Form VB are perhaps less happily situated since they continue no craft nor do they do any Science. But the postponement of the specialist work in commercial subjects as late as this is to be commended. It will be seen that the general educational principles that have guided the Warden in determining organisation have been well achieved.

Sixth Form courses aiming at the Advanced level examination are offered on both the Arts and Science sides with the usual range of subjects. There are some inconsistencies at the present time, chiefly because of courses designed to allow for 'repeat' subjects at Ordinary level, but these should largely disappear, particularly if further consideration is given to the policy for Form IVA. A most encouraging feature of the Sixth Form curriculum is the introduction of a course in General Studies taken by all the Sixth Form in groups which cut across subject specialisation. Although still in its early days it represents an enlightened attempt to broaden the general education of the Sixth Form. There is a welcome allowance of private study periods at this level, and from all the evidence they appear to be appreciated and used seriously and well.

There is also a General Sixth Form, intended primarily to give a one-year course. Half of the form are pupils who came in at 13 and who, while wanting the experience of a Sixth Form, do not contemplate going on to further academic training. Some subjects prepare for papers at Alternative Ordinary level; some new subjects are introduced as, for example, courses in Human Biology, Economics and Public Affairs. This form also joins in the first year of the General Studies course. There seems to be a place for such a form: pupils rather older than one normally finds in a first year Sixth Form going on to nursing, training colleges, or better posts in the commercial world may well derive a good deal of benefit. Further developments here might include more exacting work in Commerce - indeed, the Warden hopes eventually to postpone all such work until this stage, - and perhaps also an extension to a second year General Sixth in which some Advanced work might be carried, particularly valuable for potential training college students. It would be an advantage to separate pupils taking courses designed for papers at Alternative Ordinary level from those engaged in a full advanced course.

Over and above the normal organisation, opportunity seems to be offered for more unusual things. This year two boys are following a course in archaeology, inspired by their own interest and some excellent help from the Norwich Museum; Geology originally entered the Sixth Form curriculum in much the same way and now several pupils are taking it as a major subject.

Standards of work are dealt with more fully in the subject sections of the Report which follow. In brief it may be said that there is no real weakness, but, as might be expected in what is, after all, a young school, some subjects have developed faster than others, particularly those related to the opportunity for work with something of a technical bias. Thus Mathematics and Science are strong subjects, as are the craft subjects, while those on the Arts side are not yet up to the same standard. There is however promise even where the work is, as yet, no more than adequate. As has been

mentioned before the quality of the written work at the top of the School lacks something in shape and depth, but the steady improvement in quality and fluency of speech is excellent. The serious purpose and industry of the pupils is particularly striking and nowhere is this more evident than in the case of those who have come into the School at 13. The very sensible way they are handled and accepted as worthy of the opportunity goes a long way to giving them confidence and incentive. There is no doubt either of the great value of boarding conditions when it comes to evening preparation, for this is done under conditions which make it worth much more to both pupil and staff than can often be the case in a day school.

## *Subjects of Instruction*

### RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

The amount of time given to Religious Instruction is one period a week in all forms throughout the School with the exception of one of the fifth forms which is allowed five periods because its members are preparing for the external examination at Ordinary level. With the exception of this form no provision is made for preparation, though occasional work outside class-room hours is expected. Four Sixth Form pupils - two in the second and two in the first year are preparing for the Alternative Ordinary papers.

The teaching of the lower forms is largely in the hands of the music master, of the upper forms in those of a young master, whose university degree includes theology as one of its components, and who gives about half his time to the subject. A few forms are taught by one of the geography masters. Illness among the staff made it difficult to see as much of the work as would be desirable to enable an accurate assessment to be made, but it may fairly be said that those teaching the subject have complementary strengths out of which a good progressive course can be developed. A real difficulty is that the meagre time allocation makes it difficult for the pupils to do much work of their own. The ill effects of the system which spreads a very small number of periods evenly over the school year are most clearly marked in the Sixth Form where pupils have begun to be able to benefit from prolonged consecutive study. It seems possible that, even without any increase in the total time allowed, a redistribution of it in conjunction with the General Studies Scheme might prove more satisfying both to staff and pupils. There is need for a considerable expansion in the library provision; and the allocation of a classroom as a subject room is especially desirable where as with this subject, shortness of time makes it important for the teacher to be able to use all kinds of visual material which can speak for itself directly to the boys and girls.

There is in the upper forms of the School a strong branch of the Student Christian Movement in Schools, which secures an average attendance of about sixty at its regular meetings. This is both a sign of the good leadership which the staff gives and an indication that there is a basis of interest on which good classroom work can be expected within whatever limits are fixed for it by the claims of other subjects.

## ENGLISH

Four members of the staff, all with degrees in English, shoulder the main task of teaching this subject throughout the School, with a little assistance from two other teachers whose main responsibilities lie elsewhere. As a team they have the advantage of youth rather than experience, only the head of the department having had a spell in another school before coming here. Their teaching is thorough and shows promise, but their potentialities might be more fully realised by a rather more clearly defined policy on various aspects of the work and by occasional discussion of their problems under the leadership of the head of the department.

The quality of the oral work throughout the School is generally good. As in many other grammar schools, particularly in rural areas, there is the problem of getting country children to speak clearly and with some degree of fluency; the staff and the environment have together done much to solve this problem, and it was a pleasure to the Inspectors to note the vigorous class discussion that often took place and to hear the older pupils in particular express their ideas and opinions resolutely and with clarity. There are liberal opportunities for controlled discussion both in the classroom and in societies. Perhaps the creative and artistic aspects of spoken English might be more fully explored through choral speaking and informal dramatic activity at all levels.

Steps are also being taken to widen and deepen the pupils' experience of English literature, both in the provision of books for class study and by the development of School and House libraries. But many of the pupils still have rather a restricted fare, particularly in the middle of the School, and the syllabus might go further than it does both in introducing the pupils to good English writing in fields other than fiction and also in making more explicit the development of criticism and appreciation of English literature through written as well as oral work. It is open to question whether the external examination in English Literature at Ordinary level is having a wholly beneficial influence on the study and enjoyment of literature in the fourth and fifth years of the course; the appropriateness of this examination for some of the pupils was discussed during the Inspection.

The least satisfactory feature of the English course at present is the written composition. That is not to say that there is no meritorious work being produced; but the present efforts of the pupils as a whole scarcely do justice to their ability. Apart from errors of punctuation, spelling and syntax, which seem due as much to carelessness as to ignorance, there is a lack both of the logical arrangement of ideas that is essential for a good piece of writing and of the use of the significant word or expression that betokens the exercise of imagination and the display of pride in the craft of writing. This weakness persists even into the Sixth Form and calls for a radical review by the English staff of their methods, and of the emphasis they put on the various aspects of language work. To the visitor it suggests too much attention to the formal language or grammatical exercise and too little to original and continuous writing on a variety of themes and in a variety of ways that would stimulate the interests and ideas of the pupils.

In the Sixth Form there is a creditable quantity of specialist work in English in both the first and the second years of the course. In both years there is a steady application to the books that have to be studied for external examination, and the more mature second year pupils are capable of lively class discussion. The essays, however, though often painstaking, lack the shape and the precision of thought and language essential for a good answer on a literary text. Perhaps in the Lower Sixth and even below that stage more rigorous training is necessary in the formulation of a point of view and its substantiation by evidence from the text being studied. English also forms part of the non-examination work of many of the Science Sixth, as well as being available as an examination at Ordinary (Alternative) level for members of the General Sixth. A good deal of conscientious work is being done on both these fronts, but the programme for the scientists is still a little tentative and inchoate.

The task of the English staff in a School whose main academic strength has lain hitherto in the fields of Mathematics and Science is a challenging one. It is important that the English spoken and written by the pupils shall be of the highest quality if it is to be a precise and adaptable medium of expression in fields that are predominantly scientific; it is equally important that English language and literature shall be at the heart of what are usually known as the humane studies and also of the general education of all pupils, whatever their future specialist and vocational studies. There is clear indication that the school staff generally and the English staff in particular are aware of their various responsibilities and are determined to raise standards. Much has been achieved in a comparatively short time, but much more remains to be done before the quality of the work in English can be regarded as first-rate.

## HISTORY

The teaching of History is shared between two mistresses and one master who between them have less than eight years' teaching experience in all, and only nine terms, including the term of inspection, in Wymondham College. All hold second class honours degrees in history and are well qualified by knowledge and interest to form a strong team of teachers, but there is need for a more experienced teacher to act as head of department, and one is being sought. It is clear, then, that this subject is in so transitional a state that it is hardly susceptible to inspection at this stage. What may fairly be said is that it does not at the moment occupy a leading position in the school, and that the written work seen was undistinguished. It does, however, show signs of interest among the pupils, and these are supported by the lively response that oral questioning receives especially from the boys.

The time allocation is generous throughout the school in those forms in which History is taught. It disappears after the fourth year, however, from the curriculum of most of the science specialists and, after the fifth year, from that of all except the small number who are preparing to offer it at Advanced level or in the Alternative Ordinary papers of the external examination. They number only 21 all told, about one-fifth of the pupils above the fifth forms. The syllabus departs from those which are now becoming common in grammar schools more by what is left undone than by what

is attempted. History is rarely, if ever, at any stage of the school carried beyond the middle of the last century. The period chosen for study in the Sixth Form is the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

It is suggested that before a new head of department is appointed the Head Master should define clearly the purposes which he wishes the teaching of History to fulfil alike for the small number of those who will specialise in it, for the considerably larger body of other pupils in the Arts Sixth and for the larger number of boys who will specialise in science. There will then be a good deal of re-organisation and planning to be done on this basis by the new head of department.

#### GEOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

The School is fortunate to possess four graduate geographers to undertake all the teaching in these subjects. A young mistress, only this term appointed to her first teaching post, and two young masters give good support to the experienced master who leads the department. They bring to their teaching enthusiasm and hard work. Given a period of stability they should make a strong team.

Geography forms part of the curriculum for all pupils up to, and including, the Fifth Form, and may be taken on the arts and science sides in the Sixth Form. The scheme of work covers a great deal of ground, but the arrangement of its various parts tends to separate the subject into compartments which young teachers do not easily bring together. While outdoor work is not in evidence in the early years it forms an important part of the training of many of the older pupils, and the recent records of studies in North Wales and the Pennines show that work of good quality is done. In general human geography occupies a subordinate place in the teaching when compared with physical and economic geography, which is perhaps one reason why boys seem to be more successful in their studies than girls. A healthy feature of the course is the frequent use made of both large and small scale maps so that pupils achieve a commendable familiarity with them.

In all the lessons seen the subject matter had been prepared with care, and a great deal of trouble was taken to present it in an interesting manner. Sometimes the way is made too easy for the pupils in that too many of the problems are solved for them. They need opportunities from time to time to examine for themselves pictures, statistics and other data, to analyse their meaning and to solve some of the questions they pose. Such a training, added to the thoroughly good courses in regional and systematic geography that they already enjoy, should give an added intellectual stimulus. This is needed even more in the Sixth Form, where the fourteen pupils studying the subject to an advanced level do a great deal of reading and write comprehensive notes, but are reluctant to weigh evidence and express their own opinions.

In a short time the teaching aids of the department have been brought to a very satisfactory level thanks to the zeal of the senior master. Geology has now to be provided for in the same way. This subject has grown spontaneously in the last two years out of the enthusiasm of two boys and the staff; now six pupils are reading it in the Sixth Form, two of them aiming at the Advanced level



papers in the public examinations. Books have been bought and a collection of specimens is being built up from the beginning. The chief needs are palaeontological and rock specimens, a petrological microscope and a collection of one-inch geological maps. Much hard work is being done in the field and in the classroom; full use is made of the limited resources available, and the groundwork is being covered with great thoroughness.

#### ECONOMICS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

In the Sixth Form ten pupils, most of them members of the General Sixth, are preparing to sit the Ordinary level papers in this subject. The young mistress in charge of the work has only this term taken over responsibility for a course in which she has had no previous experience. Nevertheless she brings to her teaching the useful viewpoint of the historian. Thus far the course has been concentrated on that part of the syllabus which deals with public administration, leaving the unfamiliar subject of economics to be treated later. Reading tasks (from a rather limited list) and essays form a regular and important part of the course, and the teaching seen was designed to make the pupils think carefully. If the subject is to occupy a permanent place in the curriculum, however, it will need a specially qualified teacher.

#### GENERAL STUDIES

This course is compulsory for all members of the Sixth Form and two periods a week are devoted to it in both the Upper and Lower Sixth. Its ultimate aim is to prepare pupils for the General Paper taken by Advanced level candidates in the Certificate examination; its broader aims are to teach the pupils to think clearly and logically and to express themselves well in class discussion and in writing, and also to widen their interest in contemporary problems. The Lower Sixth is divided for this purpose into four groups, each containing pupils from all sides of the form, and each group spends a quarter of the school year in turn with each of the four members of staff concerned with this stage of the work. The Upper Sixth is divided into only two groups, and only two of the four Lower Sixth teachers are involved.

The topics selected for the Lower Sixth range from an elementary study of logic and language to a course in comparative religion which touches on ethics and philosophy, and they also include the study of national and international problems. Discussion in class is followed by the dictation of notes and the writing of essays. Discussion heard during the Inspection was brisk and lively, and the essays showed evidence of thought and occasionally of originality, though often the expression was rather shapeless and the organisation of material needed more care. In the Upper Sixth the emphasis is more on written work and bears a more direct relation to the sort of question set in General Papers.

The limitations of the present course lie perhaps in the risk of a superficial treatment of topics that require reading by the pupils as well as dictated notes, and to this end more active help might be given by reading lists which required pupils to explore the resources of the School Library. Too direct preparation for a General Paper may also deflect pupils from the study in depth of a few important topics that such a course as this should involve.

But these reflections on work that is naturally in an experimental stage should not be thought to underestimate the very real contribution that the present course is making to the general education of the Sixth Formers. The Warden and his colleagues are to be congratulated on their courage and wisdom in instituting such a course and on the thought, patience and hard work that is put into the teaching. The liveliness in discussion of many of the pupils is immediate testimony to its value; its more far-reaching effects cannot be measured but may well be profound.

#### MODERN LANGUAGES

German is the main modern language taught in the school. At present, out of the three first year forms, two take German and one French. After the first year German is 'setted'; the top set begins a second language, French, and usually offers both languages at the Ordinary level examination in Form IVA. The boys and girls who are transferred to the College at 13+ begin French. Some may drop the subject after a year or two, the rest offer it at the Ordinary level examination in their third year.

Seven members of the staff, one of whom was absent during the inspection, share the teaching. They have adequate specialist qualifications for their work and speak fluently. Some of the staff, however, have not been at the school long enough for the full benefit of their contribution to be felt. The head of the department has introduced modifications to the syllabus and organisation and an improvement in the standard of work is already evident. All the staff are conscious of the problems inherent in this school and are getting very good co-operation from their pupils.

The work is approached through the spoken tongue and the oral and written work of the first and second forms is promising. Beyond this stage, in the top set and to some extent in the French groups working on shortened courses, it would seem that some pupils are being pushed on too fast. It might be advisable to allow them an extra year so that they can assimilate new work before going on still further. This lessening of pressure would help to decrease the number who, because of failure, have to repeat both subjects at the Ordinary level in the Lower Sixth Form. It would also allow more time during their course for free composition and for introducing some individual reading to supplement the class reading. Despite the hard work of staff and pupils the standard of the written and oral work falls short of the promise of the early stages. That the standard is improving is reflected in the larger number and improved quality of those in the Lower Sixth who are offering French and German at Advanced level.

The work of the Upper Sixth, although thoughtful and conscientious is very limited. It shows an insufficient command of the language. In the Lower Sixth the work is much more promising. Although more could be done before the Sixth Form to develop the pupils facility to read easily and to handle the language confidently, there are signs of a growing command in the written work and of an enthusiasm which can transform the quality of their work. It is perhaps a measure of the boys' interest that two boys, one who had taken French and one who had taken German, have coached one another so that they can both follow the two languages to an advanced level.

## LATIN

The Latin course, which is confined to two years' study in the Sixth Form, serves a purely utilitarian purpose, that of getting the few pupils each year who may need the qualification for University entrance up to the requisite Ordinary level standard in the shortest possible time. Thanks to vigorous and devoted teaching by the two members of the staff who share the task between them and to the steady application of the pupils, these very limited aims are being achieved with reasonable success. The work goes at a good pace, and the grounding in grammar and syntax is thorough. Enough was seen of the teaching to suggest that deeper educational values would be realised if there were time to ponder and discuss.

The absence of any strong thread of classical studies running through the School places on other subjects of the curriculum, notably English, History and Modern Languages, the responsibility for ensuring that the pupils have some introduction, however slight, to the literature, thought and history of the ancient world.

## MATHEMATICS

The Mathematics department is working under difficulties. It says much for the spirit of co-operation that exists between the members of staff concerned that, when at the beginning of term a master taking a major share in the Mathematics teaching fell ill, the decision was taken to divide his work among the remaining members of the department although this was already short staffed.

The Senior Mathematics Master was appointed in 1954 and holds a first-class Honours degree. He receives full-time assistance from a master with Mathematics as part of a general degree and from a mistress who took Mathematics as a main subject at a Teachers' Training College. A master with a first-class degree in Physics and Mathematics gives part-time help in the Sixth Form as well as in the main school and two other members of staff take a minor share of the teaching. All are experienced teachers on good terms with their classes and exposition is clear and incisive.

Setting according to ability in Mathematics normally begins in the second year and continues in differing forms until the end of the course to Ordinary level. This course, which may be completed in three, four or five years, is followed by all pupils, except for those girls in the commercial group who elect to drop Mathematics in favour of arithmetic and accounts. The system of setting is complicated by the inclusion of the late entry forms in the fourth and fifth years but, under normal conditions, the size of the sets does not exceed 30. For reasons already stated, this year some of the groups contain up to 50 pupils of widely varying ability. In the fifth year the small set of pupils studying additional Mathematics is being taught with the least able set of pupils taking the Ordinary level course. In all, 45 pupils in the Sixth Form are studying Mathematics at Advanced level; 26 of these, taught in two groups, are in the first year, 18 in the second year and a boy in the third year is taking University scholarship examinations. In these groups also the pupils have widely varying mathematical backgrounds; one group contains pupils who have completed the Ordinary level course in three, four or five years and others who have already taken the papers in Additional Mathematics. Hitherto

few girls have chosen to study Mathematics in the Sixth Form (only one this year) but there are growing signs that this will be remedied in the future.

It is evident that Mathematics is making an important contribution to the curriculum of this School. Much hard work is done and there is a good oral response to the lively teaching. Although the standard of written work is rather uneven yet, despite the temporary difficulties of organisation, standards on the whole are very satisfactory. Except during the first term when arithmetic occupies the major portion of the time allocation, a good pace is maintained. This is particularly marked in the late entry form IIID, where a very promising beginning has been made. As the pupils progress through the School they compile a note-book of mathematical definitions and examples. These note-books are sensibly used by the pupils and this method has met with marked success in the Sixth Form where examination results have been very creditable indeed (all pupils were successful this year, 14 obtained Advanced level, 6 in Further Mathematics). Nevertheless, in the Sixth Form, note-taking occupies a substantial part of the time and as pupils of high intellectual capacity are now being recruited, it is open to question whether the time might not be more valuably spent in more constructive mathematical thinking.

The Library contains an admirable collection of books; ways and means of introducing the pupils to the books need to be devised.

The Mathematics department is very ably and vigorously led and the future is promising.

#### SCIENCE

The subject is in a strong position in the College. It is popular, well catered for materially and generously served for time. There is a strong teaching team, with none of the work falling below competence and some of it being outstandingly good.

No pupil drops Science until the subject has been taken for five years, except those entering the Commerce Form in the fifth year, and those pupils who, from Form IVA, enter the Arts Sixth. The intention of the syllabus is to give all pupils a basic course of four years covering the relevant major phenomena in the three main branches. In teaching some of the work is sub-divided, but this is a matter of staffing, and the present arrangement seems to suit this. The first year is admirably planned - it is refreshing to find one in which the emphasis is on interest and observation rather than information. At present this is being taken largely by a master who is not yet fully conversant with matters of teaching technique having only very recently come into teaching from industry: he is keen and should benefit from the advice of his colleagues. After the first year, in which five periods a week are given to Science, six periods are devoted to physics-with-chemistry: added to this in the third year are three periods a week of Rural Science. In the fourth year nine periods a week are divided between physics, chemistry and biology except for a languages set in Form IVA, who get six periods a week for General Science, which they take as an examination subject at the end of the year. The late entrants get seven periods a week in their first year and eleven or seven (some take Technical Drawing instead of biology) in the second. Pupils in all fourth forms except Form IVA enter one or

other of the Fifth Forms, where at present it is possible to take General Science, Physics-with-chemistry and biology, or separate physics and chemistry. At present the department is short of one member of staff, and under normal conditions courses in Engineering Science and Agricultural Science are also offered, but these are in addition to General Science.

There may at first sight seem to be rather many courses at this level, but such provision does give opportunity for entry to the Science courses in the Sixth Form as well as providing for boys who wish to leave for apprenticeships. A careful dove-tailing of syllabuses, and an obvious attempt to defer theoretical work as long as possible gives all pupils a wide empirical course.

Work in the main school is characterised by considerable effort, a very fair amount of practical work, and a conscious training in recording. Perhaps at this stage there could be more general emphasis on the investigatory nature of the subject - a feature which is conspicuously present in the work in biology. Here excellent use is made of the environment.

In the Sixth Form, in which the three main branches are all offered at Advanced level, and where external examination results have been very good indeed, practical work is, throughout, very well organised and carried out. The high standards here derive not only from the teaching staff, but owe something to the services of the laboratory steward. The Sixth Form biologists carry out a group investigation in the Lower Sixth and many of them go on to individual projects in the Upper Sixth. Some of their work is most encouraging, and if the same things could be attempted in the other branches it would give a unique flavour to the work as a whole.

The laboratories, though in Nissen huts, are surprisingly good. They all have the virtues of size and adequate benching though not all the services are as generous as would be the case in permanent buildings. The supply of apparatus is very good indeed. Mention has previously been made of the interesting experiment in training laboratory assistants.

#### COMMERCIAL SUBJECTS

The pupils in Form IVC have two periods of book-keeping. Those in Form VB have eight periods of shorthand, seven of typewriting, three of book-keeping and one period of commerce. The teaching is conscientious. The pupils are clearly interested in the work and fair progress is being made in shorthand and typewriting. Some are handicapped, however, by a weakness in English. Methods of increasing the rate of progress and improving standards in the clerical skills were discussed during the Inspection. The formal book-keeping being taught is of little educational or practical value. Such knowledge of simple accounts and their interpretation as these pupils need and are able to understand could more effectively be given by a broader treatment of arithmetic, suitably co-ordinated with the work done in commerce. The syllabus in commerce, however, is rather too ambitious for pupils of this age, especially when only one period a week is devoted to it. The occasional visits paid to commercial firms are well worth while if suitably prepared and followed up.

It remains to be seen what the standards reached at the end of this revised course will be. But a standard satisfactory for business purposes in both typewriting and shorthand and in their combined use can hardly be achieved in the time allotted to them. On the other hand, potential shorthand-typists need more rather than less general education. Consideration should therefore be given to the desirability of extending the course for a further year. It would then be possible to concentrate in the fifth year more on typewriting - the easier and more generally used skill - and give the abler pupils a more thorough training in a broader and more fully integrated course, appropriate to pupils of General Certificate of Education standard, in the sixth year.

#### ART AND CRAFT

A master and a mistress, who is also a house mistress, are responsible for teaching the subject. They work well together and freely exchange their ideas concerning the planning of the lessons and the progress of their pupils. The smooth running of the classes and the serious attitudes of the children reflect sympathetic encouragement and the keen interest of the teachers.

The studio and craft room have been reasonably well-adapted in two adjoining huts and, despite the limitations of their shapes and lighting, both rooms, through the good use of display space, provide a stimulating atmosphere for work. There are, in addition, several small rooms, one is used for throwing in pottery, one is a kiln room and the other is a store. The craft room has also to be used as a form room and for other classes. Some of the furniture in the craft room needs to be replaced with better tables which are more appropriate for the work. There is a good supply of materials.

The syllabus has been thoughtfully produced and gives a well-proportioned amount of time to Art, Crafts, and Appreciation.

In some of the paintings a restricted colour range has been used with eminently successful results. The still-lives show sensitivity and individuality in the expression through colour, in fact, the work shows a maturity which is not often seen in the examples of children's work. The careful pencil drawings of studies from plants and flowers indicate good use of observational exercises. The compositions are imaginative and sensitive and some of the group efforts are particularly successful. Experiments are carried out in abstract designs and the pattern work shows a pleasant and gay use of colour. The wall paintings in the Library provide an excellent opportunity for the children to extend their talent beyond the confines of the studio. Satisfactory examples in crafts included pottery, modelling, calligraphy, lino-block prints and an ambitious piece in mosaic had been produced.

Importance is placed upon appreciation and although some good books have been obtained for the Library, the numbers are quite inadequate for a School of this size and character.

An Art Club meets after school one evening in the week but this was not seen during the Inspection.

## HOUSECRAFT AND NEEDLEWORK

These subjects are the joint responsibility of three mistresses. One, appointed last year, is concerned only with the teaching of Needlework whilst the other two, appointed in 1953 and 1956 respectively, share between them the teaching of Housecraft and take Needlework with the younger girls. Together they form a strong team.

Both subjects enjoy good working conditions, for in the two Housecraft rooms and in the Needlework room no effort has been spared to make the best possible use of the facilities available and to provide plenty of good up-to-date equipment, suitable text books and the nucleus of a useful reference collection.

Arrangements for Housecraft and Needlework are somewhat complicated. The pattern in the normal school course is for all girls to take both subjects up to and including the fourth year when they are both dropped, regrettably, by those who go on to study commercial subjects but are optional to the rest. Those girls who join the fast stream in the second year continue only with Needlework; those who are late entrants to the school may opt for Cookery but not for Needlework whilst all those who stay into the sixth form may study either subject, with an examination in view or purely for interest.

In drawing up schemes of work for Housecraft care has been taken to meet the varying needs of each group but practical difficulties arise when Fifth and Sixth Form groups, with differing backgrounds, are timetabled together. The present Needlework scheme is based on a five-year course leading up to Ordinary level in the General Certificate examination and needs some modification for those girls who may take the examination after four years or may by-pass it and some of the specimen work now deemed necessary might be reconsidered.

In both subjects there is a certain amount of note-taking which might be dispensed with but, in the more senior forms, plenty of opportunities are given also for written work which makes demands on the pupils and this is carefully corrected from the point of layout and style as well as content. Needlework topics are exceptionally well illustrated.

In Cookery, practical work reaches a satisfactory level, good manipulation is encouraged and importance is attached to attractive serving and finish but there is need for a little more speed so that there may be time for effective criticism. The fact that this is a boarding school frees the Housecraft rooms from limitations imposed in day schools by the need to sell food and to pack it for carrying home. More effective organisation is needed, however, to ensure that the arrangements for the consumption of the food in the Houses approximate more closely to the high standards demanded in its preparation.

In Needlework, girls work sensibly and independently, they can follow instructions and can discuss their work objectively. In the clothes which they make style, fit and colour are given proper importance and they achieve a very high standard of finish. It is particularly good to find the older girls taking pleasure in making

fine hand-sewn lingerie. Clearly the girls here enjoy sewing and it should be possible to mould their taste so that the embroidery with which many of them occupy their leisure time is as aesthetically satisfying as that which they do in class.

#### HANDICRAFT

For the crafts of woodwork and metalwork there are two workshops in temporary buildings each with a store room attached. Adjacent to these, in similar type buildings, are an engineering laboratory and a room for technical drawing. Three qualified experienced masters are responsible for the teaching which is competent and well organised. In addition to their time-table duties they all contribute extra teaching time and effort in providing valuable apparatus needed by the school. Courses in woodwork and metalwork are arranged to give all the boys some experience of both crafts and the opportunity to take one of them as an examination subject, some after four years and others after five years, so that almost all the boys who reach the Sixth Forms will have passed the General Certificate of Education examination in either woodwork or metalwork. Both these crafts may also be taken in the Lower Sixth Forms as examination subjects at Advanced level. The time allowance for the crafts is adequate and most of the classes are of reasonable size.

The woodwork course succeeds in giving the boys skill in the traditional methods of the craft and a knowledge of processes, and some of them help in producing furniture for the school. A basic course in metalwork gives the boys experience in general bench work, forging, hammered metalwork and simple turning, and their work reaches a satisfactory level; perhaps the boys would respond to a more steeply graded course. Both workshops are suitably equipped and maintained. A power driven grindstone would be a valuable addition in the woodwork room, and chuck guards are needed on the power drills for metalwork. Much of the maintenance is done by a steward appointed for this purpose and for making school furniture and equipment, and his assistance is of great value to the teachers. Some form of display of good craft work might be a valuable stimulus in the workshop.

Technical drawing is introduced as a major subject in the fourth year and it may be taken as an Ordinary level subject in the fifth year, and at Advanced level in the Lower and Upper Sixth Forms. One master teaches this subject throughout very competently and much of the equipment has been made in the school under his guidance. The syllabus is carefully thought out and the work done reaches a good standard. This master also takes a group of Sixth Form pupils for engineering and their work includes practical work with engines and the school tractor, and devising and making apparatus for experimental work. The subject is taken as one of general interest and not as an examination subject, but the pupils taking it find it very valuable. Engineering science has been taken as an associated subject in recent years, but it has not been possible to offer it during the present school year.

#### MUSIC

The Music master, who is a graduate of the Royal School of Music, came to the College in 1956. He is a gifted musician able to inspire his pupils with a love of the subject.



Opportunities for instrumental music are growing, and this term a visiting master is teaching brass instruments to a small group of enthusiasts, and a peripatetic violin mistress visits the College to teach fifteen pupils in classes and another seven privately. In addition fifty boys and girls are having piano lessons from two visiting teachers.

At present Music is taken in one of the halls, but this is far from satisfactory and it is hoped to set aside a large room for the purpose in the near future. First year forms have two periods a week, those in the second year one, and the remainder of the School, with the exception of three of the Fourth Forms, relies on out-of-school activities for musical experiences. In the event of an additional full-time Music teacher being appointed (and this is essential if the very encouraging growing points in the musical life of the pupils are to be developed) it is planned to increase the amount of Music on the time-table.

The contents of the syllabus were discussed with the Music Master who, owing to illness, was only able to be present for part of the Inspection and during this time only Form IB was taught. The junior and senior choirs were heard - the former sang considerably more musically than the latter. The Music Master enlists mainly from these choirs for the case of an operetta (the School's second venture in this field) both words and music of which have been written by him.

The orchestra plays every day for assembly, at which hymn singing is clearly enjoyed by the School. This instrumental group is an enthusiastic body of players. It would seem desirable that any additional member of the music staff should be skilled in orchestral coaching, for the orchestra has made good progress in the last two years and, given experienced tuition, it should develop extremely well. The Warden has given considerable encouragement to its foundation and allocated money generously for the purchase of instruments. It would be an advantage to have them properly stored in a room designed for this purpose. The College has on order a good record-player, tape-recorder, a library of records and more books about Music. There are two grand pianos, both poor instruments, and nine upright pianos. When circumstances permit the College should have at least one good grand piano.

It is clear that much has been done since the appointment of the present Music Master to engender a love of Music in the College.

#### PHYSICAL EDUCATION

It is obvious that Physical Education plays an important part in the life of the boys and girls: a generous amount of time is allowed during school hours, and a wide range of activities is provided for leisure time to include both individual and team sports. Through effective and regular coaching the School has established a good tradition in games, and teams have been most successful in area competition. It is, therefore, particularly unfortunate that this sincere effort is seriously handicapped by most unsatisfactory indoor accommodation. The two Nissen huts, one for boys and one for girls, are most unsuitable for vigorous indoor work. Floor space is restricted and the low roof not only prevents the installation of fixed gymnastic equipment, but also limits the use of portable apparatus. There is, moreover, no apparatus store.

The ancillary rooms for girls consist of two medium sized changing rooms and one set of showers, whereas for the boys there is only one changing room and showers: this accommodation is used to capacity. The drainage in the shower area is quite inadequate, water stands in stagnant pools and spreads into the changing rooms. Owing to the lack of either kit stores or towel drying facilities, storage for gymnastic clothing is most unhygienic. There are no lavatories or wash basins for the girls in the gymnasium area, and the nearest available lavatory accommodation is at some considerable distance. Limited hard playground space is within easy reach of the gymnasium, but it is inadequate for the numbers using it at any one time, particularly when the field is unfit for play. If the boys and girls are to receive training which is sufficiently challenging and varied in scope, urgent consideration must be given to the provision of a gymnasium block complete with modern ancillary rooms, and at the same time the hard-surfaced training area should be extended. The School is, however, fortunate in having extensive and well cared for playing fields on the site, and these are fully used for both winter and summer games. No provision can be made for swimming instruction as an integral part of the general training, but some boys are taken to a bath at a considerable distance for after-school coaching, and it is hoped that the girls will shortly be given equal opportunities.

#### *Boys*

The two members of staff responsible both hold the Diploma of Physical Education: one has been at the School for some years but the other has been appointed recently. Together they make a strong team, and with their enthusiasm and effective teaching the standards of work should rise to a high level, particularly when better indoor facilities are available. The boys are interested and enter into all their physical activities with zest.

#### *Girls*

Two mistresses with specialist qualifications share the work between them and other members of staff give valuable help with the games coaching. The two teachers, both of whom left College in July, are keen, hard-working and very anxious to give of their best.

The girls attack the work with vigour and obvious enjoyment, and, given reasonably good facilities, the work should develop along sound, progressive lines.

The introduction of mixed ballroom dancing in the Fourth Forms is proving a valuable experiment, and it is hoped that this will be extended to include other age groups.

### *The School as a Community*

The day starts with an assembly which has to be taken in two sections. The first and second year pupils use the very attractive Chapel and the rest of the School use one of the large halls made from Nissen huts. This is very long and narrow and the acoustics are poor. The short senior service is all the more impressive

because these difficulties are so well overcome. The service in the Chapel for the younger children is an excellent introduction to the larger assembly later.

Conditions here are such that the traditional day of the boarding school, with its afternoon for games, is not practicable, for the difficulties of changing preclude it. Thus the day, from the point of view of teaching periods, is comparable to that of the day school, and the week, since it includes Saturday morning school, is a long one. In a week of 44 periods every form get three, four or five periods for games on the time-table, with another game on Saturday afternoon. Preparation periods are held every night except Saturday and Sunday, and it has been pointed out how valuable this is. But with the tradition of hard work so well established it may now be opportune to consider some lightening of the whole programme. A variety of possibilities is evident - there might be some relief from evening preparation on one or two evenings a week; the teaching programme might be slightly cut to allow a hobbies afternoon, or the time-table itself might be cut from eight to seven periods a day. Whatever is done in this direction more immediate attention might be given to a redistribution of time during the day to allow a rather longer lunch break. At present this seems rather rushed and there is little opportunity for rest or relaxation after the meal. This redistribution would also have the effect of putting the evening meal later - at present it is rather early to have the last main meal of the day at 5.15.

In some respects the School is handicapped by its isolation. This is recognised by the very wide range of activities organised on the site itself. Between four and five o'clock every day, and on many evenings between eight and nine o'clock, many varied interests are provided for. In addition to the more formal societies it is a good thing to see workshops and laboratories open for the boy or girl who wants to use them. Much of the musical life of the College goes on during these times. School excursions both in this country and abroad are undertaken in the holidays. There are frequent organised visits to Norwich for drama, music and in connection with history and geography. An extension of these for some of the more senior pupils on a self-organised and independent basis might be tried now that general traditions are so firmly established. All these activities are admirable and owe a great deal to the generous services of the staff. There is no doubt that the great majority of the pupils are experiencing a richer and fuller life in the College than they possibly could outside it, and the results on the personal side are most gratifying. They are frank and pleasant people to deal with: they have retained their individuality but have acquired a poise and ease of manner that is most marked in the Sixth Form. It is a remarkable tribute to the School that such traditions have been built up so quickly.

### *General Conclusion*

Wyndham College is a unique and stimulating educational experiment. Founded as an act of faith, encouraged by those responsible for its material and human requirements, it has developed further, both academically and socially, than might have been expected from the conditions in which it has had to evolve. It has now successfully passed through the first two stages of establishment and

consolidation, a tribute to the leadership of the Warden and the service of an unselfish and hardworking staff. The move to permanent buildings would not only represent the next step of development but would also offer opportunities for further advances in the work and life of a community already offering so much to its members and the County it serves. It is to be hoped that this will take place as soon as possible.

# Appendix

## NUMBERS AND AGES OF PUPILS IN FORMS

*Number of Pupils in the School whose ages on 1st November, 1958, were:*

Form	Total No. of Pupils	Average Age Y. M.		10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	18
				and under 11	and under 12	and under 13	and under 14	and under 15	and under 16	and under 17	and under 18	and over	
IC	33	11 10	B.	-	7	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			G.	1	11	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
IB	34	11 7	B.	-	14	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			G.	-	15	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
IA	35	11 7	B.	1	15	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			G.	1	12	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
IIC	35	12 7	B.	-	2	11	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
			G.	-	-	21	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
IIB	33	12 11	B.	-	-	15	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
			G.	-	-	11	3	1	-	-	-	-	-
IIA	32	12 7	B.	-	1	14	6	-	-	-	-	-	-
			G.	-	2	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
IIIE	30	13 9	B.	-	-	-	9	4	1	-	-	-	-
			G.	-	-	-	11	4	1	-	-	-	-
IIID	32	13 9	B.	-	-	-	15	6	-	-	-	-	-
			G.	-	-	-	9	2	-	-	-	-	-
IIIC	32	13 9	B.	-	-	1	11	2	-	-	-	-	-
			G.	-	-	-	12	6	-	-	-	-	-
IIIB	32	13 9	B.	-	-	-	17	4	-	-	-	-	-
			G.	-	-	-	7	4	-	-	-	-	-
IIIA	34	14 -	B.	-	-	2	10	6	2	-	-	-	-
			G.	-	-	-	8	6	-	-	-	-	-
IVE	28	14 2	B.	-	-	-	-	21	3	-	-	-	-
			G.	-	-	-	-	2	2	-	-	-	-
IVD	28	14 6	B.	-	-	-	-	14	3	-	-	-	-
			G.	-	-	-	-	10	1	-	-	-	-
IVC	21	14 6	B.	-	-	-	-	6	2	-	-	-	-
			G.	-	-	-	-	11	2	-	-	-	-
IVB	25	14 8	B.	-	-	-	-	12	2	-	-	-	-
			G.	-	-	-	-	7	4	-	-	-	-
IVA	26	14 11	B.	-	-	-	-	12	4	-	-	-	-
			G.	-	-	-	-	5	5	-	-	-	-
VE	27	15 9	B.	-	-	-	-	-	5	3	-	-	-
			G.	-	-	-	-	1	14	4	-	-	-
VD	33	16 1	B.	-	-	-	-	-	11	10	2	-	-
			G.	-	-	-	-	-	4	6	-	-	-
VB	18	16 1	B.	-	-	-	-	-	8	10	-	-	-
			G.	-	-	-	-	-	15	7	1	-	-
VA	28	15 9	B.	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	-	-	-
			G.	-	-	-	-	1	2	2	-	-	-
General Sixth	12	17 1	B.	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	6	-
			G.	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	7	1	-
L.Mod. Sixth	18	16 7	B.	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	5	2	-
			G.	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	10	8	-
L. Science Sixth B	24	16 6	B.	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	3	1	-
			G.	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	8	4	-
L. Science Sixth A	17	16 7	B.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
			G.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
U.Mod. Sixth	9	17 8	B.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	3
			G.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	16	6
U. Science Sixth	28	17 9	B.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	1
			G.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

(The D and E Forms are the late entry at 13+)

Totals	704	-	B.	1	39	55	72	87	55	47	32	6
			G.	2	40	54	50	60	48	34	18	4

Total number of Boarders	B. 394
	G. 310