

BASINGSTOKE: SOCIAL HISTORY II: EDUCATION

1871-1902

Basingstoke's population in 1871 was 5,574 with an elementary school provision for 956 children. This increased to 979 when neighbouring Eastrop was united with Basingstoke in 1873 but there was still a deficiency of 119 school places. The Queen's Grammar continued as a boys' boarding school as well as Aldworth's Hospital School which closed in 1879.¹ Totterdown for 150 infants had been inspected in 1875 and reported as doing good work for a ragged school in a very poor district but the question of efficiency and the methods of teaching were not recognised by the Department.²

Mary Nichols ran a boarding school in 1871 for 12 girls aged 8-17 in Stockton House, New Street³ and had moved to Bedford House, Church Street by 1881 where mixed boarders aged 4-13 gave birthplaces as Scotland, Ireland and London.⁴ In 1881 Marion Greysmark was principal of a ladies' school for 14 girls aged 7-15 at Westlands.⁵ In 1895 independent schools continued to be run by Hugh Perkins at 27 Flaxfield Road, Fanny Watterson in Sarum Hill and the Misses Weeks in Cross Street.⁶

A boys' boarding school was run by Robert Browne at Flaxfield House for 17 pupils aged 8-15,⁷ renamed Flaxfield College in 1881 where principal, Arthur Greenwood, educated 'young gentlemen' aged 11-16 in business pursuits, in contrast to the grammar school.⁸ Coombehurst Preparatory School opened in Westlands, Winchester Road in 1876 and moved to Coombehurst Drive in 1947. Over the years it catered for mixed pupils aged three and a half to 15 and closed in 1969 when the land was sold for housing development. At the time of its closure there were 170 pupils on the register and it was renowned for its menagerie of animals including over a thousand hamsters.⁹

Fr James Daly opened an elementary Roman Catholic school for 60 children in 1880 behind the newly constructed Holy Ghost Chapel in Burgess Road but few Catholics lived in Basingstoke and due to the lack of school accommodation a large proportion of pupils attending were non-Catholics. The school closed in 1897 when Daly left the area.¹⁰

In 1884 the National school was criticised for poor standards and dilapidating buildings but ratepayers still resisted the appointment of a School Board. In 1885 the town council was forced to recognise that the National school could not accommodate all eligible children and applied for powers to form a School Board

¹ Above, educ., Holy Ghost/Queen's Grammar School; Blue Coat Hospital School.

² The National Archive (TNA): PRO ED 2/191.

³ 1871 census RG10/1234 f.107.

⁴ 1881 census RG11/1254 f. 58

⁵ 1881 census RG11/1254 f. 4.

⁶ *Kelly's Dir. of Hants. and IoW.* (1895), 53-54.

⁷ 1871 census RG10/1234 f. 110.

⁸ 1881 census RG11/1254 f. 107; *Hants. & Berks. Gazette*, 25 Dec. 1880.

⁹ *Hants. & Berks. Gazette*, 18 Jul. 1969.

¹⁰ TNA: PRO ED 2/191: www.vinnotec.co.uk (accessed 30 Oct. 2012).

which was established on 14th May of that year.¹¹ At the first election of board members three were nonconformists, two of whom took the Chair and Vice-chair, two were Independents and two represented the Church.¹² Fairfield's Board Schools for 1,310 pupils opened¹³ in 1888 when both the National and British schools closed.¹⁴

FAIRFIELDS PRIMARY SCHOOL 1888 to present 1888-1902

The premises now occupied by Fairfield's Primary School and Fairfield's Arts Centre in Council Road were opened in 1888 as the Basingstoke Board schools. The name reflects the use of the original site where pig and sheep fairs were held¹⁵ and being high above the town it was considered to be a healthy location for children.¹⁶

The two adjacent buildings,¹⁷ designed by Charles Bell and built by H.J. Goodall,¹⁸ are of red brick with filling-in of split flint work characteristic of the district. Bell described them as 'Queen Anne, modified to suit their special purpose'. There was ample light in each classroom by means of large windows; open fires heated the infants' department,¹⁹ but innovative heating in the senior school was provided by a hot water boiler supplying radiating coils.²⁰



Fairfield's Arts Centre, Council Road,
the former Basingstoke Board School for Infants.

¹¹ Parl. Paper 1886 (C.4748) 33.

¹² G.F. Dunn and R.S. Wallis, Revd Canon J.E. Millard, E. Adams, E.C. White, Revd H. Barron, C. Pinder.

¹³ Below, educ., Fairfield's school.

¹⁴ Above. Educ., British and National schools.

¹⁵ The National Archives (TNA): Public Record Office (PRO) ED 21/6272. The Corporation of Basingstoke offered the land in 1886 on a 99 year lease.

¹⁶ www.basingstoke.gov.uk Fairfield's Conservation Area Appraisal (Accessed 4 Mar. 2010).

¹⁷ TNA: PRO ED 21/6272. The Public Works Loan Commissioners granted £12,250 for the build, to be repaid over 50 years.

¹⁸ *Hants. & Berks. Gazette*, 18 Feb. 1888. Charles Bell, FRIBA of Dashwood House, 9 New Broad Street, London; H.J. Goodall of Basingstoke.

¹⁹ *Hants. & Berks. Gazette*, 18 Feb. 1888.

²⁰ *Hants. & Berks. Gazette*, 18 Feb. 1888.

Children were received from several Basingstoke National schools, namely Cross Street Boys, Girls and Infants; Church Street Boys; Church Square Girls and Infants; Totterdown CE Mixed. They also transferred from the Mixed and British Schools at Sarum Hill. All these schools closed in 1888.²¹ Three head teachers were appointed, including George Gage from the British school.



Fairfields Primary School,
the former Basingstoke Board School for Juniors.

The premises for the seniors (7-14 year olds) comprised 10,795 sq. ft. and were on two floors. Accommodation for 380 boys was on the ground floor in four classes of 60 and two of 70 with rooms for 430 girls on the first floor. The classrooms opened out from a central hall used for drill, assemblies and recreation and were fitted with dual desks, and galleries,²² (these were removed in 1926).²³ One of the larger rooms on the girls' floor had a sliding, glazed partition separating off a cookery area for 50 girls.

The infants' single storey building (3,946 sq. ft.) for 500 pupils (entering at age three or four and leaving at six years) gave a full complement of 1,310 pupils.²⁴ The infants' school was designed as two mirrored L-shaped rooms and two classrooms for boys and girls as well as a teachers' room and caretaker's house.

Fees were payable and an income was received from local rates and a government Capitation Grant.²⁵ During the first year the senior school attendance dropped to 67 per cent, when the Michaelmas annual hiring and pleasure fair was held in town. From 1889 prizes and medals were awarded to good attendees but in 1892 a scarlet fever epidemic led to prolonged closure of all three departments. The senior boys' school was closed for seven months and when it reopened in 1893 attendance was

²¹ TNA: PRO ED 21/6272, 28 Feb. 1888.

²² J.R. John, *Fairfields Schools, Basingstoke (1888-1979)*, (1979), 15.

²³ HRO, 309M87/A1, 1 Feb. 1926.

²⁴ *Hants. & Berks. Gazette*, 18 Feb. 1888.

²⁵ *Fairfields Schools*, 20. Fees were payable at the rate of 6d. weekly for a first child and 3d. for a subsequent child if the parents' wages were 30s. a week, reduced rates were paid by lower earners.

only 70 per cent as many had found employment and were not compelled to return to school.²⁶ Apart from this, during the period up to 1902 attendance levels for all three departments rarely fell below 85 per cent.

1902-1944

The most senior boys studied woodwork in a detached workshop in the playground which by 1909 was also open to boys from Basing Church school and the newly opened Council school in Brook Street. They made repairs around the school and articles such as a bicycle rack, footrests for desks, a piano stool, picture frames and a cabinet for ambulance apparatus for contributing schools.²⁷ An Inspector's report in this year described the upper school as being excellent in all respects and maintaining its high reputation, but by 1911 the lower school had difficulties owing to the number of very backward boys admitted.²⁸ On leaving, the majority of boys left for a commercial career or industrial work.²⁹

The standard curriculum was expanded to include football, swimming and country walks outside school hours. Girls had to walk to cookery classes in the new technical room in the refitted British school in Sarum Hill.³⁰ An Inspector in 1914 recorded that attendance was 94 per cent for boys and 91 per cent for girls.³¹ The laxity of attendance officers and a five year age range in the infants' school was less satisfactory and attainments were poor.³²

At the end of 1914 all elementary schools in the borough were commandeered by the army when Basingstoke served as a troop dispersal centre. Fairfield's Schools closed until April of 1915³³ and children were transferred to Brook Street Council school with the exception of Standard I due to lack of space. The schools supported the war effort by collecting money, cigarettes, matches and clothes for wounded soldiers in the neighbourhood and by entertaining convalescent soldiers in West Ham Hospital. They also collected 2.5cwt of horse chestnuts following an appeal by the Ministry of Munitions as a source of acetone for cordite production.³⁴

By 1916 the accommodation for boys was increased to 426.³⁵ In 1923 the mixed school was reorganised to become Basingstoke Fairfield's Senior Boys' and Girls' with 389 and 321 respectively spanning Standards II–VII. The infants' department was renamed Fairfield's Junior Mixed School³⁶ and the catchment area was defined as families residing south of, but not in, Worting Road, Brook Street and Basing Road.³⁷ Between 1920 and 1926 the town had to meet an increasing interest in evening education. An army surplus hut was installed at Fairfield's to offer a metalwork course for 12 boys. Combined with woodwork, this was designed as a

²⁶ J.R. John, *Fairfields Schools, Basingstoke (1888-1979)*, (1979), 24.

²⁷ TNA: PRO ED 70/905, 19 Dec. 1925.

²⁸ TNA: PRO ED 21/6272, 4 Nov. 1909; 27 Sep. 1911.

²⁹ HRO, 309M87/A1, 1.

³⁰ HRO, 309M87/A1, 11.

³¹ HRO, 309M87/A1, 1.

³² TNA: PRO ED 21/6272, 3 Mar. 1914.

³³ HRO, 309M87/A1, 13, 17.

³⁴ HRO, 35M86/LB1, 10 Feb. 1918.

³⁵ TNA: PRO ED 21/6272, 15 Sep. 1916.

³⁶ TNA: PRO ED 21/29242, 5 Sep. 1923.

³⁷ HRO, 309M87/A1 10 Jul. 1923.

three year course but was often restricted to only two years due to oversubscription.³⁸

By 1930 Fairfields was the biggest boys' Council school in Hampshire. With the exception of science, each teacher taught all subjects and the curriculum was split into two abilities. The top class studied elementary algebra, geometry and logarithms and several singing and orchestral prizes were won by the senior boys. Teachers in the girls' school specialised in individual subjects and moved from class to class. The junior mixed department was overcrowded; the L-shaped rooms had to accommodate two classes with much noise and distractions.³⁹

Increasing numbers of boys from feeder schools prevented promotion for some children aged 11 and over. Out of 398 boys attending in 1933, only 96 were under the age of 11. Similarly in the girls' school out of 347 pupils only 78 were younger than 11 which forced a comment from an Inspector that these should not really be classified as senior schools.⁴⁰

The Second World War caused another brief closure of the girls' school in September 1939 and 33 evacuees from Portsmouth were enrolled on its re-opening.⁴¹ The school stayed open during the usual holidays and term dates were changed to fit around the potato planting and harvest times.

1944 to the Present

Following the 1944 Education Act, infants and some senior girls were moved to May Place Hall, owned by the Congregational church. Fairfields became the Secondary Modern Girls' and Boys' School and the leaving age rose to 15.⁴²

In 1948 the senior schools amalgamated into a mixed 700 pupil school, and was once again renamed as Fairfields Secondary Modern Mixed School.⁴³ The catchment area was reorganised and widened to include surrounding villages resulting in even more overcrowding.⁴⁴ Several changes in name and attendees at the school occurred over the following decades.

During the 1940s the Council purchased Castle Field and land previously owned by the Burberry family in Cliddesden Road for the construction of a new school. In 1948 prefabricated buildings were erected in the grounds of The Shrubbery (the former Burberry home) to accommodate mixed 7-11 year olds.⁴⁵ As additional classes were constructed, Fairfields infants transferred to what became known as The Shrubbery Annexe. In 1954 The Shrubbery became an all-girls school, leaving boys in sole occupancy of Fairfields which was renamed as Fairfields Secondary Modern Boys' School. Two portakabins were erected in the playground when the catchment area

³⁸ TNA: PRO ED 70/905, 3 Jan. 1928.

³⁹ TNA: PRO, ED 21/29242, 15 Sep. 1930.

⁴⁰ TNA: PRO, ED 21/29242, 15 Nov. 1933.

⁴¹ J.R. John, *Fairfields Schools, Basingstoke (1888-1979)*, (1979), 34.

⁴² J.R. John, *Fairfields Schools, Basingstoke (1888-1979)*, (1979), 34.

⁴³ J.R. John, *Fairfields Schools, Basingstoke (1888-1979)*, (1979), 36.

⁴⁴ *Fairfields School magazine* Winter (1959), 2.

⁴⁵ This subsequently became part of Queen Mary's College. Above, educ. Holy Ghost/Queen Mary's Grammar school.

was extended again to accept boys from the new housing developments built for workers at Aldermaston Weapons Research Establishment.⁴⁶

In 1960 all the boys transferred to the newly constructed Charles Chute School, (later renamed The Vyne) in Queen Mary Avenue. 460 junior pupils and staff moved back from The Shrubbery Annexe to Fairfields which became the renamed County Junior School. In 1985 falling school rolls prompted a proposal to close both schools,⁴⁷ but public opposition saved the larger building. The original infants' school was taken over by the Fairfields Arts Centre in 1987⁴⁸ and new classrooms for four and five year olds were added to the junior school in 1994.

In 1998 the school was put into special measures after an Inspector's report but was graded as 'good' in 2003⁴⁹ and 'satisfactory' in 2010.⁵⁰ The roll of 392 in 2010 was much higher than that of most primary schools, and the school was praised for its regime of integrating and teaching English to a large number of pupils of a minority ethnic heritage.⁵¹ A local business sponsored a Language Awareness Project making French, German and Spanish learning available for all 450 pupils aged 4-11⁵² and the school gained the gold Artsmark award for being an Enhanced Healthy School as well as a Level 2 Rights Respecting School Award from UNICEF.⁵³

ST JOHN'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL 1900-1967

1900-1902

St John's School developed out of Sunday schools. By 1888 approximately 400 children received Sunday school education in two free of charge buildings formerly occupied by the National schools which ceased to exist in 1888.⁵⁴ In 1889, a yearly rent of £19 was levied and three years later the Charity Commission took over the endowment of the former vicar of Basingstoke, Revd Thomas Sheppard (d.1814), previously held by the Trustees of the defunct National schools, which released an annuity based on £1,000 to support the Sunday schools.⁵⁵

By 1894 the number of boys, girls and infants attending the schools had risen to around 900 being taught in six different buildings throughout the town.⁵⁶ Revd H Cooper Smith appealed to local residents for support to erect bespoke buildings.⁵⁷ He quickly received two anonymous donations; one for £1,500, the other for £25 from a working man who had been saving little by little with the view to having a well earned holiday but instead chose to send it to the vicar.⁵⁸ This enabled the purchase

⁴⁶ *Fairfields School magazine Winter* (1959), 1.

⁴⁷ *Basingstoke Gazette*, 19 Jul. 1985.

⁴⁸ www.basingstoke.gov.uk (Accessed 4 Mar. 2010).

⁴⁹ *Hampshire Chronicle*, 13 Jan. 2003.

⁵⁰ *Hampshire Chronicle*, 2 Jul. 2010.

⁵¹ *Hampshire Chronicle*, 2 Jul. 2010.

⁵² HRO, 50A07/E58/2.

⁵³ www.ofsted.gov.uk Fairfields Primary School (Accessed 7 Jan. 2011).

⁵⁴ TNA: PRO ED 49/2625; above, educ., Fairfields School.

⁵⁵ TNA: PRO ED 49/2625.

⁵⁶ HRO, 46M74/PZ43 Nov. 1894, 3; May Street Mission Room, Reading Road Mission Room, Sarum Hill Schools, the Parvise and Chapter Room of St Michael's church

⁵⁷ HRO, TOP 19/3/25.

⁵⁸ *Hants. & Berks. Gazette*, 1 Dec. 1900.

of dilapidated buildings attached to Church Cottage, Elbow Corner House and freehold land forming part of the old Merton Farm fronting Church Street and Brook Street, formerly the site of the Hospital of St Mary and St John founded in 1261.⁵⁹ Architect, A.D. Sharp of London designed the school to be built in five stages as funds came in.⁶⁰ The builder was J. Thumwood of Eastrop⁶¹ who completed the work at a cost of £5,585 in 1900.⁶²

The finished two storey building was of local red bricks at the lower level and yellow rough cast on the upper floor; with a red tile roof. The hall could accommodate 400, with a classroom at one end raised on a stage with a movable screen to separate it from the main space. Two further classrooms were on either side of the hall, with staircases leading to the first floor which consisted of another large school room. There was also a caretaker's house.⁶³

The rooms were well used during the week by the Girls' Club, the Girls' and Women's Bible Classes, the Guild of the Holy Spirit for lads and men, mothers' meetings, temperance, parochial and diocesan meetings as well as for the collection of subscriptions to savings clubs.⁶⁴ Initially only girls only were taught in the first rooms to be built, but at completion 245 infants and 205 mixed pupils attended.⁶⁵ The high proportion of infants to seniors was to cause difficulties throughout the life of the school.

At the dedication in 1900 Canon Hussey praised the buildings which would satisfy the most determined Inspector or the most 'red-tapey Government official'. The vicar was determined that the school would provide the same privileges offered in the town's day schools. The name changed from the New Sunday Schools to St John's Schools in respect of the ancient site on which they were built.⁶⁶

With population growth on the western side of town the Fairfield's Board Schools (opened in 1888), became oversubscribed⁶⁷. To avoid the expense of erecting new premises, the Board of Education approved the use of St John's as a primary elementary day school in 1901, despite reservations about the quality of teaching⁶⁸ and in effect revived the National school ethos in the town after a lapse of 15 years.⁶⁹ Enrolment prioritised children whose parents preferred a Church of England education and those who lived nearer to the school than to any other. Attendance was free of charge. Two months after opening in May 1901 there were 150 infants and 151 mixed pupils, with 90% and 96% attendance respectively.⁷⁰

⁵⁹ HRO, 46M74/PZ43 Nov. 1894, 9; HRO 46M74/PZ49 Jun. 1900, 57.

⁶⁰ HRO, TOP 19/3/25.

⁶¹ HRO, 46M74/PZ44 Sep. 1895, 82.

⁶² HRO, 46M74/PZ50 Aug. 1901, 78.

⁶³ *Hants. & Berks. Gazette*, 1 Dec. 1900.

⁶⁴ HRO, 46M74/PZ49 Jan. 1900, 3; Blanket Club and Dorcas Clothing Club.

⁶⁵ HRO, 46M74/PZ46 Apr. 1897, 35.

⁶⁶ *Hants. & Berks. Gazette*, 1 Dec. 1900.

⁶⁷ Above, educ., Fairfield's school.

⁶⁸ *Hants. & Berks. Gazette*, 8 Dec. 1900.

⁶⁹ HRO, 46M74/PZ50 Jun. 1901, 59.

⁷⁰ HRO, 46M74/PZ50 May 1901, 43; Jul. 1901, 67.



Architect's sketch of the completed school (1896).⁷¹

The first Fee Grant of £33 2s. 6d. was received in October of that year but no rate aid was received and all expenses and maintenance were totally financed by the Church and through subscriptions.⁷² The head teachers were Frederick J. Brown and Miss Florence Berry.⁷³

1902-1944

The County Council took over the running of the school following the 1902 Act but all expenses still had to come from the parish.⁷⁴ The first Inspector's report gave an excellent rating and pupil numbers continued to grow, with many on a waiting list.⁷⁵ Attendance reached 99% in both departments in November 1902 and children were rewarded with a half day holiday, but parents of senior girls were encouraged not to keep their daughters at home to do chores, run errands or mind the babies⁷⁶ and infants were asked to attend even in wet weather. The school closed during a measles epidemic in 1902.⁷⁷

In 1903 the Board of Education designated the space as being adequate for 228 infants.⁷⁸ Increasing numbers of children on the roll forced yet another building project in 1905 at a cost of £8,000,⁷⁹ providing additional space for 80 seniors on the first floor.⁸⁰ In 1907, the Board of Education fixed the limit in the mixed school at 226⁸¹ and renamed it the Basingstoke Church of England School.⁸² The infants'

⁷¹ HRO, TOP 19/3/25.

⁷² HRO, 46M74/PZ50 Oct. 1901, 196.

⁷³ *Kelly's Dir. Hants IoW.* (1903), 49.

⁷⁴ HRO, 46M74/PZ52, 98.

⁷⁵ HRO, 46M74/PZ51, 98.

⁷⁶ HRO, 46M74/PZ51, 78, 110.

⁷⁷ HRO, 46M74/PZ, 6.

⁷⁸ HRO, 46M74/PZ53, 131.

⁷⁹ *Kelly's Dir. Hants IoW.* (1915), 57.

⁸⁰ *Hants. & Berks. Gazette*, 1 Jul. 1905.

⁸¹ HRO, 33M86/A4, 73.

⁸² TNA: PRO ED 161/6428; HRO 33M86/A4, 69.

room was constantly overcrowded, with no room for Standards I and II to progress to the senior department. Numbers on the roll hit a peak of 485 in 1909 resulting in children under the age of four being asked to leave.⁸³ The demand on space continued right up until 1918, even after the opening of the new Council school in Brook Street (1909), and was further exacerbated by taking children from the late Miss Watterson's school in Sarum Hill (1911).⁸⁴

The military took over the school at the beginning of the First World War and children were taught in alternative buildings until June 1915.⁸⁵ A week's holiday was granted on the Declaration of Peace.⁸⁶ In the years after the war overcrowding continued. The Head complained to the Director of Education of one class of 90 children and weaknesses in teaching but requests for additional staff were declined.⁸⁷

Financial problems grew in the early 1920s; parents' subscriptions declined and the buildings deteriorated. The heating apparatus and playground were condemned.⁸⁸ Books were in such a poor state that they were not fit to use. Funds were increased by church collections, licensing the hall as a theatre hired out to the Basingstoke Amateur Dramatic Society and by charging £10 per annum rent to the Sunday school for the use of what were originally their own rooms.⁸⁹ After an appeal by the vicar, donations for heating improvements were received from several charities without the need for a contribution from the Winchester Diocese Fund.⁹⁰ Unlike the Council schools, St John's was not eligible for State aid for maintenance.⁹¹ Dr. Cooper Smith, a barrister prior to becoming a priest, had drawn up the trust fund in such a way that it was impossible for it to be handed over to the local authority.⁹²

By the 1920s some Roman Catholic children attended the school and a third of pupils were Nonconformist. Some staff objected to teaching in the presence of a Roman Catholic pupil teacher who was asked to leave and it was decided not to admit any more Catholic pupils.⁹³

Prior to his resignation in 1926 the Head, Mr Gould, taught a class of 60 Standard VI and VII children and was so tied that he was unable to supervise other classes, but an Inspector praised his many years of zealous work and commented that his section of the school was by far the best.⁹⁴ A Headmistress and two assistants were in charge of 195 infants which an Inspector described as inadequate.⁹⁵ The school

⁸³ TNA: PRO 161/6428; HRO 33M86/A4, 110.

⁸⁴ HRO, 33M86/A4, 136.

⁸⁵ HRO, 33M86/A4, 168. The schoolroom of the Grammar School, Church Cottage and the Mission Church in Reading Road.

⁸⁶ HRO, 33M86/A4, 219.

⁸⁷ HRO, 33M86/A4, 223.

⁸⁸ *Hants. & Berks. Gazette*, 7 Jul. 1923.

⁸⁹ HRO, 33M86/A4, 227; 230.

⁹⁰ HRO, 33M86/A4, 274-5; Newman's Charity, Magdalen College (who had the advowson for St Michael's), Oxford and Betton's Charities.

⁹¹ *Hants. & Berks. Gazette*, 30 June 1923.

⁹² *Hants. & Berks. Gazette*, 30 June 1923.

⁹³ HRO, 33M86/A4, 302.

⁹⁴ TNA: PRO ED 21/29241.

⁹⁵ TNA: PRO ED 21/29241.

was refused the status of a Church Central School in 1929 because of the lack of accommodation.⁹⁶

During the Second World War evacuees from two Catholic schools in Portsmouth were accepted, being taught from 1.00-4.30pm with Basingstoke children having classes from 8.45-12.15pm.⁹⁷

1944-1967

Following the war the Ministry of Education described the buildings as inadequate and the school was awarded Controlled status in 1952. A change in catchment areas led to a decline in numbers when South View and Oakridge County Infant schools opened (1954 and 1955),⁹⁸ but St John's remained the only voluntary Church school in the Borough,⁹⁹ with 206 children taught in six classes.¹⁰⁰

During the town development St John's ceased to exist and was demolished in July 1967. Pupils transferred to non-denominational schools or the newly constructed St John's Church of England (Aided) Primary School in Kingsmill Road.¹⁰¹ Even this was soon inadequate. In 1968 two extra classrooms were built and plans were submitted for a new infant school.¹⁰²

⁹⁶ HRO, 33M86/A4, 340.

⁹⁷ HRO, 33M86/A4, 399.

⁹⁸ HRO, 50A07/C2.

⁹⁹ HRO, 44M68/F5/9.

¹⁰⁰ TNA: PRO 161/6428.

¹⁰¹ *Hants. & Berks. Gazette*, 21 Jul 1967.

¹⁰² *Hants. & Berks. Gazette*, 19 Apr 1968.