

Institute of Education Archives Subject Guide No. 9 Education in London, 1870-1990



Introduction

This guide looks at education in inner London during the period when its provision was dominated by a succession of single local government administrative units, from the creation of School Board for London in 1870 until 1990 when responsibility was given to the individual metropolitan boroughs. Though this introduction concentrates upon state provision of education the Library and Archives also hold collections relating to independent and further education in London.

Before 1800 education in England largely comprised private schools attached to religious institutions where the sons of the wealthy were educated. The 19th century saw a dramatic increase in the number of schools and London had a large complex organisation of schools of varying educational levels, including dame schools, charitable schools, poor law schools, public day schools, and grammar schools. Access to education was limited by class and secondary education was only accessible to children from a middle class background. Teacher training was in its infancy and many teachers did not have any formal training. The 19th century also saw the opening of London's first universities and mechanics' institutes which provided further and higher education.

School Board for London 1870-1903

The School Board for London (SLB or LSB) was the only school board created by the 1870 Elementary Education Act and it covered the area of jurisdiction of the Metropolitan Board of Works, now known as inner London. The Board's main aim was to provide enough elementary school places for all poor children in London and became the largest provider of education in London. The Board built new schools and renovated others it had inherited. In 1871 a bye-law was passed which made school attendance mandatory for children aged 5-13, though it was largely unenforceable until attendance was made compulsory in 1880 and was not free until 1891. The SLB dictated the administrative structure of its schools and their basic curriculum. It also developed higher grade schools for its oldest and ablest elementary pupils offering a vocational element to the curriculum and were funded by the Science and Art Department as schools of science.

In 1889 the London County Council (LCC) replaced the Metropolitan Board of Works as the principal local government body in inner London. In 1893 the LCC established the Technical Education Board (TEB) to aid the provision of technical and secondary education in the city. The TEB introduced the junior county scholarships to make it possible for pupils from elementary schools to go to secondary schools and technical institutes and set up new technical institutions such as the London Day Training College (later the Institute of Education). In 1897 the TEB became responsible for the allocation of Science and Art Department grants and clashed with the SLB over their higher grade schools.

Image: Photograph of a primary school home economics lesson in London, 1980s, from the papers of Brenda Francis (ref: BF/1/3/8)

In 1901 it was ruled that it was illegal for the Board to fund the schools as they were outside their elementary remit which partially led to the abolition of the SLB.

London County Council (LCC): 1904-1965

In 1904 the LCC took over responsibility for the provision of education from the SLB and TEB under the Education (London) Act 1903. The LCC brought all the elementary schools they were responsible for under one administrative structure and carried out a large renovation and building programme to improve the educational and social conditions of the schools. The LCC also introduced welfare reforms to improve the health of their pupils, including school medical treatment centres, free school meals for delicate children and open air schools. To combat the lack of secondary school places available they opened their own County Secondary Schools and retained the higher grade schools (now central schools) and other technical schools as an alternative form of post-elementary education. They also began to improve teaching standards by investing in new teacher training colleges, creating in-service training courses, developing an education library and eliminating the need for uncertified teachers.

Due to World War I and economical restrictions of the inter-war period, the LCC limited developments during this period and saved cost by limiting scholarships, cutting school hours and postponing school improvements. Despite this the LCC opened additional central schools and new day continuation schools for employed young people in reaction to the raising of the school leaving age to 14 by the 1918 Education Act. They also organised instructional and recreational centres for unemployed youths aged 16-18 as unemployment rates rose in the 1920s. In 1934 a by-law was passed to raise the school leaving age to 15, which was to be enforced nationally by the 1936 Education Act (which was never enacted due to World War II).

In the first months of World War II around 49% of London's school population was evacuated. Although evacuated secondary schools were often attached to other schools, there was no such links for elementary pupils and many younger children returned to London and were taught in emergency elementary schools. At the end of the War, of London's 1200 schools only 50 schools had received no damage and 290 were destroyed or severely damaged.

The 1944 Education Act changed the system of secondary education in England and Wales by bringing compulsory education for all up to the age of 14 (raising to 15 in 1947) and officially enforcing a division between elementary (now primary) and secondary education. The LCC drew up a plan on how they would implement the Act to again take up all the powers they had been given and began to experiment with comprehensive schools. The LCC also tried to continue to improve the educational and social welfare of their pupils by investing in school libraries, clubs and societies; providing financial aid and premises for youth organisations; providing musical instruments in schools; developing sport centres; and introducing the school meals service for all children.

In 1960 the Royal Commission on Local Government in Greater London (also known as the Herbert Commission), which reviewed the administration of the city and the surrounding area, called for the closure of the LCC and the creation of a new body, the Greater London Council (GLC), to be responsible for the administration of the whole of what is now Greater London. The London Government Act of 1963 replaced the LCC with the GLC in 1965 and the outer boroughs were given local education authority status. Education in the former LCC area was to be the responsibility of the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA).

Inner London Education Authority (ILEA), 1965-1990

The ILEA was a 'special committee' of the GLC and consisted of members of the GLC from the inner London area and members delegated from the inner London borough councils. Following the work of the LCC, ILEA introduced some experimental approaches to education including the development of its own educational television network. Teachers' Centres were established which provided education for ILEA teachers and had teams responsible for different subjects. Advisory teachers were appointed to work with each subject inspector to help develop the different subject areas. The ILEA also adopted a culturally pluralist approach towards ethnic minorities in London schools, continued to promote comprehensive education and abolished corporal punishment in its schools.

The ILEA's work was restricted by the political problems it faced due to its status. It was possible for the ILEA to have a majority of Labour members when the GLC had a conservative majority which caused conflicts between the two bodies. Conservative politicians often claimed the organisation was over-spending and over bureaucratic. After it was announced in 1983 that the GLC would be abolished, the ILEA's future was uncertain but it was decided that the inner London boroughs could not manage their own education provision at that time and the ILEA would continue as a directly elected body. The Authority still faced opposition and during discussions about the Education Reform Act 1988 it was proposed to allow the London boroughs to opt out of the ILEA and form their own local education authorities which later was amended to abolish the ILEA altogether. The ILEA was abolished in 1990 and provision for education was given to the local boroughs.

Related Archive Collections

Architects and Building Branch Photographic Archive (DC/ABB)

The Architects and Building Branch, formed in 1949 by the then Ministry of Education, oversaw the central government policy relating to school architecture and specific building programmes. The collection contains photographs, 1940s-1980s, including images of schools in London.

Papers of Brenda Francis (DC/BF)

Brenda Francis (fl. 1930s-1980s) was a London County Council (LCC)/Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) Advisory Teacher in the field of domestic science. Her collection mostly comprises photographs of domestic science lessons in London, [1930s-1990s] collected during her work for ILEA.

Records of the ILEA Bridging Course (DC/BR)

Records of the Inner London Education Authority Bridging Course (officially known as the ILEA/EEC Transition from School to Work Project), 1978-1982, which was designed to help to bridge the transition from school to working life.

Papers of Ebenezer Cooke (DC/CO)

Cooke was drawing master interested in the theory and practice of art education, and the collection, (1860-1912), includes papers relating to the London County Council Report of the Conference on the Teaching of Drawing in Elementary and Secondary Schools and Training Colleges, 1907-1909.

Papers of Cynthia Reynolds (DC/CR)

Cynthia Reynolds was an Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) advisory teacher on home economics, who was involved in the development of 'preparation for parenthood' courses in ILEA

secondary schools. Her papers, 1945-1985, include papers regarding the development of the courses and other home economics projects she was involved in at ILEA.

Papers of Ethel Martha Hatchard née Smith (DC/EH)

Collection of papers reflecting the career of a female teacher who combined teaching with family commitments in the first half of the twentieth-century. Her papers, 1899-1983, including personal material relating to her own education at the North London Collegiate School and her training as a teacher at the Hackney Pupil Teachers' Centre.

Papers of Elsie Victoria Lane (DC/EL)

Elsie Lane was a hairdresser and teacher of wig-making, who ran her own school in Mile End Road, London. Her papers, (1881-1973), include personalia, autobiographical notes and correspondence about her life, training, career and views on education and training.

Papers of Gene Adams (DC/GA)

Gene Adams was the ILEA Museums Education Advisor from 1975-1990, and her papers include publications she produced whilst in the role; papers regarding educational activities she developed in London museums and surveys of museums in London.

Records of the Girls' Day School Trust (DC/GDS)

The GDST is an independently run but centrally supported group of girls' schools initially created in 1872 to advance the education of women. Their schools are mostly based in London and their records, (1843-2009), comprise the central administrative records of the Trust. The collection also contains records of the Trust's closed schools in Kensington, Clapham, Maida Vale, Islington, and Dulwich.

Papers of Hilde Jarecki (DC/HJ)

Hilde Jarecki spent around 20 years working as the Senior Professional Advisor for the London Playgroup Association and her collection, (1945-1997), includes papers regarding playgroups in London.

Papers of Horace Panting (DC/HP)

Horace Panting was a science teacher in east London from 1935-1977. His collection, (1912-1980s), includes papers regarding his time as a student at the Institute of Education; papers associated with school sport in London; and a handwritten diary re the evacuation of Holborn Boy's School to Crudwell, Wiltshire, during the Second World War.

Papers of Rose Kosky (DC/KOS)

Rose Kosky was a former teacher who worked for Barking and Dagenham Schools' Psychological Service, [1975]-1987. Her collection includes papers on the Barking Reading Project, [1975-1979], which aimed to help teachers to teach children with reading difficulties in the classroom rather than referring them external experts.

Papers of Martin Lightfoot (DC/LI)

Martin Lightfoot was a Deputy Education Officer (Services) at the ILEA and later the Director of the Centre for the Study of Community and Race Relations at Brunel University and also worked to help the development of educational programmes in Southwark after the abolition of ILEA. His collection includes papers regarding his work, including material relating to the research projects 'Recreating Education: London and Education Reform', 1989-1992.

London History Teachers Association (DC/LHT)

This collection contains the minutes and memoranda, 1953-1975, of an association for history teachers working in secondary schools in London.

London Parents Ballot Campaign (DC/LPB)

This collection comprising the scrapbooks covering the work of London Parents Ballot Campaign (LPBC) which was set up as a sub-committee of the Parents Central Consultative Committee of the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA). The Campaign asked the opinion of parents about the transfer of responsibility for education services from the ILEA to local authorities.

Papers of David and Mary Medd (DC/ME)

The Medds were architects who worked for the Architects and Building Branch at the Ministry of Education and the collection, (1870s-2009), include various papers regarding the schools they worked on in London including Eveline Lowe Primary School.

Papers of Michael Duane (DC/MD)

Michael Duane was a head teacher who was best known for his 'progressive' educational views. His collection, (1946-1992), include papers regarding his work at Risinghill School in Islington, 1960-1965.

Papers of Kate Myers (DC/MYE)

Kate Myers was ILEA co-ordinator of the Schools' Council's Sex Differentiation Project, an advisory teacher, director of the SCDC/EOC Equal Opportunities Project, and a senior inspector in the London Borough of Ealing. Her collection, (1974-1995), include her research during her work in equal opportunities and gender equality mostly dating from the 1980s.

Papers of Nigel Spearing (DC/NS)

Nigel Spearing was a teacher who became involved in politics and was MP for Acton, 1970-1974 and Newham South, 1974-1997. His collection, (1962-2002), include papers regarding education and local government including educational reconstruction, 1979-1980, and ILEA reorganisation, 1980-1981.

Papers of Bernarr Rainbow (DC/RW)

Bernarr Rainbow was an historian of music education, organist, and choir master, his collection, (1940s-1990s), include papers relating to his work as Director of Music at the teacher training College of St. Mark and St. John in Chelsea and Gypsy Hill College of Education.

Schools Council for Curriculum and Examinations (DC/SCC)

The SCC was a non-directive body intended to provide leadership in curriculum, examination and assessment development, 1964-1980. The collection includes some files relating to ILEA projects.

Papers of Brian Simon (DC/SIM)

Brian Simon was the professor of education at the University of Leicester. His collection, (1908-2003), include papers on the reorganisation of ILEA in 1987 in relation to his book *Education and the Social Order 1940-1990* published in 1991.

Records of the National Union of Women Teachers (DC/UWT)

The NUWT was a teachers' union whose main aim was to achieve equal pay for women teachers but was also interested in various subjects related to education. Their records, (1904-1961), include correspondence with the LCC and the records of the London branch of the union.

Records of the Institute of Education, University of London

The Institute was founded as the London Day Training College in 1902 by the London County Council. In 1932 it became the Institute of Education when it was transferred to the University of London. From 1944 to 1980s it was the Area Training Organisation (ATO) for the whole of London.

Related Special Collections in the Library

Official Publications Collection

This is an almost comprehensive collection of official reports, legislation and other publications on education and related subjects for all parts of the United Kingdom, including publications by the SBL, LCC and ILEA.

Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) Publications

A collection of books and audiovisual materials published by the ILEA Learning Resources Branch was transferred to the Institute when the ILEA was abolished in 1990.

Bibliography and other printed sources

Barber, M (ed.) (1992) *Education in the Capital* (London: Cassell).

Franklin, G. (2009) *Inner-London schools 1918-44: a thematic study* (London: English Heritage) accessed at http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/upload/research_reports/043_2009WEB.pdf?1256371046.

Gibbon, G (1939) *History of the London County Council 1889-1939* (London: MacMillan).

London County Council, Education Department (1947) *London school plan: development plan for primary and secondary education*. (London: London Council).

MacLure, S. (1990) *A History of Education in London 1870-1990*. (London: Allen Lane).

Martin, Jane. (1999) *Women and the Politics of Schooling in Victorian and Edwardian England* (Leicester: Leicester University Press).

Other Relevant UK Archival Collections

The London Metropolitan Archives hold the records of the SLB, LCC, ILEA and other records regarding education in London. Please see London Metropolitan Archives Information Leaflet No.14 'An Outline of Sources For the History of Education in London Metropolitan Archives' at <http://217.154.230.218/NR/rdonlyres/B6B5961A-4FAC-4CCE-A941-3B7575B78168/0/infono14.pdf>

Records of individual schools and local education authorities in London can be found in the local borough archives.

Institute of Education Archives

Information Services, Institute of Education, University of London, 20 Bedford Way, London WC1H 0AL

Tel: +44 (0)20 7612 6983/ +44 (0)20 7911 5568

Email: arch.enquiries@ioe.ac.uk

<http://www.ioe.ac.uk/is>

First January 2010