

Garden Suburb Infant & Junior School, a brief timeline:

1909: 17th May, a temporary infant's school was opened at the Hampstead Garden Suburb Institute. 40 children were on the roll by the end of the first week.

From the age of 8yrs, children attended Hendon Council's Bell Lane School, a considerable trek (which included a return walk for lunch at home, and after, a walk from HGS back to Bell Lane)

1910: negotiations between the Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust (HGST) and the Hendon Education Committee (HEC) regarding lease of a plot of land near Willifield Green for new elementary school

1911: July, 400 residents and their supporters hold protest meeting on Willifield Green about ongoing dispute between HGST and HEC over size of new school building and playground. 98 Garden Suburb children attend Bell Lane School in Hendon.

1912: Construction and completion of the new Elementary School for Infants and Juniors, designed by Architect, W.G.Wilson. Administered by Hendon District Council (from 1965 onwards by Barnet Council)

- ***Two main blocks, one for the infants and one for the senior departments***
- ***includes 19 classrooms, two central halls, infants play sheds, girls and boys play sheds, 4 cloakrooms, boys manual training room, girls cookery and laundry rooms, boys playground, infants & girls playground. Separate entrances for boys and girls.***
- ***First school in Hendon to have electric lighting***
- ***"the children of the Suburb are to be heartily envied for their beautiful building" (The Town Crier, monthly journal of the Hampstead Garden Suburb)***

1913: Infant School opens to 227 children on 17th January, staffed by a Head Teacher, 4 teachers, and 2 supplementary.

January 31st - formal opening ceremony to the public

February 3rd – opening of Junior School, 90 children transferred to the Boys and Girls 'Upper Department'

August: Miss Chilton appointed as Head Teacher, Infants.

Mr Kamester, Head teacher for Boys

Miss Line, Head teacher for Girls

During WW1, School had a potato growing campaign

The following are a few notes on the history of the Infant school jotted down in 1957, and recently discovered in the HGS archive. Interesting entries relating to WW1, and especially WW2:

1917: October 10th, air-raid warning during dinner hour. Registers not marked. Raid drill practiced on October 26th.

Belgian refugees using two class rooms, with 3 Belgian members of staff. December 17th, School closed during cold spell and caretaker not able to come.

1918: January, heating unsatisfactory, one class in teachers' sitting room and two others in junior school.

1922: a crystal wireless set up, and in 1924 two classes listened to first important experiment in broadcasting educational work for schools.

1928: Reorganization of schools. Junior Mixed (including infants and children up to 8yrs) and Senior mixed department children over 8yrs and up to 14yrs.

1939: September 4th: School closed owing to Declaration of War – will not re-open until further notice.

September 6th Meeting of head teachers at Town Hall regarding Home Tuition.

October 16th Scheme of Home Tuition commenced

December 22nd Scheme of Home Tuition finishes. Shelters built on ground in front of school (where the front playground is now)

*1940: January . Home tuition re-commenced. 146 children being taught in their homes.
July 2nd - School re-opens.*

September 26th. School closed until further notice owing to enemy action overnight. Land Mine on Willifield Green. All teachers sent to work in other schools. The Infant School, at that time the nearest the green, was severely damaged.

"A landmine destroyed the Infants wing. Classes, with groups of about 12 children, were quickly organised in homes, and teachers went from home to home ensuring that each child had at least some tuition during the day": from memories of former pupil Michael Max

October 9th. School to work in mixed departments.

1942: November 24th - School dinners commenced.

1945: April - Pre-fabs for three classes of 40 children brought into use.

11th Sept 1947, the senior children over 11yrs, were transferred together with three teachers to Goldbeaters Sec Modern school. This created more space in the Junior dept .Also, there was twice-yearly promotion of top infants classes to the juniors which eased overcrowding in infants school.

1949: June - Overcrowding and lack of accommodation in school

1950: two new hut classrooms opened, school meals now 6d each (2 ½ p) October – new playground completed.

250 children from infants absorbed into Junior School, divided into 11 classes, and a total of 434 children. There were 285 children in Infants, arranged in 7 classes. About 40 in each class in both Juniors and Infants.

1957 11 classrooms had their sloping floors levelled, and parquet flooring put down.

1960 12th September. The new building occupied by the Junior School. Infants moved into the original building, at the end furthest from Willifield Green.

1965 Junior School Choir visit Decca Studios to record songs for 'Rhyme & Rhythm', a series of LPs issued by Argo Records recorded in association with Macmillan & Co.

Compiled by Alan Dein, 2013