

YORK CITY. SCHOOL ATTENDANCE COMMITTEE.

Vol. 1. Minutes 1877-1887

In: Explore York Archives, Reference code - Y/COU/5/3/6/1

Selected notes from 1880 – 1887, particularly concerning industrial and truant schools

Part 1 of 2

[These are very basic minutes with few details and give the impression of being rough work for a fuller version.]

City of York Byelaws

Under Section 74 of the Education Act 1870, children are not required to attend school

- (a) If they have received a certificate from one of HM Inspectors that they have reached the 5th standard
- (b) If they are beneficially and necessarily employed and have reached the 3^d standard

Parents breaking these byelaws can be fined 5/- (5 shillings)

Part 2 of 2

Recurring items on the Agenda:

- Committee business
- Statistics on absences
- Numbers of children who need help with fees
- Holiday dates
- Staff appointments
- Inspection reports of visits to industrial schools, etc in other towns

THE MINUTES RUN FROM 1877 – 1887. NOTES WERE MADE FROM MAY 1880

p. 182 1880 5 Nov SCHOOL ATTENDANCE 1880

Irregular attendance of children living in rural areas – whooping cough and fever were prevalent.

“During the year, 217 parents were summoned for not sending their children to school.” 89 were fined, and orders made in nearly all other cases. Children have been sent to Industrial Schools.

Your Committee feels greatly the want of a Wastrel School to accommodate children poorly dressed and having no boots, and who are refused admission at other schools on that account.

p. 193 **1881** 27 Jan **VISITS TO INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS**

“That the Industrial Schools to which children from York are committed be visited once a year by the Attendance Officers and a report made as to the condition of the children made thereon.”

[Amended on 10/2/1881 to two members of the SAC]

p. 196 **1881** 10 Feb **DAY INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL FOR YORK**

Looking at potential sites for a Day Industrial School – incl. Merchant Tailors’ Hall in Aldwark where “a Wastrel School was formerly held.” **1881**

p. 212 **VISITS TO INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL IN OTHER TOWNS**

Mrs Bulmer paid visits to schools in Leeds, Manchester, Liverpool and York on 18 and 19 July 1881

p. 217 **1881** 25 July **VISITS TO YORK INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL, AND SCHOOLS IN OTHER TOWNS**

20/120 boys were from York – premises were too limited and workshops too small – however, music and joinery were successful – 50 boys were learning to read music [Note: boys from Industrial Schools frequently joined the Army as bandsmen]

Woodwork – boys made cricket bats, toys, tennis rackets and wood twinings [?]

The school ran a wood chopping business - steam sawn wood for firewood was sold in York to bring in money

Boots were made for boys’ own requirements and for sale

Management is excellent

Health & happiness were excellent – no child was sick

The cost to the City is between 1/- and 3/6, the greater part being defrayed by the government

Advanced education – almost half of the inspection report consisted of discussion on a bill passing through Lords to allow advanced education to be given by these schools. It was unpopular here as: “poor traders paying the council cannot afford education for their own children”

Visits were made to other schools:

Leeds – School at Shadwell near Leeds; and Girls’ School in Leeds

Liverpool – St George’s Catholic School; Liverpool Girls School; Everton Terrace;

Manchester – St Joseph’s; Manchester Girls’ Schools

p. 231 **TRUANCY**

Targeting Street Arabs whose attendance is a source of annoyance. 206 parents were summoned before the Magistrates:

94 fined from 1/- to 5/-

51 had Orders made against them

33 were withdrawn

12 sent to Industrial Schools

[2 Feb 1877, p. 8 Parents were required to pay towards children's keep in Industrial Schools]

6 to Sheffield Truant School – 4 returned on licence and now attend regularly

p. 266 **SUNDAY SCHOOL TREATS**

“a frequent source of annoyance in the day schools, injuring the [attendance] average and unsettling the children.” Cherry Street and St Mary Bishophill Junior schools were mentioned. The Committee suggested that treats be organised in July during the school holidays

p. 276 **INSPECTION OF INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS IN LIVERPOOL**

Skills taught included shoemaking, tailoring, watch making, and wood turning. Each of the 4 schools had a specialism – printing, cabinet making, market gardening

p. 277 **1882 Sept YORK INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL INSPECTION**

Woodwork: cornice poles, rings & table legs were made

Boys are hired out for the day

Buildings are clean & well ventilated

“Each boy has his own bed and there is scarcely any sickness among them”

INSPECTION OF TRAINING SHIP SOUTHAMPTON

300 boys – moored in the River Humber. Boys are taught navigation as well as the usual subjects, and there is a tender for teaching practical seamanship.

p. 298 **TRUANT v INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS**

Truant boys are less happy – good and obedient in everything except book learning – the Education Act insists on children being taught letters, but not all are suited – it can be “as nauseous as an emetic is to a healthy man.” Remedies: solitary confinement – birching if the required passage has not been learnt – 30% do not respond to these methods.

Industrial schools – if a child is incapable of book learning, he is taught something else

Q&A to queries made by Mrs Wilkinson [Transcript]

Q: How many children are at Industrial Schools? A: 66

Q: How many children are at Truant Schools A: 4

Q: How much is paid? A: to Industrial Schools 1/- to 4/- (plus Govt. contribution from the Home Office); to Truant Schools 3/6 to 6/6

Q: By whom are children sent? A: Magistrates

Q: On what grounds are they sent in the various cases? A: Under Section 2 of Section 12, Education Act 1876 and under the Industrial Schools Act.

Q: Can parents be made to contribute to the cost? A: Yes, according to circumstances

Q: To what extent are they currently doing so? A: The Police obtain the money from the parents

Q: Have School Attendance Committees the power to establish truant schools. A: Not "per se". The Corporation being a Prison Authority has the power of erecting a Truant School.

Q: Are not the truant schools of Sheffield, London & other places successful and economical? ...If a truant school were established in York [would this] result in a considerable saving of money? A: Truant schools are only recently established ... not sufficient experience

p. 338-339 **1882** 25 Oct **REASONS FOR NON-ATTENDANCE**

From Annual statistics:

Only 63% attendance in December because of bad weather

Children who do not take their school pence on Monday morning are sent home by the teachers to get them, and are often kept at home some days by the parents

The want of boots & clothes. (This has been greatly lessened by the assistance of the Charity Organisation Society.)

p. 339 **COMPARATIVE COSTS OF VARIOUS SCHOOLS**

| School | Charge | Minus Govt. Grant | TOTAL |
|----------------------------------|----------|-------------------|---------|
| York Industrial School | £15.8.6 | £11.5.0 | £4.3.6 |
| Liverpool, Everton Terrace | £16.14.0 | £10.4.0 | £6.10.0 |
| Liverpool, Hightown (Protestant) | £26.0.0 | £8.2.6 | £17.7.6 |
| Liverpool, Hightown (RC) | £21.7.0 | £6.0.0. | £15.7.0 |
| Manchester, St Joseph's | £17.17.6 | £10.4.0 | £7.13.6 |
| Sheffield Truant School | £17.13.0 | £9.0.0 | £6.13.0 |
| Upton, Middx. | £26.12.0 | £5.5.0 | £21.7.0 |

Industrial schools were seen as for boys from bad home surroundings where they were neglected or in danger of becoming criminal

Truant schools were for boys from decent backgrounds – parents may have been working and unable to supervise, but disapproved of their child's behaviour – [Children could be returned on licence, to be sent back if they reoffended]

p. 360 1884 5 Mar [or May] **YORK GIRLS INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL**

Was about to move from Monkgate to the Old Militia Barracks [in Lowther Street]

SAC was finding increasing difficulty in placing children

p. 363 1884 29 Apr **GIRL TO BE SENT TO CANADA**

Application by Mrs Lyons, Matron of Windsor Street Industrial School, Leeds, for the sum of £10 for the outfit of Lily Pullen (a girl aged 9 taken from a brothel in York and who has no parents, and was committed to the above Industrial School until she was 16 years old), who is being taken out by Miss Rye to a Canadian home. (Resolved)

Recommended that Annie Scales (an inmate of the above) be not licensed out ...would get into bad company

p. 371 1884 15 Aug **YORK CERTIFIED INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL FOR GIRLS**

In 1877 – house in Marygate purchased – paid by the [Education] Committee and voluntary organisations – now to move to the former Militia Barracks in Lowther Street – the North & West Ridings have provided grants of £500 each – memorialists are asking the City of York to do the same.

p. 373 1884 19 Aug **YORK'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE GIRLS' INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL**

The Council is to “mature its plan with reference to the provisions of an industrial school for Boys or one for both Boys and Girls”

p. 377 1884 8 Sep **[YORK GIRLS' INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL]**

York Council agree to pay £500 providing they can send 10 girls – and that the Lord Mayor and two others be on the Committee

p. 507 1887 10 Mar **HMI REPORT ON THE MISSION ROOM, NUNNERY LANE**

This is a school similar to the purely private adventure school of Cumberland House (see below, 16 June 1887) except that the building, which serves as a Sunday School for the Primitive Methodists, is not quite so bad.

p. 508 **1887** 7 Mar **HMI REPORT ON PRIVATE ADVENTURE SCHOOL IN THE MISSION ROOM , NUNNERY LANE**

No registers are kept and there are no proper offices [toilets]. The Teacher pays the owner of the room £10 a year and makes what he can from the children's fees. There are no books or apparatus as far as I could learn. The children come when they please and do exactly as they please provided they pay the penny or twopence a week. This payment saves them from the attention of the

Attendance Officer of the City of York SAC, and the so-called school thus fulfils its only proper purpose in the opinions of their parents of the so-called Scholars.

Continued in: Y/COU/5/3/6/2

1887 16 June **SCHOOL IN CUMBERLAND HOUSE**

Defended by J.S. Rowntree. It was a British & Foreign School, not a private adventurer, but 75% of the cost was paid by private funds.

They do have offices and registers are kept.

The school was established by Rowntree and two other men for the extremely poor children locally – it is less well attended now as the corporation has been providing other schools. Rowntree was thinking of closing it as it has outlived its purpose