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COUNTY BOROUGH OF BOOTLE.



ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
SCHOOL MEDICAL OFFICER
FOR
1943

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School Medical Officer and Medical Officer of Health.

BOOTLE:
BOOTLE TIMES, 30, ORIEL ROAD.
—
1944.

February 1944.

*To the Chairman and Members
of the Education Committee.*

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present the thirty-sixth Annual Report on the medical inspection of school children in the Borough.

The steady return of children from reception areas to the borough increased the numbers under the supervision of the School Medical Service, and there was a corresponding rise in the figures of children medically examined in the schools and treated at the dental and other special clinics; by way of compensation the services of school medical staff on loan in reception areas were progressively reduced and were completely withdrawn therefrom at the end of the year.

The standard of nutrition of the children as assessed by the medical examiners was maintained on a satisfactory level and in this connection the increased use of the school dinner facilities may be noted with appreciation. Valuable work was done at the Scabies Clinic which aims at the control of scabies by treating it as a family disease, and during the year some 841 cases were admitted for treatment.

It is a pleasure again to record my indebtedness to the Chairman and Members of the Elementary Education Sub-Committee for their interest in the School Medical Service, and to the Teachers of the Borough and to the Director of Education for their co-operation in the work of the Department during the past year.

I am, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

F. T. H. WOOD,

School Medical Officer.

COUNTY BOROUGH OF BOOTLE.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SCHOOL MEDICAL OFFICER FOR 1943.

Area of Bootle in acres (exclusive of river bed)—2,414.

Population of Borough—

Registrar-General's estimate of Civilian Population at mid-year, 1942—46,100.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE.—With the gradual return of children from reception areas, the work of the schools has tended further towards normality in 1943. Accommodation in a number of the schools is being heavily taxed, and this question is receiving the attention of the Committee. During the year additional accommodation was provided for scholars of St. Winefride's School in the premises of St. Martin's College, for the senior girls of St. Monica's School in the former church premises, and for scholars of Hawthorne Road Girls' School at the Council's Kirby Road Rest Centre.

The following statement records the attendance position in December 1943, and shows an increase of 1,451 on the rolls of the Elementary Schools.

	Number.	Accom- modation.	Mean No. on Rolls.	Average Attendance.
Council Schools	8	5703	3881	3104
Roman Catholic Schools	5	3416	2224	2470
Church of England Schools	2	1637	966	746
	15	10756	7071	6320
			No.	No. on rolls October 1943.
Secondary and Junior Technical Schools (maintained)			3	829
Secondary Schools (aided)			1	36

A. THE SPECIAL WORK OF THE SCHOOL MEDICAL SERVICE.

EVACUATION OF SCHOOL CHILDREN.—The evacuation schemes formerly in operation have been in abeyance since December 1942, but the medical staff continue to examine children before admission to Marton School or to residential nurseries, and 180 such examinations were made during the year.

The number of school children in scheduled Reception Areas showed a reduction of 896 during the year, and in December 1943 was estimated to be as follows:—

Area.	Number of Children.		
	Elementary.	Secondary.	Technical.
Southport	347	155	—
Radnorshire	259	—	—
Breconshire	63	1	—
Herefordshire	87	60	—
Shropshire	23	5	—
Cheshire (Marton School)	80	4	11
Blackpool	—	34	—
	859	259	11

In addition 1,858 children remained privately evacuated to various other parts of the country.

SCHOOL MEDICAL SERVICES FOR EVACUATED CHILDREN.

One school nurse remained seconded for duty in Radnorshire until October, and the part-time services of medical, dental, and nursing staffs of the Committee continued to be available in Southport throughout the year. The Assistant School Medical Officer conducted a Minor Ailments Clinic for evacuated children there, and inspected 190 children in special surveys and made 59 routine examinations during the first half of the year; later, the Bootle school children were absorbed into Southport schools, but the medical officer's visits were arranged to include Bootle children in her inspections as far as possible. At the end of the year all the staff remaining on loan to reception areas was withdrawn.

MARTON SCHOOL.

This residential school has continued to function as part of the Evacuation Scheme during 1943, but difficulty is still experienced in maintaining an adequate number of boys in the school. At the close of the year there were 95 boys in attendance, compared with 122 at the end of 1942.

Notwithstanding special publicity efforts which have been made to recruit boys, only small parties have been sent to the school during the year. The question of the future of the school is under consideration by the Committee in consultation with the National Camps Corporation.

The arrangements for medical and nursing supervision remain as described in previous reports, and the medical officer's observation of the boys records substantial improvement in their physical condition.

B. THE NORMAL WORK OF THE SCHOOL MEDICAL SERVICE.

MEDICAL INSPECTIONS CARRIED OUT.

A statistical summary of the findings of medical inspection and of the kind of treatment obtained will be found in the Board of Education Return at the end of this Report.

(1) ROUTINE MEDICAL INSPECTIONS.—Table I. shows that 1,312 entrants and 702 leavers (a total of 2,014 children) were medically inspected, as compared with a total of 1,687 last year.

(2) ROUTINE SURVEYS.—Surveys were continued on the lines described in previous reports..

The results of these routine surveys are as follows:—1,894 examinations were made, and 685 defects were recorded, including 48 cases of subnormal nutrition, 225 cases of nose and throat disease, 64 cases of defective vision and squint, 124 cases of anaemia, and 16 cases of skin diseases.

(3) SPECIAL EXAMINATIONS.—The number of children presented for special examination was 5,517, as compared with 5,190 in the preceding year; 5,459 of these were seen at the Inspection or Minor Ailments Clinics held daily, while the remaining 58 were presented at schools in the course of routine visits.

(4) RE-EXAMINATIONS.—9,633 re-examinations of children, who on examination were referred for treatment or further observation, were made during the year, as compared with 7,191 during 1942; 891 of these were performed at the schools, and 8,742 at the School Medical Offices and Health Centre.

(5) MISCELLANEOUS EXAMINATIONS. — In addition to the ordinary work of routine and special examinations and re-inspections undertaken during the year, the following work was carried out:—

Examination of:—

Children, following Special Place examinations ...	236
„ as to their fitness for employment ...	70
„ for ascertainment of feeble-mindedness ...	25
„ before admission to Marton School ...	101
Other children	28

In addition, the Director of Education was supplied with medical histories of 44 juvenile offenders.

FINDINGS OF MEDICAL INSPECTION AND TREATMENT.

A summary of the defects noted at both routine and special examinations shows that 5,746 defects were referred for treatment or further observation.

The more important percentages of physical defects found on routine inspection this year were as follows:—subnormal nutrition, 13·6 per cent.; squint, 3·8 per cent.; external eye disease, 2·1 per cent.; chronic tonsillitis, 7·4 per cent.; chronic tonsillitis and adenoids, 0·1 per cent.; anaemia, 0·8 per cent.; lung disease, 1·6 per cent.; and otorrhoea, 1·9 per cent.

Children referred for treatment or further observation constituted 41·0 per cent. of the entrants examined, and 58·2 per cent. of the leavers examined.

NUTRITION.

Table II, on page 15, shows that out of a total of 2,014 children examined 13·5 per cent. were “slightly sub-normal,” compared with 18·5 last year.

CLEANLINESS.

The total number of examinations of children in the schools by School Nurses for verminous conditions was 7,271, and of this number 1,409 were found unclean; this is much the same proportion as last year, and the deterioration from pre-war findings is due to a continuance of the adverse conditions affecting home life.

CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR.

The activities of the School Canteen Committee's Footwear Scheme have been in operation for a full year, on the basis of at least half cost payable by parent or guardian and the balance from the Footwear Fund.

The applications dealt with are as under:—

Applications received	...	...	...	...	369
,, granted	...	...	...	...	220
,, refused	...	...	...	...	149

A total of 217 pairs of boots was paid for, leaving a balance of three cases where the privilege was not used. These figures include Southport cases.

SKIN DISEASES.

As usual, a large proportion of all the skin diseases found at routine and special inspections was due to conditions closely associated with the neglect of personal hygiene, *e.g.*, impetigo, scabies, and septic conditions.

Scabies Clinic.

The incidence of scabies among school children continued high during 1943, 668 cases being discovered at special examinations and 9 at routine inspections, compared with figures for last year of 645 and 41, and for 1941 of 475 and 12.

Arrangements for the examination and treatment of cases of scabies continued on the lines described in the previous report. In addition, as an added precaution, in March two electrically-operated hot air sterilising ovens were installed in disused premises adjoining the Public Baths,

and the practice was instituted of disinfesting the clothing of all patients whilst they were undergoing treatment.

As it became apparent that the Public Baths were for a number of reasons not the ideal premises in which to establish treatment facilities, alterations were begun, later in the year, to the above-mentioned adjoining premises, formerly the Baths Manager's house, with the object of providing a special clinic for the treatment of scabies. It is hoped that this clinic, to be known as the Medical Baths, will soon be ready for operation, and further information as to the arrangements provided therein will be given in the next report.

Scabies being essentially a family disease, increased attention was given to the following-up of contacts, with the result that during the year 361 contacts came under treatment. The number of actual diagnosed cases of scabies admitted to the register was 841. In no case was it found necessary to take action under the Scabies Order, 1941, and in many instances the attendance of adult members of affected families was made on their own initiative.

As in 1942 invaluable assistance, both in the treatment and in the following-up of contacts, was rendered by members of the Civil Defence Casualty Services.

No. of cases on register at 9th January 1943	...	...	267	
No. of cases on register at 7th January 1944	...	...	64	
No. of special treatments during period 9th January 1943 to 7th January 1944:—				
		Males.	Females.	Total.
Adults	...	71	182	253
School Children	...	634	617	1251
Infants	...	96	80	176
		801	879	1680

Private practitioners in the Borough continued to co-operate, and during the year 73 patients (43 adults, 19 school children, and 11 infants) were referred by them to the Clinic.

Two notifications were received during the year in respect of members of the Armed Forces suffering from scabies, whose families resided in Bootle.

Minor Ailments Clinics.

The daily clinics conducted at the Health Centre and at the School Medical Offices for the treatment of minor ailments dealt with 3,983 defects, amongst which minor septic infections of the skin were the commonest conditions. The attendances numbered 20,765 as compared with 16,476 in 1942.

VISION AND EYE DEFECTS.

VISION.—Entrants are not examined at routine examinations for defective vision, but during the year the leaving age group was so examined, and 69 or 9·8 per cent. were found to have defective vision requiring further examination by the Ophthalmic Surgeon.

Ophthalmic Clinic.

The number of new cases seen at the Clinic during 1943 was 425, and the total number of attendances was 1,372.

All children with glasses have their visual acuity tested by the School Ophthalmic Surgeon once a year, or oftener in certain cases, while the cases of high myopia receive full examination every six months.

Squint.

At routine examinations 77 cases of squint were found, and 22 among the special cases. Forty-six were operated on by the School Ophthalmic Surgeon at the local hospital.

External Eye Diseases.

Inflammatory conditions of the external eye were noted in 33 cases at routine inspections, and 222 cases at special inspections.

DISEASES OF THE EAR, NOSE, AND THROAT.

The total number on the register at end of 1943 was 340 (this total includes 43 infants below school age). The 297 school children include 140 cases of otorrhoea, 97 defects of nose and throat, and 9 of deafness; and the toddlers include 33 cases of otorrhoea, 7 of defects of nose and throat, and one of deafness.

Forty clinics were held, with an average attendance of 15·3 per session. Eighty-six cases (including 3 cases of chronic otorrhoea) were referred to the special department of the local general hospital.

Tonsils and Adenoids.

At routine inspections during the past year chronic tonsillitis only was recorded in 7·4 per cent; enlargement of adenoid tissue only in 0·1 per cent., while the condition of both chronic tonsillitis and adenoids was detected in 0·01 per cent. One hundred and thirty-six cases referred from special examinations received operative treatment as in-patients at Bootle General Hospital; this total includes a number carried forward from the previous year when treatment facilities were not available.

DENTAL DEFECTS.

A tabular statement of the work of the Dental Service in Bootle is given in Table IV. at the end of the report; it represents the work of Mr. Dawes only, the second school dentist having been in H.M. Forces throughout the year. Mr. Dawes also continued to give similar part-time service to children evacuated to Southport, and the summary below gives an account of dental supervision afforded there:—

Children inspected	...	...	...	...	6
Children re-inspected	...	...	...	...	228
Number referred for treatment	...	...	...	...	153
Emergency cases	...	...	...	...	5
Cases treated	...	...	...	...	200
General anaesthetics given	...	...	...	...	147
Fillings	...	...	...	...	75

TUBERCULOSIS.

During the year 50 suspected cases were referred to the Tuberculosis Officer; a diagnosis of tuberculous glands was made in two cases. Cases definitely considered not to be suffering from disease of tubercular origin numbered 37, two cases did not attend the Chest Clinic, and eleven cases were still under observation at the end of the year.

Residential treatment of tuberculous children of school age is provided at Liverpool Open-Air Hospital for Children.

CRIPPLING DEFECTS AND ORTHOPAEDICS.

There is no change to record in the arrangements described in former reports for the ascertainment and treatment of crippling defects. It should not be forgotten, however, that cases are referred from the Infant Welfare Clinics, and it is noteworthy that there have been no marked rachitic deformities.

Orthopaedic Clinic.

The Orthopaedic Clinic, which serves both as a clearing-house and as a treatment centre, is supervised by the School Medical Officer with the co-operation of Mr. B. L. McFarland paying periodic visits as Consultant Surgeon.

The Consultant Surgeon paid four visits to the Clinic during the year, and examined 136 cases referred to him. Of the patients seen, 11 were discharged, while 96 were advised to remain under treatment and supervision; 6 cases were referred to hospital, 12 for other forms of treatment, while in the 11 remaining cases no treatment was considered necessary.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

In accordance with the provisions of Article 22 of the Code, 5,878 exclusion certificates were given in respect of school children, mainly on account of minor ailments. No schools or departments were closed on account of infectious disease during the year.

SCARLET FEVER.—The number of cases notified was 87, compared with 109 in 1942.

DIPHTHERIA.—One hundred and thirty-two cases occurred in children of school age, as compared with 175 in 1942, and 121 in 1941.

MEASLES.—One hundred and thirty-four cases were notified amongst school children, as against 166 in 1942, and 99 in 1941.

CHICKENPOX.—Sixty-three cases were reported, as against 102 in 1942 and 26 in 1941.

WHOOPIING COUGH.—Twenty cases were notified, as compared with 12 in 1942.

MUMPS.—Forty-one cases were reported, this number being the same as last year.

Protection against Diphtheria.

As arrangements were instituted in 1932 for the immunisation of children as soon as possible after their entrance to school, all scholars have now been offered one or more appointments for this protective inoculation, and for some years past the acceptance rate has been such that approximately 60 per cent. of the school children have been protected. Although maximum risk from diphtheria infection is greatest in the earlier years—hence the intensification of efforts to induce parents to have their children immunised at the age of one year—belated requests for protection of older children are received and acted upon, and during the year 540 entrants to school life and 386 older children were immunised. It is estimated that at the end of the year 61·5 per cent. of the school population and 33·1 per cent. of the children under five years had accepted the offer to prevent this preventable disease.

SCHOOL MEALS AND MILK.

For the year ended December 1943 the total of 295,971 bottles of milk were distributed amongst children in Bootle and Southport.

School dinners are now served in all departments of all Elementary Schools in Bootle with one exception. The number of meals served in schools is now over 2,000 per day, and the numbers are rising steadily; this is almost on a par with the national experience, which showed 26 per cent. of the elementary school population to be so participating in October 1943, but a substantial increase is possible and desirable.

The total figures for children's dinners served were: free 83,700, on payment 226,307, making a grand total of 310,007.

The dinners are supplied and prepared by the British Restaurants and delivered in insulated containers to the schools; the charge to the children is 5d. per meal.

WAR-TIME NURSERY CLASSES.

Plans have been made for the establishment of a number of nursery classes throughout the Borough, and the first was opened at Linacre School on 14th July.

A part of the school premises was converted into a nursery suite comprising school-room, kitchen, storage and toilet offices, and part of the school playground was enclosed for outdoor recreation. This accommodation, though not ideal, has proved convenient, and the children admitted give an impression of definite improvement in health, spirits and behaviour.

The class is open to children aged 2-5 years of mothers on war-work; the maximum number on roll has been 39, with an average attendance of 23.

The staff, directed by the Head Teacher of the Infant Department, consists of two general assistants, two nurse assistants, and two probationers. They work on a rota system on half-day shifts, the hours being 7-30 a.m. to 6-30 p.m. and 1 p.m. on Saturdays.

Close supervision of the children and contact with the homes have been exercised by a Senior Health Visitor, who examined each entrant before admission. The standard of cleanliness improved quickly, but repeated attention required to be given in some cases. The Assistant Medical Officer made frequent visits to the Class, and a few minor catarrhal and skin infections were dealt with. Sixteen boys and sixteen girls received a medical examination on the lines of that given to school entrants; twenty-one defects were noted for treatment or observation.

Meals supplied by the Catering Officer have been good in quality, quantity and variety; and cod liver oil and orange juice have been issued as a routine in addition to the ration of milk. In accordance with Administrative Memorandum No. 485, a special survey was made, and seven children who were slightly subnormal were recommended to be given an iron preparation.

The mid-day rest has been taken on folding trestle beds, and the ease with which toddlers accustom themselves to this beneficial practice would enlighten many mothers who say they cannot train their family to sleep at the proper time. Regular instruction in handkerchief drill and toilet habits and a daily walk for the older children, are part of the routine. At the end of the day tiredness and fretfulness are not in evidence.

TABLE II.

CLASSIFICATION OF THE NUTRITION OF CHILDREN INSPECTED DURING THE YEAR IN THE ROUTINE AGE GROUPS.

Number of Children Inspected	A (Excellent)		B (Normal)		C (Slightly subnormal)		D (Bad)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
2014	20	0.99	1721	85.45	272	13.50	1	0.05

TABLE III.

TREATMENT TABLES.

GROUP I.—MINOR AILMENTS

(excluding Uncleanliness, for which see Table V.)

Total Number of Defects treated or under treatment during the year under the Authority's Scheme ... 3983

GROUP II.—Treatment of Defective Vision and Squint.

	Under the Authority's Scheme.
Errors of Refraction (including Squint)	394
Other defect or disease of the eyes (excluding those recorded in Group I.)	31
Total ...	425
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	Under the Authority's Scheme,
No. of Children for whom spectacles were	
(a) Prescribed ...	222
(b) Obtained ...	143

GROUP III.—Treatment Defects of Nose and Throat

	Under the Authority's Scheme
Received Operative Treatment ...	136
Received other forms of Treatment ...	3
Total Number Treated	139

TABLE IV.—DENTAL INSPECTION AND TREATMENT.

(1) Number of children inspected by the Dentist.			
(a) Routine age-groups	5723
(b) Specials	439
(c) TOTAL (Routine and Specials)			6162
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(2) Number found to require treatment	4934
(3) Number actually treated	2668
(4) Attendances made by children for treatment	3659
(5) Half-days devoted to:—		(7) Extractions—	
Inspection	... .. 27	Permanent Teeth	... .. 741
Treatment	... .. 311	Temporary Teeth	... .. 4796
Total	... .. 338	Total	... .. 5537
		(8) Administrations of general anaesthetics for extractions	
		...	2382
<hr/>		<hr/>	
(6) Fillings:—		(9) Other Operations—	
Permanent Teeth	... .. 772	Permanent Teeth	... .. 124
Temporary Teeth	... .. —	Temporary Teeth —
Total	... .. 772	Total	... .. 124

TABLE V.—VERMINOUS CONDITIONS.

(i) Average number of visits per school made during the year by the School Nurses	... .. 5
(ii) Total number of examinations of children in the Schools by School Nurses	... .. 7271
(iii) Number of individual children found unclean	... .. 1409
(iv) Number of individual children cleansed under Section 87 (2) and (3) of the Education Act, 1921	... .. 2
(v) Number of cases in which legal proceedings were taken:—	
(a) Under the Education Act, 1921 —
(b) Under School Attendance Byelaws —

TABLE VI.—BLIND AND DEAF CHILDREN.

Number of blind and deaf children not receiving education suitable for their special needs Nil.
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