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County Borough of South Shields.



ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

School Medical Officer

For the Year 1944.

W. CAMPBELL LYONS,
M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

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County Borough of South Shields.
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OF THE
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For the Year 1941
W. CAMPBELL LYONS
PUBLISHED

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE
EDUCATION COMMITTEE.

I have the honour to present the Annual Report on the work of the School Medical Service for the year 1944.

There has been a noticeable reduction in the number of cases of tuberculosis—particularly the non-pulmonary type of the disease—among school children.

The nutrition of the children has been well maintained during the past year. A slightly larger number have been classified as being slightly subnormal than in the previous year, but on the whole the pupils are at least as well nourished as in pre-war years.

Early in the year an Ear, Nose and Throat Surgeon was appointed. Prior to this operations for the removal of tonsils and adenoids only were undertaken; now all forms of obstructions in the nose and throat are treated surgically. This should have the effect of reducing the number of absences from school through "colds." Diseases of the ear are also being treated and the result will probably be reflected in a smaller number of cases of partial deafness in adult life.

The scheme for the immunisation of children against diphtheria has been pursued during the year. About 90% of children of school age have received protection against the disease.

I have pleasure in recording my thanks to the members of my staff for their efficient work during the year.

W. CAMPBELL LYONS,

Medical Officer of Health.

SCHOOL MEDICAL SERVICE.

Annual Report of the School Medical Officer.

STAFF.

The only alteration in the staff of the School Medical Service was the appointment of Mr. P. MacMurray, M.B., D.L.O., as part time Ear, Nose and Throat Surgeon to succeed the late Mr. W. J. Harrison who held that office since 1934.

CO-ORDINATION.

Co-ordination with the Maternity and Child Welfare Service and with other branches of the Council's medical services has been maintained as before.

The following are the reports made to me by the Assistant School Medical Officers, the School Dentist, the Consultant Ophthalmologist and the Organiser for Physical Education.

THE SCHOOL MEDICAL SERVICE IN RELATION TO PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

Number of children on the registers at the end of 1944	13,739
Average attendance for the year (90.7 per cent)	12,195
Number of elementary schools (excluding the School for the Partially Sighted, the Open Air School and the Day Special School)	23
Number of elementary departments	44
Number of children on registers of the three special schools at the end of 1944	260
Average Attendance at special schools (83.5 per cent)	217

Medical Inspection.

The number of children examined at routine and special inspections during 1944 is as follows :—

1. Routine Medical Inspections.

Entrants (5-6 years)	2,011
Intermediates (8-9 years)	1,410
Leavers (12-13 years)	1,317
Total	4,738

2. Other Inspections.

Number of Special Inspections and Re-Inspections 16,058

“Other inspections” include the examination of children referred to the clinic by parents, teachers and health visitors and the inspections from time to time at the three special schools.

Nutrition.

The nutrition of the 4,738 elementary school children examined at routine inspections during the year was classified as under :—

	<i>Number.</i>	<i>Per cent.</i>
Excellent	1125	23.7
Normal	2678	56.8
Slightly sub-normal	918	19.4
Bad	17	0.4

Cleanliness.

Two surveys were carried out. At the first survey 13,309 children were examined and 13,552 at the second. A wide variation exists in the numbers of children found to be unclean in different schools. In one junior girls' school 50% were found to be verminous and in one senior boys' school only 2% were unclean. In 20 out of the 44 departments about 25% of the children were classed as unclean to some degree. In some schools the number of unclean children showed no improvement at the second survey.

Compulsory cleansing notices under Section 87 of the Education Act, 1921, were served on 127 parents regarding 148 dirty children. Subsequent proceedings for general neglect were instituted in one case affecting four children, by the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children and both parents were sentenced to four months imprisonment.

Tuberculosis.

There was a decrease in the number of cases of tuberculosis among school children during 1944. The number notified was 52 as compared with 67 in 1943. The decrease is almost entirely in non-pulmonary forms of the disease.

112 children were referred by the school medical officers for examination by the tuberculosis medical officer during 1944, compared with 84 in the previous year. Of these 14 were found to be suffering from tuberculosis (pulmonary 8, non-pulmonary 6).

The following table shows the incidence of tuberculosis among children of school age as revealed by notifications received by the medical officer of health or otherwise ascertained.

Age-Group.	1943.		1944.	
	Pulmonary.		Pulmonary.	
	Boys.	Girls.	Boys.	Girls.
5—10 years	8	7	8	8
10—15 years	9	2	5	2
Total	26		23	
Age-Group.	Non-Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.	
	Boys.	Girls.	Boys.	Girls.
	Boys.	Girls.	Boys.	Girls.
5—10 years	8	12	11	12
10—15 years	9	12	2	4
Total	41		29	

Following-up.

The Health Visitors paid 1,185 visits to homes of school children to ascertain whether the necessary treatment was being obtained; 760 visits in connection with uncleanliness, 731 visits after surgical and dental treatment; 119 in connection with orthopaedic cases, 618 regarding mentally defective children; 137 visits in connection with immunisation, 261 visits in connection with London evacuees and 25 visits for other miscellaneous purposes in connection with the school medical service. In addition 25 visits were paid to the schools for similar purposes and 117 visits for routine medical inspection apart from 795 visits to schools in connection with cleanliness surveys. (This is in addition to the visits paid to the homes regarding tuberculosis, infant welfare and infectious diseases). The health visitors and school nurses also attended 480 sessions at the general school clinics, 235 sessions at dental clinics, 228 sessions for artificial sunlight treatment, 29 sessions for treatment by ionization, daily sessions for the treatment of scabies and 49 sessions for immunisation, apart from the attendances at child welfare, tuberculosis and other clinics. In addition the school nurses attended at 46 sessions and 7 over-night sessions for the surgical treatment of tonsils and adenoids.

Medical Treatment.

Number of children who attended the School Clinic in 1944	4,523
Number of these children who were treated	4,175

The total number of attendances was 18,265 as compared with 21,336 in 1943.

The numbers treated, as given in the following paragraphs, refer to the elementary school children only (except where otherwise stated) although the same facilities are available also to the pupils of the secondary schools.

Skin Diseases.

The number of children who received treatment was as follows :

Impetigo	93
Ringworm (scalp)	20
Ringworm (body)	37
Scabies	338
Other skin diseases	1,557

There was a decrease in the number of cases of scabies treated at the clinic, 338 cases in 1944 as compared with 618 in 1943. Most of these cases had the treatment carried out by a nurse with the assistance of personnel from a first-aid post at the municipal clinic. The homes were visited for the purpose of finding and treating any other affected members of the family.

Vision.

During the year 571 cases were submitted for refraction. In 520 of these, spectacles were prescribed. The number of spectacles supplied through the Education Authority's scheme was 512.

Diseases of the Ear, Nose and Throat.

Mr. P. MacMurray, M.B., D.L.O., was appointed Ear, Nose and Throat Surgeon to the Authority in May, 1944. Since his appointment he has attended 27 sessions at the school Clinic. 99 children were referred to him by the School Medical Officers for special examination for obstructive or inflammatory conditions in the nose and throat and for ear diseases. These children made 139 attendances; 87 were referred for operation. In addition, 315 elementary school children received operative treatment for enlarged tonsils and adenoids at the General Hospital under the Authority's scheme.

Orthopaedic Scheme.

During the year 78 cases were referred from the school clinic to the orthopaedic department of the Ingham Infirmary.

Of the 78 cases, 5 had congenital wry-neck, 34 suffered from flat feet or other deformities, 3 suffered from the effects of infantile paralysis, 9 had spinal curvature, 16 had injuries to the limbs, one congenital dislocation of the hip, 3 had postural defects, 3 suffered from the defects of birth palsy, 1 had rheumatism and 1 Schlatter's disease.

In addition 10 children who were treated in 1943 continued treatment at the Ingham Infirmary.

Five cases received in-patient treatment (59 days in all), five children had operations performed and five were supplied with surgical appliances. The children paid 527 attendances at the Out-Patient Department at the Ingham Infirmary. Many other children were treated otherwise than at the cost of the Local Education Authority.

Dental Defects.

The following is the report of the School Dental Surgeon, Mr. F. Innes, L.D.S. :—

“The dental inspection of the school children has been carried out in a similar manner to that adopted in previous years, and all the schools in the Borough have been visited and every child in attendance has been inspected. The necessary treatment has been carried out at the clinic in cases where the parents consent had been obtained. Some of the children were treated privately by their own dentists. 14,183 children were inspected. Of this number 5,729 required treatment and 2,885 were actually treated at the clinic.

War-time conditions do not seem to have affected the teeth adversely, and speaking generally I would say that in spite of the shortage of toothbrushes there has been an improvement. It may be that the plainer diet, combined with the smaller quantity of cheap sweets consumed at every odd moment has had a beneficial effect.

The condition of the mouths has been gradually improving during the past few years, and in some of the senior schools particularly the mouths are in really excellent condition.

There has also been a noticeable improvement in the mouths of the younger children and in the infants schools the teeth are in a much better condition than they used to be. There are not nearly so many septic mouths to be seen.

The value of the instructions given at the Maternity and Child Welfare Clinics seems to be bearing fruit in the way of improved oral conditions.

There have been a few cases of gingivitis during the year but they have responded to treatment, and have cleared up in a satisfactory manner.

The majority of the extractions have been performed under a local anaesthetic, but in 55 cases a general anaesthetic was necessary."

Ultra Violet Ray Therapy.

184 children of school age who made 3,303 attendances were treated by ultra-violet radiation including treatment by the Kromayer lamp.

The following is a summary of the conditions treated :—

	Cured.	Im- proved.	Ceased attend- ing.	Trans- ferred for treat- ment.	Still attend- ing.	Total
Post-diphtheritic debility ..		5	2	1	..	8
Debility.....		48	18	5	19	90
Anaemia ..		2	1	..	1	4
Septic sores ..		1	..	..	1	2
Bronchitis ..		15	3	1	2	21
Asthma ..		3	1	..	..	4
Bronchial catarrh ..		1	..	..	..	1
Alopecia ..		2	..	1	..	3
Psoriasis ..		1	..	..	..	1
Cervical adenitis ..		9	..	6	4	19
Tuberculous abdomen ..		2	3	..	..	5
Rickets ..		2	..	..	..	2
Rheumatism ..		3	..	..	..	3
Chorea ..		2	..	..	..	2
Tonsillitis ..		1	..	..	..	1
Diphtheria carriers ..	18	..	..	..	..	18
	18	97	28	14	27	184

Most of the 28 children who ceased attending for treatment did so because of improvement in their condition.

Ionization.

Two children were treated by zinc ionization for chronic ear discharge. Both improved.

Diphtheria Immunisation.

450 children of school age were immunised during the past year by the medical staff of the Health Department as under :—

Age.	Numbers.
5	116
6	60
7	43
8	70
9	36
10	35
11	24
12	20
13	40
14	6
	<hr/>
	450
	<hr/> <hr/>

At the end of 1944 it was estimated that 90% of the school children in the Borough had been immunised.

Physical Education.

The following is the report of the Physical Education Organiser, Mr. J. W. Thompson :—

“During the period covered by this report the usual routine visits and many special purpose visits have been paid to all departments by the Organiser. In most cases the subject is well established and reasonably satisfactory results obtained. In some cases, however, owing to complete lack of facilities for this subject it is only possible to get satisfactory lessons intermittently and owing to this lack of continuity it is difficult for both staff and children to maintain interest and therefore neither the results nor pleasure in the subject can be achieved.

It has not yet been possible to supply each senior school with a specialist or semi-specialist for Physical Education. It is hoped that this will be remedied as soon as possible and the principle of providing special teachers for this subject extended to the Junior schools.

The footwear problem is becoming even more acute, but in most cases it is still possible—with difficulty—to provide special shoes for use during P.T. lessons. This gets more essential as time goes on and the condition of the children's normal footwear gets worse and worse.

More games are being played in schools now than at any time since war began, and most senior and some junior schools organised field days at Cleadon Recreation ground during the Summer term.

The swimming in the schools is good, especially when one considers the very limited facilities—the great difficulty in obtaining costumes and, in the case of the girls, the even greater difficulty in obtaining caps or some form of head covering. The principle adopted is that each child as it enters the senior school has at least one year's swimming. The results of the Local Education Authority's swimming examinations during the year—particularly the one held in December, 1944, were most creditable."

School Baths.

Instruction in swimming was continued during 1944. 1,970 certificates were granted, of which 386 were first class, 583 second class and 884 third class.

The number of attendances at the public baths in conducted school parties was 36,688 (boys 28,185 ; girls 8,503).

Provision of Meals and Milk.

493 children were supplied with 102,766 dinners at a cost of £1,927.

There are now 11 school canteens and the central kitchen from which the meals are sent out in insulated containers.

During 1944, 913 children were supplied with free milk under the milk-in-schools scheme. In addition, 8,175 children received milk under the Milk Marketing Board's scheme of part payment. In all 5,609 gallons were consumed by the children. The cost to the Local Education Authority was £518.

BLIND, DEAF AND PHYSICALLY DEFECTIVE CHILDREN

Mental Deficiency.

During 1944, 78 children reported by the head teachers as very much retarded in educational progress or brought to notice in other ways, were specially examined by the assistant school medical officers, with the following results :—

	Boys.	Girls.	Total.
Feeble-minded :—			
For special day school	7	15	22
For residential school	1	.....	1
Ineducable	2	1	3
Imbecile .....	.....	.....	.....
Idiot .....	.....	.....	.....
Dull or backward	11	11	22
Backward	2	3	5
Neurotic or unstable	3	.....	3
Defective speech	1	1	2
Referred for child guidance	2	1	3
Normal or average	2	3	5
Inconclusive	1	11	12

14 children were recommended for notification to the Mental Deficiency Act Committee, with a view to their being sent to an institution or kept under statutory supervision or guardianship, as under :—

Article 2 (a) .....	.....	2	2
Article 3	1	2	3
Article 4	4	5	9

At the end of 1944, there were 119 ascertained educable feeble-minded children under the jurisdiction of the Education Authority as under :—

	Boys.	Girls.	Total.
At certified residential schools for mentally defective children	4	1	5
At a certified day school for mentally defective children	32	73	105
At public elementary schools	2	1	3
At no school or institution	2	4	6

Of the six not at school or in institutions, one boy aged 10 is physically unfit to attend school, one boy and two girls aged 15 are working ; and one girl aged 15 is at home.

Special Day School.

Since January, 1944, the accommodation in the Special Day School has been increased by the addition of two class rooms formerly used by the school for partially sighted children.

The average number on the register for the year was 111. 34 new pupils were admitted during 1944.

School for Partially Sighted.

4 children were recommended for admission to the school during 1944, and eight were allowed to leave. The average number of pupils on the roll was 22. The children were examined by the Ophthalmologist who, in sending a report on each individual child says "the pupils are all making satisfactory progress, and I would like to bring to your notice how very well indeed the Head Teacher, Mrs. Steele, has managed to improve the mental status of so-called "backward" children. She ably assisted me during the inspection."

Speech Training.

Six courses of intensive treatment for stammering and other speech defects were held during the year. Altogether 50 children were treated. Instruction in lip reading was given to seven children whose speech defect was due to deafness. Two children who had cleft palate were also treated.

The children after training are kept under observation by the speech therapist who visits the schools for that purpose. Refresher courses are given to those children whose speech shows any signs of relapse. The results of these courses are excellent.

Open Air School.

47 delicate children were recommended by the Assistant School Medical Officers in the course of the year for admission to the Cleadon Park Open Air School.

Of those in attendance at the school, 42 had sufficiently improved as to allow of their return to the ordinary elementary schools, 9 were allowed to leave at the school leaving age, and two were taken off the registers as unfit for school attendance owing to pronounced ill-health. 125 children were in attendance at the end of 1944.

Convalescent Home.

24 children were admitted to the Convalescent Home during 1944. A total of 2,613 in-patient days were spent there by these children; an average of 7 cases in residence per day.

Shoeless Children Fund.

The Chief Constable reports that 987 children were supplied with boots, shoes or clogs during the year through this Fund, of which he is the Honorary Secretary.

Higher Education for the Blind, etc.

At the end of the year one boy and three girls were attending higher education courses (3 blind, 1 epileptic).

MISCELLANEOUS.

Secondary Schools.

There are two secondary schools provided by the Local Education Authority. The number of pupils on the registers at the end of 1944 was 1,204; the average attendance during the year was 1,004 (94.1%)

645 pupils were examined at routine inspections during the year.

The state of nutrition of the 645 children examined was as under :—

- (a) Excellent 269 (41.7%).
- (b) Normal 300 (46.5%).
- (c) Slightly subnormal 73 (11.3%).
- (d) Bad 3 (0.5%).

The same facilities at the clinics are available for secondary school scholars as for elementary school children. The following is a summary of the treatment given during the year :—

Minor ailments treated	117
Spectacles prescribed	53
Spectacles obtained	53
Operative treatment for enlarged tonsils and adenoids	13
Dental treatment :	
Number of children examined	917
Number found to require treatment	346
Actually treated	148
Attendances	234
Fillings	139
Extractions (permanent teeth)	89
,, (temporary teeth).....	67
Other dental operations	17

Examination of Children for the Stage.

17 children who required certificates for stage performances were examined. All were granted the necessary certificates.

Deaths of School Children.

The following is a statement of the causes of death during 1944, of children of school age (5-14 years) :—

CAUSES OF DEATH.	Boys.		Girls.		Total.
	5-9 years	10-14 years	5-9 years	10-14 years	
Diphtheria .....	..	1	1	1	3
Pulmonary tuberculosis	1	..	..	..	1
Tuberculous meningitis	1	..	1	..	2
Disseminated tuberculosis ..	..	..	..	2	2
Cancer.....	1	1	..	..	2
Tumour of brain .....	..	..	1	..	1
Rheumatic fever .....	..	..	..	1	1
Myxoedema .....	..	..	..	1	1
Disseminated sclerosis .....	..	..	..	1	1
Mastoid Disease.....	..	..	1	..	1
Valvular disease of heart ..	..	1	1	..	2
Myocarditis .....	..	..	1	..	1
Broncho-pneumonia .....	..	..	1	..	1
Appendicitis	2	1	..	..	3
Nephritis	1	..	1	..	2
Osteomyelitis	1	..	..	..	1
Accidents, injuries, burns etc.	5	1	1	1	8
Total	12	5	9	7	33

ELEMENTARY AND HIGHER SCHOOLS.

Table 1.—Medical Inspections during Year ended 31st December, 1944.

A.—ROUTINE MEDICAL INSPECTIONS.

Elementary. Higher.

Number of Inspections in the prescribed groups :—

Entrants	2,011	}	645
Second age group (Intermediates).....	1,410		
Third Age group (Leavers)	1,317		
	<u>4,738</u>		<u>645</u>

B.—OTHER INSPECTIONS.

Number of Special Inspections and Re-inspections	16,058	136
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Table 2.—Classification of the Nutrition of Children Inspected during the Year in the Routine Age Groups.

	No. of Children inspected.	A. (Excellent).		B. (Normal).		C. (Slightly sub-normal).		D. (Bad).	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Elem. Schools	4,738	1125	23.7	2,678	56.5	918	19.4	17	0.4
Higher Schools	645	269	41.7	300	46.5	73	11.3	3	0.5

Table 3.

GROUP I.—TREATMENT OF MINOR AILMENTS.
(excluding uncleanliness).

	<i>Elementary.</i>	<i>Higher.</i>
Total number of defects treated or under treatment during the year under the Authority's scheme.....	4,798	117

GROUP II.—TREATMENT OF DEFECTIVE VISION AND SQUINT. Under the Authority's scheme.

	<i>Elementary</i>	<i>Higher.</i>
Errors of refraction (including squint).....	571	53
Other defect or disease of the eyes (excluding those recorded in Group I.)....	..	..
	<hr/> 571	<hr/> 53
No. of children for whom spectacles were		
(a) Prescribed	520	53
(b) Obtained	512	53

GROUP III.—TREATMENT OF DEFECTS OF NOSE AND THROAT.

Received operative treatment	315	13
Received other forms of treatment	7	..
	<hr/> 322	<hr/> 13
Total number treated	<hr/> 322	<hr/> 13

Table 4.—Dental Inspection and Treatment.

	<i>Elementary.</i>	<i>Higher.</i>
(1) Number of children who were inspected by the Dentist :—		
(a) Routine Age groups	13,245	917
(b) Specials.....	21	..
(2) Number found to require treatment	5,362	346
(3) Number actually treated (by School Dentists)	2,716	148
(4) Attendances made by children for treatment	3,225	234
(5) Fillings :—		
Permanent teeth	650	139
Temporary teeth .....	..	..
(6) Extractions :—		
Permanent teeth	807	89
Temporary teeth	5,046	67
(7) Administration of general anaesthetics for extractions	55	..
(8) Other operations :—		
Permanent teeth	86	7
Temporary teeth .....	..	1
(9) Half days devoted to :—		
Inspections, 139 ; Treatment 574 ; Total 713.		

Table 5.—Verminous Conditions.

	<i>First Survey.</i>	<i>Second Survey.</i>
(i) Average number of visits per school made during the year by the School Nurses for cleanliness surveys	8	8
(ii) Total number of *examinations of children in the schools by School Nurses :—		
(a) Children examined	13,309	13,552
(b) Examinations made*	18,325	18,560
(iii) No. of individual children found unclean	2,854	2,770
(iv) No. of individual children cleansed under Section 87(2) and (3) of the Education Act, 1921 .....	..	1
(v) No of cases in which legal proceedings were taken :		
(a) Under the Education Act, 1921 .....	..	..
(b) Under the School Attendance Byelaws .....	..	..

*Verminous children are re-examined.

Table 6.—Blind and Deaf Children.

Number of totally or almost totally Blind and Deaf Children who at not at the present time receiving education suitable for their special needs :—

	<i>Blind. Children.</i>	<i>Deaf Children.</i>
1. At a Public Elementary School .....	.....	1
2. At an Institution other than a Special School .....	.....	.....
3. At no School or Institution	1	1
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	1	2
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

The blind child, who is suffering from cerebellar tumour, is unsuitable for a residential school and in the opinion of the Home Teacher of the Blind Persons Act Committee she is ineducable owing to her physical defects.

The two deaf children had been certified only towards the end of the year and applications have been made for vacancies in residential schools.

Mentally Defective Children.

Total number of children notified during the year ended 31st December, 1944, by the Local Education Authority to the Local Mental Deficiency Authority under the Mental Deficiency (Notification of Children) Regulations, 1928..... 20*

(*Including recommendations from the previous year.)