

**On the British Education System  
and  
The State Schools in Cambridge (XVI)**

**Minoru SHIGETA\***

In the preceding essays (Vol.I—V), I mentioned how we settled in Cambridge, how I got permission to the local state schools for my three children, the British compulsory education system, especially concerning LEA (Local Education Authority) schools, and also explained some special features of the British school system, Further Education, the British Universities — the origin, the three types of the universities in Britain, the admission procedure to enter a university, and the Degree system of Oxbridge — and Polytechnics and Colleges of Higher Education in Britain. And in Vol VI— XV, we have seen the general statement of Milton Road Junior School, including the school organization, curriculum, extra curricular activities, P.T.A., school meals, educational visits, and so on, according to the school pamphlet, and the school lessons, including spelling and reading, language, mathematics, science, physical education and project, and school events, including “Mary Rose” Trip to Portsmouth, the Performance of the “Happy Prince,” “Discover Industry” Residential Field Trip,” and the miscellaneous things, including Transfer to Community College or Secondary School, The Final Term News Letters, My Small Gift, Group Photographs, and the Scholar’s Report & Certificate of Attendance at Milton Road Junior School. In this essay, I will tell you about The Manor Community College where my son went.

As I said in the preceding essay (Vo. I), on the afternoon of October 7 (Tuesday), '86, as I finished all the necessary things to live in Cambridge, I decided to go to the Education Headquarters (Shire Hall at Castle Street) for the purpose of my children getting admission to the local state schools. Going there, I asked a clerk if I could consult with someone about my children getting admission to the local state schools. After a while, Mr. Gage, one of the staff of the Education Headquarters, came up to me and asked me the date of birth of my children, so I handed in the certificates of studentship which I had written out in Japan. Mak-

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\* 宇部工業高等専門学校英語教室

ing a note of my children, Mr. Gage told me to call him up in the morning or afternoon two days later, and said that he would be able to make some advice about the matter. Feeling relieved to hear that, I made my way home.

On the morning of October 9 (Thursday), I called up Mr. Gage in the Headquarters from a public telephone, and he told me that he had made an appointment with the headmaster of a junior school and the head of the pastoral care of a lower secondary school, and that it would be better for me to call Mr. Ellis, headmaster of Milton Road Junior School, as soon as possible. He also advised me to contact with Mr. Dixon at Collegiate Board for my elder daughter. So, calling up Mr. Ellis, I made an appointment with him at 3:25 p.m. that day. Thus my wife, younger daughter and I visited the Junior School and got admission to the school.

On the morning of October 10 (Friday), I got up at seven, and it seemed that I would be very busy, because I had to call Mr. Dixon at Collegiate Board for selecting my elder daughter's school and also had to visit the Manor Community College at eleven a.m. to meet Mr. Hunter with whom Mr. Gage at the Headquarters had made an appointment for me. First of all, at ten I telephoned Mr. Dixon with whom Mr. Gage had advised me to make contact, but unfortunately he was not at his office, and a clerk said that he would not come to his office until the next Monday morning. So I was compelled to wait till the next week for deciding my daughter's school. At any rate, my wife, my son and I went to the Manor Community College at 10:50. When we entered the back gate of the school, a lot of students were running and playing on the school ground. Perhaps it was a break. We went to the main office for reception and said that we would like to meet Mr. Hunter with whom we had had an appointment. After a while, we saw a man approaching us, and he said that his name was Mr. Hunter, and asked us to wait for him as he would go in a minute. He asked two girls near by to show us the way to his room, and we headed for his room, conducted by the two girls. After a short time, Mr. Hunter came in and gave us a school brochure, explaining a lot of school rules, and encouraging my son by saying that many students had come to study at the school from all over the world as well as from Japan, and that my son would be able to get along well though he would have much difficulty in being settled. He also told us about the curriculum, school uniform, P.E. Kit and where to buy them. When I asked him where I could buy a school tie, he said that I could buy it from him, so I got it for £2.5. And he told us about Mrs. Brown, my son's form teacher, and school meals, adding that my son could come

back to school at 9 a.m. from Monday next week and that he must come in the school uniform and tie. In our leaving the school building, Mr. Hunter kindly showed us the registration office. We thanked him for his kind advice, and left school from the front gate.

On Monday, October 13, I took my son to the Manor Community College before 9 a.m., and met Mrs. Brown, teacher in charge of his class. After talking with her for some time, I left the college, placing him under her care. As for my wife, she was to take my younger daughter to Milton Road Junior School by 9:20 in the morning, and I tried visiting the school, having some misgiving about them because of language barrier, but I did not find them there, so I went home feeling somewhat relieved. After a while, my wife returned and said that she had followed my daughter to the classroom, where my daughter introduced herself to the classmates in English, adding that she had handed in the school form about my daughter which I had written in and paid £3.5 (70P × 5 days) for school meals of the week. Thus my wife and I were much relieved that our two children were allowed to attend each different school and college.

As above-mentioned, Mr. Hunter gave me a school brochure when we called at his school for the first time. The brochure differs a great deal from that of Milton Road Junior School; after the principal's compliments to the parents of freshmen, the brochure is divided into three sections. Section 1 contains "The School Day," "The Pastoral System," "Uniform / Special Clothing," "Equipment," "Travel," "School Fund," "Lost Property" and "Reports." Section 2 contains "School Aims," "Equal Opportunities," "School Rules," "The Curriculum," "Public Examinations," and "Extra Curricular Activities." And Section 3 contains "School Governors," "Community College Awards," "The Manor Association," "School Calendar," "Useful Information" and "Community Education." So I will mention the principal's compliments to freshmen's parents in the next page, and then will pick up, according to the brochure, the interesting items out of the three sections.

## SECTION 1

### 1. YOUR CHILD'S FIRST DAY

On the first day of school, 2nd September, your child should come to the Lower School Hall around 8.50 a.m. The First Year Tutor and the First Year Form Tutors will be there to meet them and place them in their form group. During the first morning the pupils will spend all the time with their Class Tutor who will explain

# INTRODUCTION

Dear Parents,

I am pleased that you have decided to send your child to the Manor Community College for the next five years. I hope that these will be hardworking, constructive, productive and happy years and that we will be seeing you in school quite often. To do anything worthwhile for your child over these next five years, parents and school are going to need each other's help. My hopes cannot be realized unless we can rely upon your support and co-operation.

Five years may not seem very long but they will pass quickly and great changes will occur as they pass. On arrival our students are still children, but by the time they leave us they are almost young men and women. Within this period marked physical and intellectual changes will transform them. Change will also affect the world into which they will emerge. There are signs all about us that the world ahead will demand more integrity, ingenuity, skill and tact than ever before.

Within the Manor Community College we seek to provide our pupils with those experiences and activities that will enable them to acquire the knowledge, master the skills, and foster the attitudes to construct a better tomorrow.

Teachers and parents have a duty to prepare these children for this important task. We must stretch their minds to the limits of their ability. We must give them confidence in their own worth. We must care for them so that they can become genuinely friendly individuals. If we succeed, they will leave the Manor Community College capable of working together for that better future. The College will seek to maintain its traditionally high standards of intellectual achievement and conduct.

We will report on your child's progress in writing and by interview many times during the course of these five years. Nevertheless we may sometimes feel it necessary to by-pass these formal events to get in touch with you directly. Similarly if you are at all worried do not hesitate to contact us. Your child can always confide in his Class Tutor whom he will meet twice a day. Time will be set aside each week when your child's Year Tutor will be available to you.

If we work together and have confidence in each other, your child's next five years should be fruitful ones.

Yours sincerely,

*O. GAGGS*

O. GAGGS  
Principal

school routine, give out timetables, cloakroom pegs, introduce their subject teachers and give details of lockers and fire drill. The normal teaching programme will start in the afternoon.

Each pupil will require a pen, pencil, ruler, and where necessary dinner money, and bag to carry books which may be issued.

Enclosed is a pro forma which should be filled in with all the details including arrangements for how your child will spend dinner time. Please return the form to the Form Tutor with your child on the first day of term.

### ARRANGEMENTS FOR NEW PUPILS

1. Senior Staff visit the main contributory Primary Schools, to discuss each pupil and to consider the most appropriate arrangements for each child.
2. Pupils spend a morning or afternoon in the school, visiting various departments, and receive a short introductory talk. This takes place in the term prior to starting here.
3. Parents are invited to an informal evening meeting, on 30th September, 1986, where you will have an opportunity to ask questions about matters affecting your child and meet other parents and staff.
4. The social welfare of each pupil is in the hands of many staff, and parents are welcome to get in contact whenever necessary. First and foremost, the child's Form Teacher will hope to see him / her every day, and will be ready to help with problems. Then, the Year Tutors will be meeting children at least 2 or 3 times a week, and may also be able to help. Finally, the Head, and the Deputy Heads and Head of Pastoral Care may be able to help — with the hope that each pupil may be suitably cared for at school in order to profit to the fullest extent from the activities and lessons provided.

## 2. THE SCHOOL DAY

The school day begins with a registration and assembly period followed by 4 lesson periods in the morning and 4 in the afternoon. The time is:

9.00 — 9.25	Registration and Pastoral Time	1.00 — 1.05	Registration
9.25 — 10.00	Period 1	1.05 — 1.40	Period 5
10.00 — 10.35	Period 2	1.40 — 2.15	Period 6
10.35 — 10.50	Break	2.15 — 2.30	Break
10.50 — 11.25	Period 3	2.30 — 3.05	Period 7
11.25 — 12.00	Period 4	3.05 — 3.40	Period 8

### BREAK TIMES and LUNCH TIMES

Pupils can spend break and lunch times in the playground or in the leisure area designated to their year.

### SIGNING OUT

If pupils are required to leave the school premises during the school day for an appointment they must bring a note, appointment card or get permission from the Year Tutor or Deputy Heads. Having received permission they then sign out, and back in, at the school Welfare Office. No pupil should leave the premises without permission.

### 3. THE PASTORAL SYSTEM

This system is designed to help you and your child to cope as well as possible with all aspects of education whilst your child is here. It tries to do this by breaking the school down into smaller units which you and your child can easily identify. Each child is in a form group with a Form Tutor and it is hoped that child and teacher will get to know one other as well as possible. During form time children will discuss items raised in the school council, issues raised in assembly and will also follow a planned pastoral curriculum. The form groups are organised into year groups and each year group has a Year Tutor with specific responsibility for their year. There is also a Head of Pastoral Care with overall responsibility for pastoral work.

Should you or your child have ANY problems do not hesitate to contact the school. If the problem concerns work in a particular subject it might be beneficial to contact the Head of Department of the subject in question. For problems of a more personal or general nature contact the specific Year Tutor, Head of Pastoral Care or the Principal.

Certainly we will contact you if there is any problem at school which is worrying us.

The pupils in each year have a council which meets regularly to discuss matters affecting their year. This council consists of 2 members from each class and is usually chaired by the Year Tutor. It is intended as an educational experience as well as a chance for pupils to put their points of view. Occasionally several years met together and meeting between Year Councils in other Secondary Schools have taken place. In addition there is a School Council which meets every 2 weeks to co-ordinate issues raised. It has representation from each class and is chaired by members of the senior students.

### SCHOOL CONTACT WITH PARENTS

Great importance is attached to regular contact and co-operation between School and Parents. Letters are normally sent home via pupils for school events such as open evenings, visits, concerts, etc. and usually include a reply slip. Parents are asked to reply promptly and do their best to support these events. The staff do their utmost to see all interested parents on parents' evenings, by arranging definite appointment times, but if parents wish to see a member of staff on a specific matter at another time an appointment can be made by calling at or telephoning the School Office and agreeing a time when the teacher is not teaching.

Some contacts may be made via the School Welfare Officers especially on matters of absence.

### ABSENCES / ILLNESSES / FAMILY HOLIDAYS

Parents are asked to notify the school of the reason for any absence by sending a note to the school, either during the child's absence, or on the day of return. Sometimes, a telephone call will also help. Cambridgeshire County Council have produced a form which they require parents to complete when pupils are going to be absent because of family holidays. These forms can be obtained from Year Tutors.

All parents are asked to complete the form issued with this handbook so that we may contact them in cases of emergency, at any time during the school day. This form is treated as confidential and is not allowed out of the School Office.

### SICK ROOM

If a pupil is taken ill during the school day they are sent to the School Welfare Office (Mrs Spencer) for care and attention. We have a sick room but will send pupils home if there is a parent to receive them. No pupil is sent home without parents being contacted first.

### MEDICAL / DENTAL INSPECTIONS

These take place from time to time and are organised by the Schools Medical Service — Parents will be advised in advance in order that they may object or attend as they wish.

### MEDICINES

Any pupils who need to bring medicines to school must leave them in the School Welfare Office clearly labelled with pupil's name and how the medicine is to be taken.

### DETENTIONS

Detention of pupil beyond normal school hours is a legitimate sanction available to every teacher, department or year tutor.

Pupils are given 24 hours' notice of formal detentions. Each year group makes arrangements for a weekly detention for persistent latecomers.

While we are pleased to discuss the circumstances surrounding any particular detention with parents, the school must exercise its judgment for the majority of pupils and normally there can be no exceptions to a school ruling.

## ORGANISATION FOR LESSONS

Pupils are arranged in socially effective registration groups after consultation with Primary Schools and for their first term taught in these groups. After this diagnostic term some subjects may arrange the pupils into groups which they consider to be educationally effective.

Any pupil may be considered for transfer to another group at any time if work levels and progress suggest that this is desirable.

Specialist teachers remain, on the whole, in their own specialist rooms for teaching, and it is the pupils who move from room to room.

Pupils pursue a largely common curriculum for 3 years after which they will choose subjects on which they will concentrate for their final 2 years. These subjects will be taken at G.C.S.E. Level and / or Pre-Vocational Level.

The Remedial Department helps those with learning difficulties throughout the School.

## HOMEWORK

Every pupil is given a homework timetable and homework diary at the beginning of the school year. Parents are asked to help with the homework programme by providing suitable conditions for study in the evenings for periods from 1/2 hour to 2 hours according to the pupil's age and ability and to check that homework is satisfactorily completed and entered in the homework notebook. Parents are asked to sign the homework notebook each night to indicate that the work is complete.

A suitable bag or case is also needed for carrying homework books as well as equipment and clothing, to and from school daily.

## 4. UNIFORM / SPECIAL CLOTHING

Every child should wear School Uniform.

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|---------------------|--|
| BOYS: <u>Shirt:</u> | — A neutral tone such as grey, blue or white.                            |
| <u>Pullover:</u>    | — Navy-blue or grey (not polo-neck and no slogans).                      |
| <u>Trousers:</u>    | — Black, grey or navy-blue (not denim).                                  |
| <u>School Tie:</u>  | — (Optional in the summer season).                                       |
| <br>P.E. Kit:       | <br>— White siglet, white shorts, white gymn shoes (white socks are also |



desirable).

Towel needed after showers.

Winter Games:

- Boots, black shorts, Manor College stockings. The “Manor reversible” all-purpose shirt (for Rugby and Soccer), with contrasting white band on the reverse side.

Available from: McNeil Sports and most sports suppliers in the town.

Summer Games:

- P.E. Kit for Athletics and Games.

GIRLS: Skirt or trousers:

- Navy-blue, if trousers are worn they may not be denim.

Blouse:

- White or blue. ) No slogans

Cardigan or Jumper:

- Navy-blue or grey (not polo neck). ) No slogans

P.E. Kit:

- Red sweatshirt (can be ordered from school), white or pale blue sports blouse, navy-blue pleated skirt, plimsolls, white socks, red socks for hockey. Leotards may be worn for gymnastics and dance. Track suits may be worn in winter.

5th Year Pupils as a privilege are allowed to wear black and a special 5th Year tie.

Parents should be aware that pupils arriving in school wearing jeans will be sent home to change.

You will notice that no substitute for a school blazer is permitted. Pupils will either wear the blazer or a school pullover. Any jacket or outdoor coat must be removed before entering classrooms.

CRAFT SUBJECTS:

(Craft, Design and Technology, Home Economics and Needlework). During the time that they are at school, pupils will need 2 aprons for these subjects.

One strong cloth apron without commercial slogans will be needed initially. A second apron will be required for further work.

JEWELLERY:

It is not suitable with school uniform and therefore should not be worn in school. Pocket knives are also not to be brought into school.

MARKING OF PROPERTY:

All items of clothing and equipment **MUST** be clearly marked in indelible ink with the child's name. Name tabs alone are insufficient, since they are easily removed. Any watches worn must be clearly named.

FINANCIAL AID:

If there is any financial difficulty in the matter of school uniform you may

apply to the Senior Area Education Officer, Castle Court, Shire Hall, Cambridge.

UNIFORM IS  
AVAILABLE FROM:

- a. G.H. Jacob & sons, Ltd., 23 St. Andrew's Street, Cambridge.
- b. Cambridge & District Co-operative Society, Ltd., Burleigh Street, Cambridge.
- c. Eaden Lilley & Co., Market Street, Cambridge.

MONEY and  
VALUABLES:

These should not be brought to school unless really necessary. If, for some special reason, a child has to bring a large sum of money to school this should be handed in to the Form Teacher or to the Secretary for safe keeping.

Valuables also, should be handed to teachers during P.E. and Games lessons and perhaps in practical sessions.

Transistor radios and cassette recorders are not allowed in school.

So far I have mentioned, according to the school brochure, "Your Child's First Day," "The School Day," "The Pastoral System," and "Uniform / Special Clothing," and so on in Section 1. However, the space is limited, so I will tell you about the rest of Section 1 in the next essay.

*(Continued)*