

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

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In the preceding essay (Vol.XVI), I mentioned, according to the school brochure, "Your Child's First Day," "The Pastoral System," "Uniform / Special Clothing," after the principal's complements to the parents of freshmen. In this essay, I will tell you about the rest of Section 1, including "Equipment," "Travel," "School Fund," "Lost Property" and "Reports." And then, I will come to Section 2 containing "School Aims," "Equal Oppotunities," "School Rules," "The Curriculum," "Public Examinations," and "Extra Curricular Activities."

5. EQUIPMENT

All pupils are expected to supply his or her own basic equipment.

Pen (ballpoint, fountain or felt tip)

Pencil

Ruler

Rubber

A pupil failing to provide these will be supplied with basic equipment and a bill for the cost sent to his / her parents.

When a pupil loses or damages an exercise book or a textbook he will be charged replacement cost.

MATHEMATICS — All pupils are asked to provide a pen, pencil, ruler, rubber, protractor and compass for Mathematics lessons throughout the school. Pupils will be allowed to use electronic calculators for certain topics in the 4th and 5th years.

HOME ECONOMICS — Parents are requested to supply their son / daughter with ingredients for practical cookery lessons. A small termly charge is also made to cover the cost of incidental items used in these lessons.

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SCIENCE — A calculator is useful for 3rd, 4th and 5th years and is allowed in external examinations. A laboratory coat is desirable although not essential. Pupils who break apparatus through carelessness will be expected to make a contribution towards the cost of replacement.

CRAFT, DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY — Pupils are required to pay for the basic cost of items designed and made in practical lessons.

PERSONAL PROPERTY — The authority does not accept responsibility for loss or damage to personal property. All personal property is brought onto and left in school premises at the owner's risk.

Nevertheless we are always concerned to help pupils trace and recover lost property. It is therefore essential that the owner's name is marked indelibly on his / her property and in a prominent place.

Pupils may not leave coats, bags or property in school overnight unless it is secure inside a locker. The school can take no responsibility in these circumstances.

ART — Pupils are expected to provide the following for all Art / Pottery lessons: — an overall (an old shirt or apron would do), a 'B' pencil and a rubber. In the 4th / 5th year students must provide a sketch book, a variety of drawing pencils, a putty rubber and to pay the return postage of their exam work.

6. MEALS

A cafeteria system is used and pupils can purchase their meal direct from the serving hatch.

All pupils remaining on the site during the dinner hour will need a Dinner Pass. These are issued automatically to those entitled to a free school meal. Anyone else whose child cannot return home, go to a friend's or relative's or to a neighbour's during the dinner hour, should write to the Principal explaining the situation. Normally a Dinner Pass will be issued.

Pupils without a Dinner Pass are their parent's and guardian's responsibility for the Lunch Hour.

Pupils with a Dinner Pass must remain on the school premises for the whole of the Lunch Hour and may only leave with permission. Failure to observe this rule may lead to the withdrawal of the Dinner Pass.

7. TRAVEL

Bicycle sheds and racks are provided for those pupils who find it necessary to bicycle to school. (BICYCLES ARE LEFT AT OWNER'S RISK). Each pupil wishing to bring their bicycle to school must have a permit issued by their Year Tutor. It is a good idea to insure cycles.

Parents are asked to ensure: —

1. that pupils paint the SCHOOL CODE and their personal rack number on the frame of their bicycles;
2. that their children have received training in safe cycling;
3. that bicycles are roadworthy;
4. that they have checked the route to be used and pointed out places where special care will be necessary;
5. that a bicycle padlock is provided. Bicycles must be padlocked at all times;
6. that children are not bringing bicycles to school if they are within walking distance of the school.

BUS

Some allowance will be made for out-of-town pupils on buses which do not always arrive promptly at 9.00 a.m.

Parents are asked to remind their children that even if one bus is missed, it is better to arrive late on the next bus than not at all.

Season tickets are issued, where appropriate, by the Education Office, for pupils living more than 3 miles from the school. Special termly tickets for special buses from the Newmarket Road area have been issued by the Education Office, on termly payment, for the Autumn and Spring terms over the past few years.

8. SCHOOL FUND

Each year, towards the end of the Summer Term, we aim to hold a Fund Raising Day, when pupils take part in various activities, usually sponsored, to raise money for the School Fund.

This Fund helps to finance clubs and societies and in the past we have bought many items e.g. games equipment, chess sets, musical instruments, records, etc. We hope that each pupil will benefit frequently from the Fund's spending.

9. LOST PROPERTY

Property which is FOUND should be handed in to the Welfare Office where a FOUND PRO FORMA is completed and a sticker attached to the item indicating the area of the school in which it was found. After

48 hours identifiable items are handed to the appropriate Year Tutor for return to their owners, sports items are passed to the P.E. Department and unidentifiable items are stored so that they may be inspected at any time. After a term any items remaining in store will be disposed of.

Whenever an item is "LOST" the child should enquire first at the Welfare Office. If it has not been handed in by then the child is asked to complete a LOST PRO FORMA giving all the details.

Equally children are always told to have a thorough search themselves as they are most likely to recognize their own property.

Most items of any value which are handed in are re-allocated to their rightful owner promptly through the school system.

The Golden Rules

- a. Put a name tag on every item brought to school, if possible.
- b. Report LOSSES or FINDS right away.
- c. Do not bring valuable property such as jewellery, clothes or other expensive presents to school in the first place.

LOCKERS will be available for First Year Pupils for which a rental is charged.

10. REPORTS

Parents receive a school report annually, after the formal school examinations. The dates of the examinations are on the School Calendar.

A Parent Evening will be held for all years to give parents the opportunity to discuss their child's work with the members of staff concerned. The third year parent evening is held in conjunction with their Option choice. The 5th Year Parent Evening is held before final entries are made for external examinations. Parent evenings are run on an appointments system.

As well as the examinations we have a system of internal assessments. These are recorded twice a year and students are graded on an A-E scale for attainment and 1-5 for effort. These assessments are based on the student's interest, participation, punctuality, homework, presentation of work and attitude towards staff and other pupils.

After the assessments parents will be notified if it is felt that their child is under-achieving and all students will be seen by Year Tutors.

At the beginning of the third year a Parent Evening will be held to explain the Option System to parents before the normal parent / staff consultation begins and during which parents can discuss their child's progress and Option choices. After the parent evening all third year students have individual, in-depth interviews about their subject choices with senior members of staff.

Now I have finished mentioning Section 1, including "The School Day," "The Pastoral System," "Uniform," "Equipment," "Meals" and "Report," and so on. About the details, I will tell you in the later essays in which I will describe the school lessons of my son. Therefore, I will come to the next section.

SECTION 2

1. SCHOOL AIMS

The Manor Community College is a learning and teaching environment. We are a community within a community. We exist because the larger community desires, through our work, to ensure a civilized, harmonious and productive future.

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

It is therefore our objective to develop the potential of all those within our community with whom we come into contact.

We do this in order that they may enjoy a full personal life; and that they be enabled to take an informed and responsible part in their community. That part is both social and economic. In some respects "the community" has a wide context : sometimes national and sometimes international.

It is therefore also our objective to encourage those within our community to obtain the skills, expertise, achievements and qualifications of which they are capable.

We do this in order that they may raise their aspirations; that they may enjoy to the full those pursuits they may wish to follow; that they may get the jobs that they want; and that they may obtain entry to such courses of further education as they may desire.

It is also our objective to offer to the people in our community the opportunity to achieve a confident under-

standing of the ideas and technology that will influence their lives and mould their futures.

We do this to enable them to take a more decisive part; in determining their own futures.

Finally, it is our objective to help the people in our community to create a compassionate, just, understanding and rich society.

To do this we must provide them with the knowledge of how society functions and concepts of right and wrong.

2. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The Manor Community College is an equal opportunity school. This means that we are committed to equal opportunities within the structure of the College and in the conduct of our business. We believe that all our students should have equal access to learning in all areas of our curriculum.

In this College we believe that all of us who form this community of the Manor Community College have a right to an equal chance irrespective of colour, sex, race, creed or physical handicap.

- * Some of our students speak more than one language — we are proud of that fact.
- * Some of our students' families come from all corners of the earth — we are glad of the richness of variety of experience that this gives to the College.
- * We are proud of this multi-cultural dimension to the College.
- * Several students from abroad join our College for just a few terms while their parents work in Cambridge.
- * Some of our students are blind, some have other physical handicaps. We believe that all our students should play a full part in our College life.
- * There are no "girls" subjects or "boys" subjects. For the first three years everyone does the same subjects. After that we help you choose.
- * All students will receive advice and help when it is time to choose. They will be encouraged to think what is best for THEM.
- * If anyone tries to "put you down" because of your sex, race, colour, religion, nationality, language, culture or physical handicap the College will support you.

- * Please report any such comments or behaviour to a teacher.

The Manor Community College intends to take every opportunity to encourage our students to become independent learners who can recognise and make constructive criticism of bias and prejudice.

REMEMBER Treat everyone with the same respect as you expect for yourself.

3. SCHOOL RULES

Like all other communities, schools must have rules and they must be enforced. We like to think that our rules are only those necessary to enable the school to function as a happy learning environment. We try to make our rules simple while retaining the flexibility necessary to meet new situations as they arise. There are ten written rules and, of course, many that are unwritten. All however are designed to cause as little inconvenience to the normal child as possible, while the pupil who is anti-social or careless about his relationships with others will quickly be made aware that his behaviour is unacceptable to the other pupils and staff.

1. Pupils are expected to act with courtesy at all times towards each other and towards adults. We expect them to observe rules at school, when representing the school and while travelling to and from school.
2. Pupils will always wear the approved dress.
3. Radios and cassette recorders must not be brought to school.
4. All pupils should provide themselves with a pen, pencil and ruler.
5. Cycles must be left inside the cycle parks and must be locked at all times.
6. No smoking.
7. Keep to the left when moving around the school and do not run.
8. Pupils must observe all OUT OF BOUNDS areas.
9. Pupils must arrive punctually at school and to lessons. No pupil is allowed to leave school during lesson time without permission and must then sign out and in at the Pupil Welfare Office.
10. Pupils who stay at school for lunch may not leave the premises without permission. Packed lunches must be eaten at the set times in the school dining hall. Litter must be placed in the bins provided.

School Rules and standards of behaviour are maintained through a network of caring staff both pastoral and academic. Sanctions range from simple informal suggestions to children through to suspensions which involve the School Governors and are controlled by country-wide regulations. The College does not use corporal punishment. We aim to exercise firm but sympathetic order at the Manor and are confident that our policy works. For information on detention see page 6.

4. THE CURRICULUM

In designing our curriculum we have kept faith with the fundamental principles of choice and opportunity for all. Hence all pupils in Years One to Three explore a broad range of experiences which allow them to come to terms with their potential, and then choose from "options" which take them into their final two years. In their final term pupils are expected to take public examinations, as appropriate to their abilities. In most cases the examination taken will be G.C.S.E. We also offer Typing Examinations organised by R.S.A. and Pitman's and a Pre-Vocational Certificate for some pupils.

We are anxious to assess and, where possible, improve our curriculum and a Curriculum Working Party meets monthly to review curriculum issues. We feel confident that we have, in recent years, introduced new challenges while still preserving an essential balance, and we shall continue to respond to the opportunities offered by new technologies and a progressive society.

At present our curriculum can be summarised as follows: (The table indicates the number of periods per week studies in each subject).

<u>Year</u>	<u>ONE</u>	<u>TWO</u>	<u>THREE</u>
English	5	5	5
Mathematics	6	6	5
Science	4	5	-
Physics	-	-	2
Biology	-	-	2
Chemistry	-	-	2
History	3	2	2
Geography	3	2	2
Physical Education	4	4	4
French	4	}6	}6
German	-		
Practical Subjects*	4	4	6
Art	2	2	2
Music	2	1	1

Religious Studies	1	1	1
Library	1	1	-
Drama	1	1	-

* In Years 1 and 2 all pupils study Designing and Making (in Wood, Metal and Plastic), Home Economics, Textiles and Technology. In Year 3 pupils choose 3 from Food and Nutrition, Fashion and Fabric, Technology, Designing and Making, Nutrition and Health and Technical Graphics.

YEARS FOUR AND FIVE

For these courses subjects are divided between those which are compulsory and those (six in number) chosen as options. Pupils choose options after individual interviews and full scale meetings involving both students and parents. The dialogue between school and home is crucial at this time. Pupils are asked to choose one subject from each of six option blocks and their final choice must include a science subject, a humanities subject and a Technical and a creative subject to preserve a balanced curriculum.

Compulsory: English (6) Mathematics (6)

A non-examination Personal and Social Skills course involving Careers, Social and Moral Education, Politics, World of Work, Money Matters, Study Skills Health Education, Keyboard Skills and Recreational Activities (2).

For either the 4th Year or 5th Year pupils may choose Community Service (4) as their non-examination alternative.

OPTIONS (All 4 periods except French and German which have 6 periods in Year 5)

Physics	German	Drama	Craft, Design Technology
Biology	History	Art	Technology
Chemistry	Geography	Music	Motor Vehicle Engineering
Human Biology	Religious Studies	Physical Education	Technical Drawing
General Science	Economics	Textiles	Home Economics
Computer Studies	Typewriting		Child Care
	French		

So far I have mentioned, according to the school brochure, "Equipment," "Meals," "Travel," "School Fund" "Lost Property" and "Reports" in Section 1. And also I explained "School Aims," "Equal Opportunities," "School Rules," "The Curriculum" and "Public Examinations" in Section 2. However, the space is limited, so I will tell you about the rest of Section 2 and Section 3 in the next essay.

(Continued)