

On The British Education System
and
The State Schools in Cambridge (Vol. XXV)
—Academic Progress Check—

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In the preceding essay (Vol. XXIV), I finished explaining the details of “Activities Week 1987,” which I had let them undone because of the limited space, especially the details of the school letters and the trip to France. In this essay, I will mention scholastic attainments of my son at the Manor Community College.

In the preceding essay (Vol. XX), I showed you the letter of Miss Anne J. Sinkinson, mathematics teacher at Manor. Indeed my son lay under a great obligation to her. Here again, I will tell you about her kindness to my son and her enthusiasm for teaching mathematics to him.

One day, at the beginning of February, 87, my son told me that Miss Sinkinson had told him Japanese mathematics books to school. So I selected some textbooks used in the sixth year of Kamiube Primary School, and let him take them to his school along with my letter. And on the 11th of February, my son came home with her letter. It contained very affectionate words concerning my son's

mathematics education; her letter said that in the Japanese mathematics books which my son took to her, the work was too easy for him and did not challenge him, and that as he was a bright boy he could be coping with some Algebra during that year which might help him when he returned to Japan. And she suggested that as there were a lot of Japanese scholars in Cambridge, there might be someone who spoke English and Japanese, who would be prepared to come in for 3 hours a week and translated for Yoshi [my son], and that then she could *really* begin to help him learn some useful mathematics, adding that she was very worried that my son would become frustrated and not enjoy the subject any more. When I read the

letter, I was filled with a deep sense of gratitude, and answered the letter, saying that I would contact the Society for Visiting Scholars and find someone who would help my son with his mathematics, adding that the teachers of Manor were not so kind as she, because I had written to Mrs. Brown, my son's class teacher, concerning the academic progress of my son but I had not answered my letter at all. At once by return mail, she said that she was trying to be as helpful as possible with my son's mathematics education and had a colleague at the University Department of Education who had a small collection of Japanese texts which had been donated by visiting academics, and that the colleague would be bringing them to her on Monday so she would see if they could be of any help. Furthermore she said, "I am sorry you feel that teachers at Manor are unhelpful; that is certainly not the intention. I have asked Mr. Hunter, the 1st year tutor, if he will ask all Yoshi's teachers to write a comment about Yoshi's progress in other subjects and then to let you know. Hopefully he will be able to do that during next week." And she finished the letter, saying "Please be assured that I will continue to help Yoshi all I can in mathematics — I'm already finding it interesting and challenging, not to mention very funny; trying to work out what the Japanese characters in Yoshi's textbooks are asking him to do with the numbers! Between us I'm sure Yoshi and I will both learn something." When I finished reading the letter, I was moved to tears and especially was impressed by the sentence "Between us Yoshi and I will both learn *something*." At the same time I was very happy to know that there was such a nice teacher as Miss Sinkinson at Manor, and I fully appreciated her kindness, thinking heartily that she *is* a teachers' teacher and that I would become such a good teacher.

As Miss Sinkinson told me, Mr. Hunter, the 1st year tutor, wrote a letter to me after a few days. In his letter, he apologized me, saying "Miss Sinkinson has passed me your letter and I am very sorry if you feel the teachers here have not all been as kind as Miss Sinkinson. I have asked teachers this morning to complete a progress check on your son and I enclose the replies. At the moment some teachers are away from school with flu so the set are not complete.... Our first year parent's evening is on May 5th when you will be able to see all the teachers." Thus thanks to Miss Sinkinson and Mr. Hunter, I received my son's progress check from many teachers. Now when I reconsider my complaints to the teachers at Manor, perhaps they may have thought that my complaints were too selfish an idea because my son would stay at the school for a short time. However, the staff at Manor, not to speak of Mr. Hunter, treated the matter seriously and wrote down the progress check! For their kind and generous behaviour, I thank them too much. So in the following pages, I will show you all the comments which were written by the teachers who came to school at that time. At the same time, we were given a list of my son's school record up to then. In the record, 1 is excellent, and 2 is good, and 3 is satisfactory, I imagine. This list will be shown also in the following pages.

As Mr. Hunter announced beforehand in his letter, toward the end of April, I received from Mr. Hunter a school letter informing us of 1st Year Parent / Teacher Consultation Evening on Tuesday 5th May at 7.00 p.m. The letter said, "It is a chance for you to talk to your child's teacher concerning the work done during the first year. It is a very important evening and we hope all parents will be able to come." In addition to the above sentences, it said, "In order that the evening proceeds as smoothly as

NAME YOSHI FORM 1-1 DATE 16.2.87

Would you please comment on the ability; attitude to staff; attitude to other pupils; standard of classwork; standard of homework of _____

Thank You

B L HunterSUBJECT:- Music Mr Durrant

Capable. Shows much aptitude in group work. Gradually settling in socially.

SIGNED. _____

NAME YOSHI FORM 1-1 DATE 16.2.87

Would you please comment on the ability; attitude to staff; attitude to other pupils; standard of classwork; standard of homework of _____

Thank You

B L HunterSUBJECT:- History Mrs Kilburn

Has great difficulty understanding English - however watches TV programmes & learns also from pictures. Does superb illustrations in his exercise book.

SIGNED. _____

V S Kilburn

Is no trouble & must be benefiting from being in the class.

NAME YOSHI FORM 1-1 DATE 16-2-87

Would you please comment on the ability; attitude to staff; attitude to other pupils; standard of classwork; standard of homework of _____

Thank You

B. L. HunterSUBJECT:- Geography marker

Although he presents no disciplinary problems, he is struggling to understand anything in this subject, and passes his time copying fairly aimlessly.

SIGNED. Kenneth HunterNAME YOSHI FORM 1-1 DATE 16-2-87

Would you please comment on the ability; attitude to staff; attitude to other pupils; standard of classwork; standard of homework of _____

Thank You

B. L. HunterSUBJECT:- Irama mes Oaw

Does his best - difficult for him to join in - lack of English etc - but the other boys help out in integrating him into class activities. A pleasant boy.

SIGNED. [Signature]

NAME YOSHI FORM 1.1 DATE 16.2.87

Would you please comment on the ability; attitude to staff; attitude to other pupils; standard of classwork; standard of homework of ~~4~~

Thank You

B.2 Hunter.

SUBJECT:- FRENCH MR SMITH

Yoshi is beginning to understand some of the basic work but he has obviously found this subject very difficult. He is always well behaved and attentive. He also seems to get on well with other pupils.

SIGNED. R SmithNAME YOSHI FORM 1.1 DATE 16.2.87

Would you please comment on the ability; attitude to staff; attitude to other pupils; standard of classwork; standard of homework of _____

Thank You

B.2 Hunter.

SUBJECT:- Art Mr Glsky.

gets on well with other children —
v. quiet, v. able, charming boy.

SIGNED. Amphrey

NAME YOSHI FORM 1-1 DATE 16.2.87

Would you please comment on the ability; attitude to staff; attitude to other pupils; standard of classwork; standard of homework of _____

Thank You

B L Hunter

SUBJECT:- PE MLDaft

ATTITUDE - EXCELLENT
FOOTBALL - "
CROSS-COUNTRY - GOOD.

works hard and enjoys the subject
I don't know how much English he
got but the other boys seem to be
able to communicate. He is a good
copier.

SIGNED. _____

J. Hunter

NAME YOSHI FORM 1-1 DATE 16.2.87

Would you please comment on the ability; attitude to staff; attitude to other pupils; standard of classwork; standard of homework of _____

Thank You

B L Hunter

SUBJECT:- Science (M.A. V. V. V.)
MRS FORSTER.

Can copy well but I don't think he understands
a great deal. He finds difficulty in practical
lessons because he cannot comprehend what
is being said - sometimes he sees this
as an
opportunity to

SIGNED. _____

M. Forster

be silly - but this is not his fault
as the language barrier is the main
problem in science

CAMBRIDGESHIRE EDUCATION COMMITTEE



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O.GAGGS L.G.S.M., L.R.A.M.
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CAMBRIDGE (0223)354937

Senior Community
Education Tutor
H.GRIFFITH B.A.(hons)

CAMBRIDGE (0223) 355745

RD/HPC

Dear Parent/Guardian,

I am writing to let you know the standard of effort achieved by your son/daughter in the recent assessments.

Mathematics	2	Human Biology		French	1	Technology	
English		Comp. Studies		Woodwork		P.E. C.S.E.	
Chemistry		Geography	2	C.D.T.	2	Music	2
Physics		History		Home Economics		T.D.	
Biology		Commerce		Typing		Child Care	
Gen. Science	3	Art	1	H.V.E.		German	
		Textiles		Drama	2	P.E.	1

The Year Tutor or Form Tutor will be seeing your son/daughter to discuss the effort grades, but should you wish to do so as well, do not hesitate to contact me. It would be helpful if you could complete the attached reply slip to acknowledge receipt of this letter.

Yours sincerely,

possible it will be helpful if you could complete the reply slip below and if your child could make appointment times with the teachers you wish to see.” So talking with my son, I completed the reply slip and let him make appointment times with the teachers we wished to see. And on 5th May, I went to Mannor Community College with my wife and saw Miss Sinkinson, Mr. Daft, Mr. Smith, Mrs. Partridge and Mr. Hunter, and asked them some questions about my son’s progress, and also thanked them for their kind teaching and consideration to my son. Some teachers said that my son was very good at football, and others said that my son could translate English into Japanese for the two Japanese pupils who were newcomers at Manor. Hearing these sayings, I was much relieved to know that my son managed to fit in. It is a matter for regret that such consultation evening which many teacher attend is not help in Japan. In our country, class teachers play a very important role in Parent / Teacher consultation, and it is only class teachers that talk with their pupils’ parents. Therefore I wish there ware such consultation afternoon or evening in our country, too.

As I mentioned in the preceding essay, I was to leave Cambridge for Paris on July 1st. So for the final month in England I was terribly busy in packing my belongings, and doing farewell parties with our friends and acquaintances ;in Cambridge, and in writing letters of my gratitude to them. On June 28th, I wrote to some persons who I thought helped; and encouraged my three children at each school, including the headmaster, the class teacher, of Milton Road Junior School, and the headmaster, the pastoral care, Mr. Hunter and the class teacher, of the Manor Community College, and the deputy head, Mr. Hjort and the class teacher, of Impington Village College. In

each letter, I expressed our gratitude to their kind, generous and friendly teaching and advice to my children and enclosed a cheque £ 100 to each of the three schools as a mark of our appreciation. After I left England on July 1st on schedule, my wife received a letter from Mr. Hunter, pastoral care of Manor. Showing you the letter of thanks from him in the following pages, I will finish this essay.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

MANOR COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Arbury Road
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CB4 2JF



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Telephone: 355745 Senior Community Education Tutor: P. SHIPLEY, B.Ed. (Hons) D.E.M., M.B.I.M.

Dear Mr Shigeta,

Thank you for your kind donation to the school. It is much appreciated. We have enjoyed having your son here and he has fitted in very well. I am sure the other children will miss him when he goes.

All first years will get a full report before the end of term and I will see your son gets his. The year book is due anyday and I will see to it that your son gets a copy of the book for last year too.

Thank you and your wife for ~~the~~ the interest you have shown and I am

glad you have enjoyed your stay here. I hope your wife will also enjoy the trip to FRANCE in July. Finally best wishes for the future and if you are in Cambridge again then do come and visit us.

yours sincerely
Bruce Hunter
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