

Part-time schooling in Barnet soon warning is sounded by QE headmaster

PART-TIME SCHOOLING will hit the Borough of Barnet soon unless drastic measures are taken to enable teachers to afford to live in the area, warned the headmaster of Queen Elizabeth's School, Barnet, Mr. Timothy Edwards, at the school speech day last Wednesday.

"We are already seeing part-time schooling in a nearby authority, and we shall see it here, soon, if drastic measures are not taken to enable those who want to teach to afford to live near enough to work in Barnet schools.

"We can manage with fewer books, less paper, less heat and less of a good deal else besides; but we cannot manage without teachers, and teachers cannot teach in our schools unless they can afford homes near them."

Cr. Victor Usher, chairman of the school governors and chairman of Barnet Education Committee, who presided at the speech day, listened intently to the headmaster's comments.

Awareness

He said Barnet Council are aware of the situation, and are working at the problem. "I hope, however, that this situation will not come and we will be able to go from strength to strength," he said.

Mr. Edwards also warned that the present economic crisis "could easily undo the work of

hundreds of selfless teachers who have served the school over four centuries.

"We are almost inevitably facing a situation where inflation is imposing a decline in our standards. We may not be able to afford the increase in the allowance to schools that would merely keep pace with inflation.

In jeopardy

"If there were actual cuts, the decline would be sharp and serious. Our very buildings are at risk. Economies cannot be made without the likelihood of reduced maintenance, and on the other hand, the tidal wave of higher building costs puts the future of our building programme in jeopardy."

On a brighter note, Mr. Edwards said the school is making "most encouraging progress" since the reorganisation from a grammar school to comprehensive.

The year had been most eventful, he reported, with numerous events marking the school's quartercentenary. These included the world premiere of the school's specially commissioned opera; an anniversary dinner, banquet and ball, and a number of smaller events all connected with the anniversary.

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During the year, two major changes had taken place with the introduction of house tutor groups "whereby we are not only preserving but strengthening the house system that has long been a feature of the school", and the division of the school into upper, middle and lower schools.

Scores of boys had taken part in school holiday trips, including visits to the Lake District for fell walking; Snowdonia for a geography field course; a skiing and a summer holiday abroad; and to the Dunstable Downs for gliding.

The school has enjoyed a successful season in most sports, including the recently introduced fencing. Music, he said, has had an outstanding year.

Tributes

Mr. Edwards paid tribute to Mr. Spencer Vaughan Thomas, who died just before Christmas. He taught English at the school from 1931-44. In his retirement he was a loyal supporter of the rugby and cricket teams, and was a good and loyal friend of the school, said Mr. Edwards.

The headmaster also paid tribute to Mr. Ron Burles, a former caretaker, who died in the autumn.

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Summing up the work of the school staff, Mr. Edwards said: "I would like to thank all my colleagues who, with really very few complaints and admirable patience, worked immensely hard to improve the quality of service to the boys."

Guest speaker

The guest speaker for the afternoon was Dr. Alasdair Worden, chairman of the Huntingdon Research Centre, Fellow of Wolfson College, Cambridge, professor of toxicology at the University of Bath, and an Old Elizabethan.

Dr. Worden gave a witty address, including many reminiscences of his time as a student at Queen Elizabeth's.

A vote of thanks was proposed by the school captain, M. Ball, and during the afternoon a piano solo, Polonaise No. 2 in C minor by Chopin, was played by Vincent Barr.

Prizes

Dr. Worden presented prizes to the following boys:-

Bishop Broughton divinity prize, R. K. De La Mare. Kiddell-Coffin prize for English, R. P. C. Saint. John Bond Lee prize for classics, D. F. White. Kiddell Bequest prize for science, C. B. Golding.

French prize, D. R. Peacock. I. A. Slade. German prize, D. I. Hyman. Geography prize, Vincent Memorial prize, G. M. Hallam. Art prize, D. Leake. Harrison mathematics prize, J. I. Davies. E. H. Jenkins history prize, M. A. Foster.

Normanton prizes for chemistry, R. A. Lampert. S. Greenfield. Powell-Davis prize, N. P. Lamb. Dr. Frederick Brittain prize, M. D. O. Thomas. Chairman's prize, J. E. Buswell.