The re-organisation of education in the county borough of Wallasey 1961-1968

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SUMMARY

The Local Education Authority in Wallasey began in 1961 to consider the re-organisation of the Borough's system of education with a view to eliminating selection at 11+ and separatism in secondary education. This thesis gives a broadly chronological account of the ensuing progress towards the implementation of an approved scheme commencing in September 1968.

A number of possible schemes for re-organisation were examined by the Authority and this thesis considers their detailed application to the County Borough of Wallasey. The Authority decided upon a Three Tier system based on schools for children aged 5 - 9, 9 - 13 and 13 - 18 long before the Secretary of State for Education and Science gave limited approval to such schemes in Circular 10/65. Indeed at the time when Wallasey decided upon this scheme a Three Tier system was actually illegal. Circular 10/65 indicated that the Minister was prepared to approve experimentally a limited number of schemes spanning the traditional 5 - 11, 11 - 18 age groups but when approached he was not prepared to give prior approval to Wallasey's intentions. This did not deter the Wallasey Authority which was quite prepared to fight the Department on this issue if necessary. Eventually, the Minister hinted that he would be more ready to approve Three Tier systems than had been indicated in Circular 10/65.

The present work examines the process of deliberation within the Authority, consultation with local teachers' organisations and negotiations with the Department of Education and Science through which the approved scheme finally emerged. It refers to the problems caused by delay in approval, unexpected financial restrictions and the deferment of the raising of the school leaving age. The three tiers are separately considered with special emphasis on Middle Schools. A further section deals with re-organisation of Catholic schools, affecting approximately one fifth of the school population.

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I. Introduction.

Wallasey is a County Borough situated on the left bank of the Mersey estuary, opposite Liverpool. It has developed comparatively recently as a largely residential area. In 1821 the parish of Wallasey had a population of 1,169, increasing to 10,723 by 1861. At the turn of the century, a further forty years later, the Urban District Council's area had 53,579 inhabitants. In 1913 the County Borough of Wallasey was established to include the township of Wallasey with Egremont, Liscard and Poulton-cum-Seacombe and the then extremely popular seaside resort of New Brighton, which at that time boasted extensive sandy beaches within easy reach of trippers from Liverpool. In 1928 the Moreton and Leasowe areas were added to the Borough and, in 1933, Saughall Massie was included.

By the outbreak of the second world war in 1939, the total population stood at 94,000 and after the war, in 1947, under the Town Planning Act, a start was made on the detailed planning of the "west end" - i.e. those parts added in 1928 and 1933, to provide facilities for community needs in the only extensive development area available. Wallasey now has rigid geographical frontiers, determined by the Mersey estuary, the Irish Sea, the County Borough of Birkenhead and the Urban District of Hoylake.

In 1934, the University of Liverpool "Survey of Merseyside" said of Wallasey that it "has the typical character of a dormitory town: over one third of the total occupied population spent their working hours in Liverpool. It is one vast suburb, almost entirely middle-class, which has spread around and between, without entirely destroying, the

original village nuclei of the borough". There is still a measure of truth in this description, although there are now some industries, including flour milling and the manufacture of belting, bronze propellors, chocolate biscuits, and glass-washers which are exported throughout the world.

In 1961, the population reached 102,100 - probably its peak, as there is now some evidence of a slight decrease, perhaps due to greater ease of transport which permits urban development beyond the borough further out in Wirral.

Thus from the educational point of view, one of the most important features of the Borough's history was the necessity for rapid expansion of educational provision. It is not suggested that this type of rapid development was peculiar to Wallasey - but the pace was certainly above the average.

Until Wallasey was incorporated as a Borough in 1910, the area had enjoyed unified control of its educational provision for only eight years and that control extended only to elementary schools. In 1902, the powers of the Poulton-cum-Seacome School Board were widened to cover the whole area under the title "Wallasey United School Board" - but with the passing of the Education Act in the very same year School Boards were abolished and the Wallasey District Council appointed an Education Committee in 1903 to press on with the extension of school provision to meet the needs of the growing population. In 1913, when Wallasey attained the status of a County Borough and took over secondary as well as elementary education, the Education Committee was responsible for seven elementary schools, one higher elementary

school, eight voluntary schools and two secondary schools,namely, Wallasey Grammar School and Wallasey High School. By the early 1960's, when this study begins, the Wallasey Education Committee controlled over fifty schools, including seven secondary grammar schools, ten secondary modern schools, two special schools, one nursery school, one Technical College and a School of Art and employed well over six hundred and fifty full-time teachers.

II. Review of Educational Provision in Wallasey in the early 1960's.

Early in 1967, the Director of Education for Wallasey wrote an article on Middle Schools,[1] about which the Chief Education Officer for the London Borough of Merton said "if for Wallasey you had substituted Merton, I could have signed the article myself". It is interesting that two Authorities, so far apart, and with no previous consultation, should have arrived at much the same solution to the problems raised by "Circular 10/65".[2] Some of the content of this thesis is of a general nature, applicable to Education Authorities other than Wallasey, although much of it is peculiar to the County Borough of Wallasey in that it takes account of matters of buildings, distribution of population, historical developments and social characteristics of the Borough, as well as the likely effects within the Borough of social and educational trends.

The Education Committee began to consider the reorganization of secondary education in 1961 and first expressed interest in a three tier system in 1963. The Director of Education maintained that the Committee "valued (this system) for its considerable educational advantages" and said that "it has been implicit in the planning thatthe high level of academic achievement should be maintained and that the variety of opportunities should be increased".[3]

(1) K.A.Rowland, "Avoiding Fragmentation", The Teacher, 27th January 1967.

(2) Department of Education and Science Circular No.10/65 dated 12th July 1965 entitled "The Organisation of Secondary Education".

(3) K.A. Rowland, op.cit.

To substantiate this claim the new system must be considered by comparison with a known system for which the good and less good aspects are already evident from actual experience and not simply from estimates or only in theory.

Children in Wallasey normally enter school at the beginning of the term or half term following their fifth birthday. (There are no admissions after the beginning of the summer term). At the end of the school year in which their seventh birthday occurs, they transfer to the appropriate Junior School or Department and until 1967 at the end of the school year in which their 11th birthday occurred they transferred to Secondary School. Up to this stage no choice of school is offered to parents, the schools which children attend being determined by a rigid system of zoning.

The transfer to secondary schools was controlled by a classification procedure, operated on behalf of the Education Committee by a Classificatio Board, made up of representatives of the Education Committee and of headteachers from both primary and secondary schools. Panels of the Classification Board gave detailed consideration to the results of the Classification Tests which were taken in three series in July, November and February. The July test was solely for the purpose of accustoming children to conditions of testing and the type of test paper, and the result of the July series was not normally taken into consideration.

The scores of boys and girls were considered by separate panels, together with details of any circumstances which appeared to warrant special consideration. The Panels interviewed headteachers of the primary schools of some borderzone pupils, and finally recommended to the Board a classification list.

Of an age group of about 1,500, some 560 children were classified for Grammar and Technical Schools, broadly as follows:-

	Boys	Girls	Total
Wallasey Grammar School	90		90
Technical Grammar School	90		90
Oldershaw Grammar School	60	60	120
Wallasey High School		90	90
Technical High School		90	90
Maris Stella High School (RC)		50	50
Boys to Roman Catholic Grammar schools outside Borough	30		30
	270	290	560

The courses provided at these schools were based largely on the preparation for the examinations at Ordinary, Advanced and Scholarship levels of the General Certificate of Education. Of these schools, in 1966, only Oldershaw Grammar School (Boys' Dept.), the Technical Grammar School, and the Technical High School offered candidates for the Certificate of Secondary Education; Wallasey Grammar School, Wallasey High School and Maris Stella entered no candidates for this examination and no school adopted a Mode III syllabus.

All pupils in Wallasey Grammar and High Schools, and in Oldershaw Grammar School and Maris Stella were drawn from the top 25% of the classification list, (some 25 Roman Catholic boys each year from this group going to a Direct Grant School outside the Borough). The Technical Schools, whilst admitting from the top 25% any candidates opting for these schools (in 1966 28 boys and 17 girls) continued to admit pupils down to about 37%.

The children classified for non-selective secondary education were allocated by rigid zones to the school serving the area of residence, viz:-

Boys	Area	Girls
Gorsedale	Seacombe, Poulton	Somerville
Withensfield	Egremont, Liscard, New B.	Quarry Mount
St. George's	Wallasey Village, Leasowe	St. George's
Moreton Boys	Moreton	Moreton Girls
St. Bede's	Wallasey RCs	St. Hilda's
St. Thomas Becket	Moreton RCs	St. Thomas Becket

These schools developed in response to the demands of the 1944 Act for a new concept of secondary education, and were soon faced with the problems imposed by the attempt to carry out a programme for which their buildings were not designed, exacerbated by the problems of an extension of school life imposed by the raising of the school leaving age in 1947. The changes in these schools have been very great, and in Wallasey they have developed a variety of courses appropriate to the varied ability of the children. Until 1965, many of these schools offered G.C.E. 'O' Level courses and most offered courses leading to the Certificate of the Union of Lancashire and Cheshire Institutes. In 1966, these schools - without prompting from the Authority - all ceased to take G.C.E. and entered pupils instead for the C.S.E. There was provision in each school for a fifth form, but in 1965/66 and 1966/67, there was in fact no fifth form at Somerville Secondary School for Girls and the fifth forms at some others - notably the Roman Catholic Secondary schools - were negligible.

The total number of pupils in Non-selective 5th forms was as follows:-

YEAR	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL
1964	93	73	166
1965	124	53	177
1966	94	45	139
1967	98	60	158

The views of parents as to the type of secondary education which they desired their child to have can be assessed by reference to the following table which shows parental options at 11+:-

YEAR	GRAMMAR	TECHNICAL	MODERN
1964	40%	26%	34%
1965	42%	27%	31%
1966	36%	30%	34%
1967	41%	29%	30%

Opportunities for transfer between schools for children whose development in the Secondary School shows this to be necessary occurred at 12+ and 13+ under arrangements carried out by the Classification Board and at 15+ by administrative arrangement following agreement between the headteachers concerned. Transfers were considered on the recommendations of headteachers of secondary schools or at the request of parents.

YEAR	BOYS				GIRLS			
	12+		13+		12+		13+	
	Sub-mitted	Trans-ferred	Sub-mitted	Trans-ferred	Sub-mitted	Trans-ferred	Sub-mitted	Trans-ferred
1963	22	6	27	8	28	4	3	2
1964	17	1	3	-	33	3	5	-
1965	3	-	2	-	16	-	2	-
1966	14	9	2	-	26	8	13	-
1967	10	1	4	-	38	2	14	1

Transfers at 15+ to Grammar and Technical Schools were made on the results of the Wallasey Secondary Schools Certificate of Education Examination. Only two or three pupils each year were transferred, but their results have clearly justified this action. There was also provision for transfer at the age of 15+ to full time courses in Science, Engineering and Commerce at the College of Further Education. The following tables show the number of young people remaining at school in Wallasey after the statutory leaving age, and the number of young people who enter universities and comparable institutions (Colleges of Education being shown separately) on completion of their secondary school course:-

YEAR	A NO. REMAINING AT SCHOOL AT 15+	B NO. ENTERING UNIVERSITIES & COMPARABLE INSTITUTIONS	C NO. ENTERING COLLEGES OF EDUCATION	TOTAL B & C
1964	637	92	71	163
1965	662	112	91	203
1966	639	110	84	194
1967	671	120	91	211

These figures indicate a high level of academic study. Therefore, any scheme of re-organisation should offer pupils of this level of ability at least the same opportunity to reach the same standard, and enable them to compete with pupils from other areas for places at universities, colleges, and other institutions of further education. At the same time the figures are not in themselves proof that all secondary school pupils are being given the facilities and means to reach the highest levels of which they are capable. Indications that this is so are difficult to bring forward as evidence, but the following records of development show a degree of progress:-

a) The establishment of fifth year courses in non-selective secondary schools has enabled national external examinations to come within reach of pupils in these schools, with the following results in recent years by individual subject passes:-

	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967
U.L.C.I.	592	535	521	7	3
R.S.A.	23	25	11	13	10
C.S.E.				660	799
G.C.E. (O Level)	30	44	44	7	-

The Wallasey Secondary Schools Certificate developed steadily from its inception in 1958. Its effect as a stimulant and for assessment of standards of work in the fourth year of secondary schools led to its acceptance on a wide scale by employers on Merseyside as evidence of successful general education.

Numbers of entries and passes have changed as follows:-

	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968
Entered	484	546	508	511	577	587
Gained Certificates	399	438	416	406	474	432
% Gained Certificates	82.4	80.2	81.9	79.4	82.2	73.6

III. The Beginnings of Reorganisation - 1961/1964.

In April 1961, the Education Committee received a letter from the New Brighton and Wallasey Ratepayers' Association drawing attention to the "evils" of classification at 11 plus and the benefits of "The Leicestershire Plan" and the Director was instructed to report on this matter at the June meeting of the Committee.(1) By that time, a letter had been received from Councillor Hetherington asking the Committee to examine all possible alternatives to the present form of selection procedure. It was decided to consider the matter further after the receipt of more information from the Director.(2) The Leicestershire Plan continued to interest the Committee and in March 1962 the Chairman of the Education Committee, Councillor F.H. Hutty and the Director visited Leicester to see "the plan" in operation and for discussions with the Director of Education for Leicestershire, Mr.Stewart C.Mason. After some pressure, particularly from Councillor Dr. David Caldwell, the Director produced, in October 1962, a report on the Leicestershire Plan and, in broad outline, its possible application to Wallasey.(3) It is interesting that even at this early stage, a number of factors which were to be of importance later had already become apparent.

(1) Wallasey Corporation, Minutes of Education Committee. Minute No. 248, 17/4/61

(2) Wallasey Corporation, Minutes of Education Committee. Minute No. 16 19/6/61

(3) Director of Education "Application of the Leicestershire Plan to Wallasey". 18th October, 1962.

An immediate problem was the application of the plan to an area such as Wallasey with a high proportion of Roman Catholic children where there was a well established and still developing system of aided denominational schools within the maintained school system, but lacking within the area of the Authority any provision for denominational grammar school education for boys. For many years, use had been made of Roman Catholic grammar schools in other authorities, particularly of St. Anselm's College in Birkenhead. There would be many difficulties in administering a scheme providing for automatic transfer at wish at 13 or 14 years of age when a school involved was outside the area of the Authority and used by other Authorities not operating a similar scheme. Beyond noting that "some special provision would have to be made for this group",(1) the Roman Catholic problem was forthwith shelved. The ease of adaptation of buildings emerged as a factor - and favourable reference is made in the report to Mr. Stewart Mason's comment that "The fact that it fits the existing plant of buildings and is therefore easily adaptable to changing circumstances has always been one of the arguments I have advanced in favour of it".

One of the main problems running all the way through possible schemes of re-organisation in Wallasey has been the problem of allocation to third tier schools. In Leicestershire, no problem of "grammar school" choice arises, since each "grammar" school has traditionally served an area of the county and continues to serve that area in the different capacity which the Plan has demanded.

(1) Director of Education "Application of the Leicestershire Plan to Wallasey". 18th October, 1962. Paragraph 7.

In Wallasey the system of classification for secondary education provided not only for two types of grammar school - one of which had a technical bias - but, within the limitation of accommodation of Oldershaw and Wallasey Grammar and High Schools, allowed parents to express a preference for one of these schools, and operated a "ward" system to maintain a random cross-section of entry.(1) Allocation as between Grammar and Technical schools had been possible because classification information had been available to the Classification Board on which this allocation could be made. However, under a scheme whereby transfer is made soley on the parents' wish and undertaking to allow the child to remain, this information would no longer be available.

(1) Prior to 1947 it was customary for Wallasey Grammar and Wallasey High Schools to take the highest group of candidates on the "Special Place" examination list - a system which handicapped the development of the Oldershaw Schools and gave rise to the idea that the latter were in some way inferior. It was therefore not unnatural that the majority of parents expressed a desire for their children to enter Wallasey Grammar and Wallasey High Schools. In consequence it was impossible to comply with parents' wishes because both Wallasey Grammar and Wallasey High Schools would have been seriously overcrowded whilst the Oldershaw Schools would have been only half filled.

The Education Committee decided that in order to meet these difficulties in 1947 (i) children classified for grammar school education and whose parents chose Oldershaw Schools should be admitted to them; (ii) the town should be divided into "ward-groups", the children being allocated to ward group lists according to their home addresses, boys being dealt with separately from girls; (iii) the children in each ward group list should be arranged in descending examination order; (iv) if the first pupil on the first ward group list was allocated to Wallasey Grammar or Wallasey High School, the first pupil on the second ward group list should be allocated to Oldershaw, the remaining children in each ward group list being allocated alternately to the Oldershaw and Wallasey Schools, the precise arrangement depending upon the ratio of places to be filled at the Oldershaw Schools and the number of places available at the Wallasey Schools.

Although the Education Committee did not pretend that this scheme was perfect, it was held that it offered a reasonable solution to a difficult problem. It recognised the equality of the four schools. It enabled the Oldershaw Schools to have a fair share of the abler boys and girls, and it gave a reasonable distribution of places in the various secondary grammar schools to all parts of the town, whilst parents wishes were recognised as far as they had been in previous years.

Whatever merits and strengths these schools might develop, it would be inevitable that parents' views of the schools for some time to come would be coloured by their present position in the educational system - the problem of "the rump school" had reared its ugly head.(1)

The Education Committee at its meeting on 6th November 1962 set up a special sub-committee, consisting of the Chairman, Vice Chairman, Alderman Bedlington, Councillors Dann and Hutty and Messrs Griffiths (University representative) and Mason (Teacher Representative) to collect information on the desirability of the application of the Leicestershire Scheme to Wallasey ....." or of any alternative scheme for the organisation of secondary education in the Borough".(2) The special sub-committee wrote not only to the four teacher organisations, but asked each Headteacher in the Borough to comment on the Director's report of October 1962. The headteachers and staffs of the grammar schools immediately sprang to their ramparts. The staff of Oldershaw Grammar School were "seriously disturbed and shocked" and regarded the Director's report as a vote of no confidence in the school.(3) In the Director's view, Oldershaw might well have been developed as a High School, and with only one abstention, the 36-strong staff of Wallasey Grammar School sprang to the support of Oldershaw, saying that they would be prepared to "see professional advice give way to parental wish" only on condition that it was clearly understood that the courses offered at the proposed grammar schools should be in what had always been understood to be grammar school work.

(1) Many teachers feared that one school - e.g. Wallasey Grammar School, would attract boys of the greatest ability and that boys of least ability would congregate in the Technical Grammar School.
(2) Minute 177 Wallasey Education Committee, 6.11.62.
(3) M. Mullett - letter to Director of Education, 13th December 1962.

Wallasey Grammar School staff stated "in the strongest possible terms" that it was vital for their future success that able boys should continue to reach the grammar schools not later than age 11.(1)

The views of headteachers on these suggestions of the Director are summarised in Appendix E to a progress report submitted by the Director to Education Committee at its meeting on 9th January 1964, reflecting almost unrelieved opposition. Mr. Oliver, the headmaster of Wallasey Grammar School expressed strong opposition to a three tier system for "a number of reasons, including the difficulty of preparing candidates for 'O' Level G.C.E. starting at 13, the repercussions of this on University entrance, the probability of reduced numbers in sixth forms, the difficulty of coping with the introduction of C.S.E. and the implementation of the Newsom Report, and the prohibitive cost". To these objections, Miss Slade, the headmistress of Wallasey High School added the further objections that the scheme would involve the re-organisation of every school in the Borough and that it would be difficult to provide adequately for the teaching of specialist subjects particularly languages and science in second tier schools. She wanted consideration of any scheme involving changes in primary schools to be deferred until after the publication of the Plowden Report.
Mr. Mullett, the headmaster of Oldershaw Grammar School, expressed "serious doubts as to the possibility of implementing the Three Tier System effectively in Wallasey". Mr. Mason, then headmaster of Somerville Junior School, and teacher representative on the Education Committee,

(1) Wallasey Grammar School - Minutes of Common Room Meeting, 10th December, 1962.

thought that a three tier scheme had much to recommend it if it were to be applied to a new satellite town without any established system of education, but that in Wallasey the extension of infant education to the age of 9 would retard the emotional development of children, the abolition of the junior school on grounds of convenience rather than of educational principle would be a tragedy, that every school would need extensive alteration and each school staff would be disbanded and transferred. Mr. Knowles, Principal of what was then the Technical College, said "the sooner abilities are recognised and pupils with similar abilities are grouped together, the better opportunities they will have". None of the headteachers who sent in comments supported a three tier scheme for Wallasey.

The sub-committee submitted an interim report in April, 1963, when the Education Committee recommended that to the terms of reference should be added the consideration of alternative selection procedures for secondary education to that now used.(1) This resolution was not approved by the Council and on 27th May 1963 the Council instructed the special sub-committee to direct their further enquiries to a form of organisation of secondary education in Wallasey which would not necessitate selection at 11+. It is clear that by this stage two things had begun to worry re-organisers in Wallasey:-

a) it appeared that the buildings in Wallasey were not big enough to provide viable Leicester Plan schools.

b) doubts had begun to arise as to whether Wallasey's high academic standards would be maintained.

(1) Wallasey Education Committee Minute No. 340. 16th April, 1963.

The Director wrote to several colleagues - and to Leicester - asking for information about the effects of comprehensiveness on:-

a) admission to universities and Technical Colleges.

b) premature leaving of able pupils.

c) achievements in 'O' Level G.C.E.

In his reply, the Chief Officer for Coventry pointed out that in the case of that Authority it was unfair to compare the standards of the comprehensive schools with those of the grammar schools, since the Ministry had insisted that parents of children of high ability residing within the catchment area of comprehensive schools should be allowed to opt out to the Grammar Schools - this involved the loss of the top 5 - 8 % of the ability range and hindered the development of sixth forms in Coventry. Although comprehensive education was not very far advanced at that time in the West Riding. Mr. (now Sir) Alec Clegg felt that "the introduction of a comprehensive school will certainly not reduce admissions to Universities and Training Colleges and there will be a tendency for pupils to stay on to take various types of extended courses in the comprehensives". Another sentence in his letter - "good results with the more able pupils must not be achieved at the expense of the majority" - drew the attention of Wallaseyans to the fact that under re-organisation the children whose interest need most to be safeguarded are the least able. The Special Sub-committee met again in July 1963, and received a report from the Director which is interesting for two reasons. Firstly, the appearance yet again of the pre-occupation with buildings and high academic achievements in Wallasey - and secondly the emergence of the idea that the improvement and amelioration of the status quo is better than re-organisation.

"Any plan adopted must take account of existing buildings, and of the availability of teachers ofvarying specialist and non-specialist abilities ..... the existing system ..... is economic in the use of teachers ..... and within each school is educationally efficient". "The position of the Borough in the Ministry's statistics for the number of pupils staying at school after the compulsory school leaving age both up to 16 and up to 17 and 18 years of age, added to the level of awards to Universities and other Further Education Institutes, confirms an opportunity at present existing which must not be lessened by re-organisation, which, if selection no longer takes place, is likely to produce less concentrated units of the pupils of highest ability."(1) In the opinion of the Director, a comprehensive school offering 'O' Level subjects would need to have about 900 pupils, and a school capable of offering a varied range of courses to 'A' level would need to have nearly 1500 pupils. Combining this information with the sizes of Wallasey schools, it is clear that either the present units would need to be joined together in groups of two or three, or that there would need to be a break in the secondary school course for some pupils - as in the Leicestershire Plan. This break has been regarded as one of the major disadvantages of the Leicestershire Scheme ..... and at last Wallasey began to give serious consideration to other schemes of re-organisation - especially the Three Tier System.

(1) Director of Education - "Organisation of Secondary Education" July, 1963.

The special sub-committee reported to Education Committee on 28th October 1963 about the advantages and disadvantages of the various schemes considered, and the Education Committee expressed itself "favourably impressed with the report on a proposed new three-tier scheme requiring non-selective transfer at 9 plus and 13 plus", and asked that further information should be submitted to another meeting of the Education Committee on 9th January 1964.(1) The Education Committee decided that the observations of the teaching profession should be invited, and their co-operation and goodwill sought, with reference both to this system and to one based on a two-tier comprehensive organisation of secondary education. The Joint Consultative Committee of Wallasey Teachers' Organisations set up a Working Party to consider these schemes - and damned the lot. The teachers were not against "all-through comprehensive education in purpose-built buildings", but regarded any other plans as a compromise. It was felt that a two-tier system might be made to work - but the smallest possible school would be an eight-form entry school. The Working Party felt that on practical grounds these schools would have to be neighbourhood schools. "We do not rule out these schemes, but we require a detailed examination of their application to Wallasey".(2)

(1) Wallasey Education Committee, Minute 189, 28th October, 1963.

(2) First Report of a Working Party set up by the Consultative Committee shown at Appendix A to Report on Organisation of Secondary Education - Education Committee, 9th January, 1961.

In the meeting in 1966 which finally approved the Three Tier Scheme, Mr. Mason, the Teacher Representative, was heard to say "I am happy to say that here we have a scheme to which the teachers feel able to lend their support". This was far from being the case with the Working Party - of which Mr. Mason was chairman - in 1964. The Working Party agreed that the scheme satisfied the demand for an unselective system, and that it had the advantage of involving no additional change of school. However, they listed its disadvantages as follows:-

A change in age of transfer should wait until the Plowden Report has been considered, and in any case the age ranges suggested are contrary to the 1944 Act.

It is an untried shheme - tried nowhere - it exists only on paper - a full scale introduction of this scheme in Wallasey would mean an experiment with no less than 16,000 children.

It causes maximum disturbance.

The existing buildings are least suitable. The Working Party thought that very large expenditure on buildings would be required. "Further, there would be a tendency to spend money first on buildings essential to the implementation of the scheme (i.e. the third tier schools), leaving until last in the queue for new buildings, those schools which are relatively the worst at present. "We must draw attention to the fact that although all schemes will require considerable extra expenditure, this scheme is by far the most costly"(1).

(1) Ibid

These arguments are less than fair. Few schools in Wallasey could be considered to be worse off for accommodation than Wallasey High School and the Oldershaw Schools. Also, at the time this report was produced, there had been nine new post war primary schools, five new post war secondary non-selective schools, but only two new selective schools. In any case, the effective cost of the Three Tier system has been shown to be only about £100,000 more than the Borough's 1947 Development Plan.(1) The teachers felt that the proposals were detrimental to the atmosphere of the Infant School, which has a specific purpose and needs an atmosphere that can be achieved satisfactorily only in smaller schools than those resulting from the 5 - 9 range envisaged: fourth year children, they claimed, are not generally suited to the infant school atmosphere - they require a more adult approach. The Consultative Committee considered the proposed third tier school to be too small to provide as good a range of options for the able child as would be available in the sixth form of a three form entry grammar school, asserting that the less able child would have a poorer chance of proper attention than at present. The period to be spent in a third tier school was considered to be too short and the Consultative Committee claimed that this would result not only in a lowering of academic standards but also in the lessening of the general influence of the life of a school upon the character of the child, and in turn, lessening the contribution the child can make to the life of the school. This does not seem to have been the experience of Leicestershire, where the final stage covers an even shorter period, with transfer at 14. The teachers fearedd that in the proposed three tier the interests of the abler minority would not be safeguarded;

(1) Education Act 1944, Development Plan Form 650 G
Director of Education, Wallasey, 1946

they saw all sorts of dangers in delaying the start of G.C.E. courses to 13 plus, particularly in Latin, French, German, Spanish, Physics, Chemistry and Biology. Examination preparation, they argued, would have to start in the second tier school, where there would have to be qualified specialist staff. They doubted whether qualified staff would be prepared to stay in a second tier school and, even if they would be prepared to do this, the Consultative Committee considered that they would benefit from concurrent experience of more senior work. They claimed, without further elucidation, that this system would create more difficulties than other systems in the field of co-education. The change at 9 and the recasting of primary education are not essential elements in a comprehensive shheme, they argued, and "on the whole we view the Three Tier Plan as the least satisfactory alternative to the present system". (1)

After considering this report on 9th January, 1964, the Education Committee expressed the opinion that none of the systems covered offered clearly greater educational advantages than those the town already enjoyed, recommending to the Council that the Working Party of Teachers be asked to report upon possible academic and social improvements in the present organisation, with perhaps abolition of selection at 11 plus, and that it should give careful consideration to the Doncaster and Campus Schemes.(2)

(1) First Report of a Working Party set up by the Consultative Committee shown at Appendix A to Report on Organisation of Secondary Education - Education Committee, 9th January, 1961.

(2) Wallasey Education Committee, Minute 245, 9th January, 1964.

For Doncaster and Campus Scheme see page 40 seq.

The Town Council rejected this resolution, and substituted a resolution to the effect that selection at eleven plus be abolished and that the Education Committee be instructed to consider all practical forms of organisation to achieve this end. Furthermore, the Council resolved that:-

> "The Governors of the various secondary schools of this Authority may, if they wish, discuss the suggested re-organisation of secondary education in so far as it concerns the schools of which they are governors, and make observations, but that it is a matter for the sole discretion of the headteacher of each school as to whether he or she comments upon it and that the headteachers and governing bodies of all the secondary schools in the Authority be similarly advised". (1)

The Director was depressed:- "what has already been said elsewhere will be said again and again at Governors Meetings, and while all this is being said by both sides, the present system continues, with whatever faults it may have, under somewhat of a cloud."(2) The Director feared that these meetings would achieve nothing except to rouse even greater feelings. He must have been comforted, on the very day he wrote this, to have received an expression of support for comprehensive education and the abolition of the 11 plus, from the Wallasey Third Branch of the Amalgamated Engineering Union.(3)

Mention has already been made of the fact that transfer at 9 and 13 was contrary to the requirements of the 1944 Education Act. In March, 1964, a bill was introduced in the Lords "which will help local authorities who wish to introduce new education plans. It will regularise the situation where local education authorities have been experimenting with secondary education and have been abolishing the 11 plus examination.

(1) Wallasey Corporation Town Council Minutes. of January., 1964.
(2) Director of Education - letter to Councillor F.H. Hutty, 4th February, 1964.
(3) H. Cartwright, Branch Secretary A.E.U. Letter to Director of Education dated 29th January, 1964.

"Present legislation is specific that the period of secondary education should be five years from the age of 10"[1] The Director was quick to ask for clarification from the Ministry, and was informed that it was not the intention of the bill to bring in a new era - the Secretary of State's powers under the bill would be used only in a very strictly limited number of cases, so that any 9 - 13 schools established would be genuinely experimental. "We do not intend whole LEAs to use the freedom given by the bill to adopt new forms of secondary education"

In July 1964, the Education Committee resolved that a special meeting of the Committee should be held on 29th September to consider a report by the Director of Education on the organisation of secondary education. This resolution was amended by the Council on 14th September 1964, by the addition of the following:-

> "and that the Education Committee bring before the Council a detailed plan for the re-organisation of secondary education involving abolition of selection at 11 plus at the Council Meeting on 19.11.64."

(1) Daily Telegraph - 23rd March, 1964.

IV. The Six Schemes Considered and Their Application in Detail to Wallasey.

The schemes considered in the Director's report of September 1964 were as follows :-

a) Comprehensive Secondary Schools.

b) Comprehensive Schools in Groups of Buildings based on Western, Central, Northern and Southern areas of the Borough.

c) Two Tier Comprehensive Schools.

d) Variations on two tier systems.

e) The Three Tier System.

f) The Sixth Form College.

a) Comprehensive Secondary Schools.

A Comprehensive Secondary School is a school intended to cater for the secondary education of all children in a given area for the whole of the secondary range both of age and ability. Children would enter such a school at 11 and would remain there for the whole of their secondary school course, whether it be terminated at the end of the statutory school age or at the age of 18 or 19. Such a school, if designed, built and staffed with its particular needs and purpose in mind, should be an economic and efficient way of meeting the whole range of abilities and aptitudes of children at all ages. Socially, the school would reflect the area which it served and subject to that proviso, would give an opportunity for all children from that area to enter the widest possible range of social activities.

Although many authorities have comprehensive schools in operation, in few is the system of education fully comprehensive. Anglesey in North Wales is probably fully comprehensive, but in all other areas where comprehensive schools exist, there are either direct grant or independent schools in or near the authority's area to which some of the most able children are sent by their parents.

In a comprehensive school the needs of pupils with abilities varying from the most to the least able and with interests and aptitudes equally wide in variety, have to be provided with suitable courses within the one school. This requires at each stage of the secondary school course a wide range of suitable levels of study and an equally wide range of course and subject options in the later stages. To provide such facilities the school must be large in number of pupils and most authorities where such systems are operating have considered it necessary to set up schools of intakes varying between 10 and 12 form entry and therefore accommodating between 1500 and 2000 pupils. In Wallasey no single school or group of adjacent school buildings could accommodate this total number of pupils. In order to approach this number it would be necessary to combine existing pairs of buildings - buildings which, in any case were not designed for the purpose for which they would be used. Difficulties would of course arise, and the flexibility of the organisation of the school would be limited by the practicability of moving pupils from building to building and by increased timetabling difficulties which would be caused if staff were to move too much between buildings.

Indeed, the advantages in the fully comprehensive school of flexibility, of wide opportunities for setting in many subjects at many levels, and the ability to command the services of a diversely qualified and experienced staff would be reduced appreciably by the physical separation of the school into two buildings.

The following table shows a possible grouping of schools to provide such comprehensive units in Wallasey;-

Group	Area	School Buildings	No. of Pupils	Sex
I.	Seacombe and Poulton	Gorsedale Boys and Somerville Girls	850	Mixed
II.	Egremont, Liscard and New Brighton	Wallasey High and Quarry Mount	1090	Girls
III.	Egremont, Liscard and New Brighton	Oldershaw Schools and Withensfield	1290	Boys
IV.	Wallasey Village	Technical Grammar and St. Georges	1150	Mixed
V.	Leasowe	Wallasey Grammar and Technical High	1175	Mixed
VI.	Moreton	Moreton Boys and Moreton Girls	900	Mixed

It will be seen that the number of pupils to be accommodated in each group of schools varies between 5 and 8 form entry: this in the light of experience of other authorities is small for such a school, and even if examined from the point of view of Wallasey's existing provision for secondary education would still seem to impose a serious limitation on providing adequate facilities in each school for the whole ability range of children. The aim of the examinations for G.C.E. and C.S.E. is that G.C.E. should apply to about 20% of the school population and C.S.E. should apply to the next 40% of whom 20% will be likely to take a number of single subjects rather than a grouped examination. In a 6 f.e. school there would be little opportunity for options amongst pupils

working to G.C.E. level, and the picture when considering the sixth form would be even more serious. In an 8 form entry school, G.C.E. and C.S.E. examinations would be within the compass of five of the eight streams. Pupils in the first two streams, together with some of the pupils in the third stream, would take G.C.E. subjects. A possible sixth form of 100 would provide a reasonable though not limitless choice of courses and subjects.

It is difficult to be dogmatic about the best size of schools. Many small schools have not only achieved outstandingly good results, but, by their more intimate atmosphere, have established relationships resulting in the maximum possible achievements which pupils in a very large school might never have reached. It could be possible that in Wallasey, where the nature of the borough results in a somewhat higher intelligence level than the national average, a school smaller than that assessed elsewhere to be necessary would meet the criteria for success as a comprehensive school. However, it must be noted that, even so, the optimum size of school might vary according to the social background of the area of the borough served. Nevertheless it would seem that an eight form entry school is the smallest viable unit and even this might not be adequate for some zones. Having regard to the possible inequality of academic potential in the different areas of the Borough and the availability of specialist accommodation for advanced work, it might be considered advisable to introduce a polity of limited sixth form concentration, whereby not all the constituent school groups would have sixth forms, but might transfer their pupils for advanced work to other school groups better placed to provide this.

(b) Grouped Comprehensive Schools:-

The major disadvantage of the use of pairs of buildings as full comprehensive schools is the limitation in size of the schools which could be accommodated in them. It would be possible to overcome this disadvantage by grouping school buildings in larger units, each group serving a major area of the Borough. For instance:-

West

Serving the zones of the following Infant Schools:

Lingham	65
Barnston Lane	55
Eastway	65
Castleway..	70
Birket	100
Moreton C.E.	20
	375 = 12½ F.E.

		Form Entry
Formed by:	Moreton Boys' School	3
	Moreton Girls' School	3
	Technical High School	3 + VIth
	Wallasey Grammar School	3 + VIth
		12 + VIth

The accommodation to be provided for the new buildings of the Moreton Girls' School could be so planned as to make the total accommodation fit the needs of the complete school.

Central

Serving the zones of the following Infant Schools:

St. Georges	130
Liscard (Pt.)	60
Park (Pt)	80
	270 = 9 F.E.

		Form Entry
Formed by:	St. George's Sec. School ...	5
	Technical Grammar School ...	3 + VIth
		8 + VIth

The accommodation would be reasonably balanced apart from deficiencies in practical subjects rooms for girls at the Technical Grammar School site and the need for other facilities for girls at that school.

North

Serving the zones of the following Infant Schools:

New Brighton	135
Egremont (Pt)...	100
Mount (Pt)	45
Liscard (Pt)	60
... ...	340 = 11 F.E.

Formed by:	Form Entry
Quarry Mount School ...	3½
Withensfield School ...	3½
Wallasey High School...	3 + VIth
	10 + VIth

Accommodation would again be reasonably balanced except for the limitations of the Wallasey High School building which would be compensated for by the better than normal facilities of the Quarry Mount building. The dispersal of practical accommodation at Withensfield would cause difficulty but could be adjusted with the remodelling of the Wallasey Grammar School (Withens Lane) buildings in due course.

South

Serving the zones of the following Infant Schools:

Gorsedale	85
Somerville	90
Riverside	85
Park (Pt)	30
Egremont (Pt)...	40
	330 = 11 F.E.

		Form Entry
Formed by:	Oldershaw Schools	4 + VIth
	Gorsedale Sec. Boys' School	3
	Somerville Sec. Girls' School	3
		10 + VIth

When the Oldershaw buildings are remodelled, the accommodation of this group would balance but additional practical accommodation both for boys and girls would be required immediately on the Oldershaw site.

The major disadvantage of the groupings of schools indicated here, and one which might well be so great as to prevent them operating effectively as single units is the division into more than two buildings. This raises many problems of organisation and prevents optimum use of staff and facilities. Because of the different relationships of buildings forming the groups the organisation of each grouped school would differ from the others, with transfer between buildings of pupils at ages selected to make the best use of the buildings. Thus, at Moreton, the buildings could fairly effectively be organised (eventually) in two parts, one in Fender Lane and the other on Birketside, but pending the completion of the new Grammar School and the new Moreton Girls' School the problems would be insuperable.

The Northern and Southern groups have the very great disadvantage of operating each in three buildings separated by distances of up to two miles and the prospect of organising these as single entities is remote. In the Southern group, the buildings available would permit the first three years of a five year course to be spent at Somerville and Gorsedale, and the final two years at Oldershaw.

Problems arising from either three moves for each pupil during this time or, alternatively, single sex schools at Gorsedale and Somerville, following mixed junior schools with subsequent transfer to a mixed secondary school at Oldershaw would seem to give such an arrangement little hope of the success which a school of one unit with comprehensive facilities might reasonably expect.

Further, the scheme would mean segregation between different areas of the borough, as would the other comprehensive schemes suggested; and, although the area covered by each would be large, there would remain a distinction between the four schools as a result of the different social backgrounds of the areas served with undoubtedly probability of a differential in the potential ability of the pupil entry and of the likely size of the VIth form.

On the other hand, the scheme would involve fewer staffing changes than any other which might be adopted, as the staffs of a number of schools would in each case combine to form the staff of a single school. There would be marginal adjustments but in most cases these would be internal to each "school" and might mean in a number of cases that teachers would work in different buildings as compared with the present arrangements. The number of headteachers would, of course, be very much reduced - from a total of 12 to 4.

c) Two Tier Comprehensives:-

The limited size of buildings and their distribution throughout the borough is the main hindrance to the introduction of a fully comprehensive system.

Assuming that the number of form entries in each comprehensive school should be of the order of 10 or 12, and also assuming that it is both necessary and desirable to make use of as many as possible of the existing smaller school buildings an alternative system of organisation might be considered. This would sub-divide the 5/7 year age range of the comprehensive school by introducing a secondary school course consisting of two stages or tiers, each housed in a separate building.

In contrast to the fully comprehensive system of grouped pairs already described, this system would involve the transfer of pupils from Junior High Schools to Senior High Schools at some fixed age between age 11 and 18. All children would transfer at the age of eleven from the primary school to the lower school of this two stage system - variously known as a Junior High School, Intermediate School or Lower School,-and would remain there until either 13 or 14 years of age. Transfer from the Junior High School to the Senior High School would normally be direct and automatic in that all the pupils from a Junior High School would at a specified age transfer to the same Senior High School.

A variant of this procedure, which would at the same time give some measure of reality to the idea of parental choice embodied in the 1944 Education Act and give some flexibility fo the system, would involve zoning only at the 11 plus transfer to the Junior High School but offering choice of schools at the 13 plus or 14 plus transfer stage. Such a scheme, if applied to Wallasey, would involve the use of non-selective secondary schools as Junior High Schools, with the existing selective secondary schools as Senior High Schools.

The exact use to which each building would be put would depend, amongst other things, on the age adopted for transfer from Junior High Schools to Senior High Schools. The proposal to accommodate the Junior High Schools in non-selective schools has many advantages, since these buildings, with their furniture and equipment, are not too specialist in function, and are already more or less suited to this purpose. The numbers of places are also approximately correct.

The major difficulty in such a system is the selection of the most appropriate age of transfer between the two stages, and the various further factors arising from any decision on this point. At this stage it was expected that by 1970 the basic secondary school course for all pupils would be of five years duration - and this was therefore the length of course considered. The point at which it is most appropriate and educationally sound to split a five year course is difficult to determine. It has been argued that the absolute minimum required to prepare pupils for G.C.E. 'O' Level is three years. Whilst it is undoubtedly true that the Upper School would make some demands upon the Lower School in terms of basic preparation for this course, these demands might amount almost to detailed specification of the curriculum and syllabus if the Upper School course were to include only the last two years of the 11 - 16 span. Such detailed direction might not be so undesirable if pairs of schools were tied together in the sense that all pupils from one Lower School were transferred to the same Upper School. However, if any real degree of parental choice is to be permitted at the age of final transfer, (and this, for other reasons, would seem to be desirable) there would obviously be some cross movement between first stage and second stage schools.

This might lead to demands on one Lower School from more than one Upper School which might in turn necessitate some measure of agreement between the Upper Schools themselves upon matters of curriculum - and similarly for the Lower Schools. Thus it is possible that a rigidity at present absent from the separate school system might be introduced, the effect of which would seriously limit the independence of all the schools and their freedom to experiment in the interests of their pupils. On the other hand, an attempt to split the five year course at the age of 13, thus giving the Upper School a three year course to 'O' level G.C.E., would reduce the age span of the Lower School to two years.

With an intake of the order of 7 or 8 form entry (i.e. 210 to 240 pupils annually) not only would there be a serious lack of continuity and even of security for the pupils, especially those of least ability, but there would be a danger that the teaching staff would only get to know the pupils superficially. They might, therefore, gain little satisfaction from having them in their care for only two years.

The exact use to which each building would be put would be determined by the age at which transfer from the Junior High School to the Senior High School took place. Allowing for a slight increase in population, accommodation would be required for a total of about 7800 secondary pupils, of whom approximately 1200 would be Roman Catholics. This would leave about 6,600 county school pupils of secondary age to provide for.

On the basis of transfer at 13 (i.e. after a two year period in the Lower School) about 2400 places would be required in Lower Schools and 4,200 places (three whole year groups plus sixth form) in Upper Schools. The actual number of places available in selective and non-selective secondary schools at this particular time was 2995 and 3590 respectively. The use of non-selective schools as Lower Schools and selective schools as Upper Schools would result in there being some 1,100 - 1,200 places too many in the proposed Lower Schools with a corresponding shortage in the Upper Schools. The shortage might to some extent be made up by transferring two of the proposed Lower Schools to Upper School use, but the accommodation thus liberated would not be sufficiently specialised for Upper School work without extensive remodelling. Also, subtraction of two such schools from Lower School use would seriously upset the geographical distribution of schools for younger children aged 11 and 13. In fact, the Director found the situation so difficult that he did not bother to work out in detail the accommodation changes required.

On the other hand, on the basis of transfer at 14, the number of places required in Lower Schools would be approximately 3600 and in Upper Schools about 3000. These numbers would fit almost exactly into existing buildings, retaining the use of non-selective schools as Lower Schools and existing selective schools as Upper Schools.

d) Variations on Two Tier Systems

Proposals have been made by some Local Education Authorities which, while retaining a two tier system of secondary education and obviating the need for classification of pupils at 11plus, have attempted to offer parental choice of school at a later stage,

and by doing so, in some cases, to enable smaller, more specialist schools to be organised efficiently. Different length of course in different schools has been one of the main ways in which the choice has been offered. In the Leicestershire Plan all pupils transfer at 11 plus to a High School and at the age of 14 transfer is offered to a Grammar School for all pupils whose parents undertake that they shall remain at school to the end of their 16th year. Remaining pupils complete their education in the High School up to the end of the statutory school life and have an opportunity there for specialisation in craft and commerce.

When the school leaving age is raised to 16, the Leicestershire Plan is likely to become a straightforward two-tier comprehensive system, as all pupils will then be required by law to complete the optional course now offered. Such a system has been discussed fully on its application to Wallasey on page 35 seq.

In Doncaster a scheme was proposed which has come to be known as the Doncaster Plan, although it was not in fact put into effect in Doncaster. Under this scheme all pupils at the age of 11 plus would transfer from Primary Schools to High Schools, as in the Leicestershire scheme, but the parental decision would become operative at 13 plus as opposed to 14 plus in Leicester; parents would be given the opportunity of transferring their child to a Grammar School if, and only if, they were prepared to keep the child at school until the age of 18, so that, whilst 'A' level work would be restricted to the Grammar Schools, the High Schools would retain work to 'O' level standard of G.C.E.

In the draft of the Doncaster Plan, it was noted that it might be necessary to safeguard the rights of the Local Authority by putting certain restrictions on transfers and that, whilst this is a subsidiary issue to the main scheme, it is of vital importance; this restriction would obviously apply to permit the transfer only of those pupils whose potential ability as shown in the Junior High School indicated some possibility of success at 'A' level. There would also be an opportunity for transfer to the Grammar School from the Junior High Schools after 'O' Level G.C.E. (i.e. at the age of 16 plus) for pupils wishing to continue on either an 'A' Level course or a General Course to the age of 18.

The claims for this scheme are that:-

a) selection at age 11 plus is eliminated.

b) the academic Grammar School tradition is retained.

c) the success of the Modern School is not destroyed but is used in the development of Junior High Schools.

d) responsibility for educational decision is placed on the parents.

In considering the application of this scheme to Wallasey, it is difficult to assess what the likely demand of parents would be. At present, with about 37% of pupils transferring at age 11 to Grammar and Technical Grammar Schools, there are parental options at that age for more than 70% of pupils to go to these schools. It might well be that at age 13, when ability and prospects may be assessed more realistically, and when the option is for a course lasting a further five years to age 18, some of these parents would accept advice that it would be in the best interests of their children for them to remain in Junior High School.

The percentage asking for transfer might then be of the order of 50%. As this percentage cannot, however, be forecast with any reasonable degree of accuracy, it would be necessary as the scheme evolved to develop schools to meet the wishes of parents, unless some limitation other than parents' wish were to be placed on entry to the Grammar Schools. Such a limitation would necessitate some form of assessment of the potential ability of each child. This assessment could be made by the Headteacher of the High School, or by a series of tests. In either case there would be consistent resistance from those parents whose children were marginally separated in ability from other children who were advised to proceed on a Grammar School course. The problem of drawing a line where it is not theoretically possible to draw one would have been successfully transferred from age 11 to age 13.

In the event of the number of requests for transfer approaching the present figure of 70% schools would be required to provide appropriately for pupils with an ability range at least as broad as that indicated by Intelligence Quotients from 70 - 140. This is very much greater than any selective school is staffed and equipped to handle. It would result in schools approaching Second Stage Comprehensiveness with many of the problems already discussed, in an attempt to offer a wide range of courses with an inadequate number of teaching groups. The High Schools would suffer from a disadvantage, strongly felt by the Education Committee to be serious when the Leicestershire Plan was discussed, of lower forms of the full ability group and upper forms of either lower ability or with less interest in their education who would, by their seniority, be responsible for setting the tone and atmosphere of the school.

This effect would become more serious as the number of transfers to the Grammar School at 13 increased.

The proposal by the Leeds Authority was to modify the Doncaster Scheme by transferring all pupils at age 13, those who undertake to complete a five year course going to the Grammar School and those who did not wish for a five year course going to a Senior High School. In both the Grammar and the Senior High Schools there would be G.C.E. 'O' level course, and transfer from the Senior High School to the Grammar School would be possible for pupils who wished to take an 'A' Level or other general course to the age of 18. The way in which these shhemes could be fitted into buildings in Wallasey is shown in the following outline:-

Percentage opting to transfer at 13		40%		50%		60%	
DONCASTER	High Schools	Required:- 4,600		Required:- 4,300		Required:- 4,000	
		Moreton Boys	540	Moreton Boys	540	Moreton Boys	540
		Moreton Girls	450	Moreton Girls	450	Moreton Girls	450
		Quarry Mount	550	Quarry Mount	550	Quarry Mount	550
		Somerville	400	Somerville	400	Somerville	400
		Gorsedale	450	Gorsedale	450	Gorsedale	450
		Wallasey High	550	Wallasey High	---	Wallasey High	---
		Technical Grammar	550	Technical Grammar	550	Technical Grammar	---
		Withensfield	500	Withensfield	500	Withensfield	500
		St. George's	720	St. George's	720	St. George's	720
			4,710		4,160		3,610
	Grammar Schools	Required:- 2,000		Required:- 2,400		Required:- 2,800	
		Wallasey Grammar	625	Wallasey Grammar	625	Wallasey Grammar	625
		Technical High	550	Technical High	550	Technical High	550
		Oldershaw Schools	720	Oldershaw Schools	720	Tehhnical Grammar	550
			1,895	Wallasey High	550	Wallasey High	550
					2,445	Oldershaw	720
							2,995
LEEDS	Intermediate Schools	Required:- 2,400		Required:- 2,600		Required:- 2,600	
		Moreton Boys	540	Moreton Boys	540	Moreton Boys	540
		Moreton Girls	450	Moreton Girls	450	Moreton Girls	450
		Quarry Mount	550	Quarry Mount	550	Quarry Mount	550
		Somerville	400	Somerville	400	Somerville	400
			2390		2,390		2,390
	High Schools	Required:- 2,260		Required:-1,800		Required:- 1,450	
		Wallasey High	550	Technical Grammar	550	St. George's	720
		Technical Grammar	550	St. George's	720	Withensfield	500
		St. George's	720	Withensfield	500		
		Withensfield	500				
			2,320		1,770		1,220

Percentage opting to transfer at 13	40%		50%		60%	
LEEDS (cont'd)	Required:- 2,000		Required:- 2,400		Required:- 2,800	
Grammar Schools	Wallasey Grammar	625	Wallasey Grammar	625	Wallasey Grammar	625
	Tech. High	550	Tech. High	550	Tech. High	550
	Oldershaw Schools	720	Oldershaw Schools	720	Tech. Grammar	550
			Wallasey High	550	Oldershaw	720
					Wallasey High	540
		1,895		2,445		2,985

e) The Three Tier System

The Director also reported on the possibility of introducing a Three Tier system in which school life would be divided into three stages as follows:-

1. Primary Stage from entering school to age 9
2. Intermediate Stage from 8 or 9 to 13
3. Secondary Stage from 13 to 16 or 19.

Each stage would be uninterrupted by change of school and such an organisation would meet many of the problems involved in a change to a comprehensive system and would help to meet other problems likely to arise in future years, e.g.

(a) With the disappearance of separate Infant Schools, and a Primary School up to the age of 9, the ratio of men to women in the present primary schools could be increased as an aid to the more stable staffing of schools and a reduction of the very great wastage at present caused by marriage of women teachers.

(b) The problems of supply of teachers have caused suggestions to be made for part-time education between 5 and 6. If this were to come into force the present Infant course to 7 plus would be appreciably shortened and might well cease to be viable. In any event, many children transfer to Junior Schools to-day when continuity would serve their interests better than a change of school.

(c) Each of the three stages would be of sufficient length to give children stability and continuity of contact with teachers; each stage could be long enough to exist in its own right and to avoid control by the succeeding stage.

There would, however, be a place for liaison between heads and staffs to ensure the establishment and maintenance of standards.

(d) The final change of school, at 13, would take place when the effects of puberty, if not complete, had touched most children, and children would themselves be able to take part in the exercise of choice with a sense of responsibility which is lacking in most phpils at 11.

(e) The system would give three much more equally balanced divisions of the statutory school system, especially in the light of the raising of the school leaving age to 16 in 1970 and the indications of a possibility of full-time schooling commencing at the age of 6 with part-time schooling below that age.(1)

(f) Socially, schools would fit in reasonably with existing and comprehensive patterns in neighbouring authorities - for example, third tier schools would be able to compete in sports, athletics, chess and other activities with normally organised grammar schools and could not be considered to suffer in this direction by the loss of the 11 and 12 year olds.

It was expected that zoning up to the age of 13 could reasonably follow the pattern of existing schools, but the Director pointed out that if zoning thereafter in the third tier schools were maintained rigidly, then the disadvantages already mentioned would apply to this as to any comprehensively organised system.

(1) Up to 1968 it was expected that the school leaving age would be raised to 16 in 1970.

The London County Council tried to counteract these effects by insisting that each of its large comprehensive schools should take a proportion of its pupils from neighbouring areas outside its main catchment zone. An alternative would be to allow parents to opt in order of preference for the third tier school, but this would involve the establishment of criteria to determine cases where demands for places did not agree with the accommodation of the schools.

The Director drew the attention of Committee to the fact that progression between schools of this kind could be brought into operation gradually with the weight of pupils distributed at any one time between the three stages in the way in which they could best support them. He admitted that the basic intention would be to reduce the cost of the work on primary schools by providing accommodation to full standard for fewer pupils than is now proposed, and increasing expenditure on the third tier schools, where additional places would in any case be required to meet the raising of the school leaving age. It was felt that the general effect would be to house under better donditions all children in the Borough, and, bearing this in mind, the cost of the scheme would be only marginally greater than the 1944 Development Plan.(1) This "Three Tier Scheme" was the scheme eventually submitted by the Authority to the Department of Education and Science and approved by the Secretary of State in June, 1967. This is dealt with in greater detail in subsequent chapters.

(1)See note 1, page 24

(f) The Sixth Form College

The last scheme considered was the Sixth Form College, in which secondary education would be divided into two stages:-

a) comprehensive schools for all pupils aged 11 - 16.

b) a VI form college for all students aged 16 - 18.

In support of this, it was argued that if comprehensive schools were attended only by pupils from 11 - 16, and older pupils were educated in a VIth Form College, the number of pupils in the schools would be reduced to more manageable proportions. A fully comprehensive school with a sixth form must have a form entry sufficiently large to produce adequate numbers for the sixth form. An 11-16 comprehensive school by excluding sixth form teaching, can be a satisfactory educational unit on a 6 or 7 form entry, i.e. a total roll of 900 - 1050 pupils, the youngest being 11 years of age and the oldest 16+.

The 11 - 16 comprehensive school would still remove the process of selecting children at 11 for different types of school, and would bring together into a single community all the children of a particular age group. It would be sufficiently large to offer a diversity of courses, so that each child could follow the course best suited to his individual abilities, needs and interests. A 6/7 form entry school could be expected to provide the equivalent of 2 forms following courses to 'O' Level G.C.E. and 2 towards C.S.E. although the organisation would not be as rigid as this and each pupil would take subjects to the level appropriate for him. The problems of the vast size of a full comprehensive school would not arise, though it should not be forgotten that a school of even 1000 pupils would be very much greater than anything Wallasey had known.

The 11-16 school and Sixth Form College would overcome the disadvantages of the 7 or 8 year range school with its inherent problems of meeting the different and diverse needs of the young adolescent and of the 16 - 18 year old by providing for them as separate groups, so that school and college can each concentrate on their specialist functions to the mutual benefit of both groups.

The Sixth Form College would provide a wide variety of traditional VIth form subjects at different levels, and include some subjects not available in all schools (e.g. Russian), It would also offer other less academic courses to meet the needs of a wide range of students. At present, the 16+ age group are educated as secondary school pupils or as students in Colleges of Further Education. A VIth Form College would bring together many of this group into one educational and social unit, although some students would be more appropriately educated in Colleges of Further Education. The Sixth Form College would be attended not only by the traditional grammar school sixth form pupil but also by many others wishing to continue their education after the age of 16 in subjects and at levels other than the G.C.E. Students could be accepted for courses in liberal studies not necessarily connected with external examinations. There would need to be a careful study of the respective roles of the Sixth Form College and the College of Further Education, and there might be a danger that the College of Further Education would be relegated to the role of a part-time institution.

The staff of the 11-16 school would not teach beyond 'O' level. Teachers who are well qualified both by training and experience to teach up to this level but not beyond would be allocated to these schools and so help to alleviate the general shortage of specialist teachers. The staffs of grammar schools are usually qualified to teach at VIth Form Level. Some of these would staff the Sixth Form College, and the concentration of these teachers on advanced work would help to ease the difficulties arising from the shortage - sometimes acute - of subject specialists. In some subjects, women teachers are becoming increasingly harder to find, and men teachers are frequently replacing them in girls' grammar schools. As the Sixth Form College would be mixed, many posts would be open to either sex and men who may be reluctant to apply for posts in a girls' school would be available for posts in the college.

A Sixth Form College, replacing small separate VIth forms in a group of schools, would help to avoid the situation of teachers working with very small groups. There were at this time about 520 pupils in Wallasey sixth forms (County Schools only), and an enquiry showed that the size of sixth form teaching groups varied from 1 - 30. Teaching periods and groups of pupils were as follows:-

Size of Group	Number of Teaching Periods.
1 - 5	234
6 - 10	421
11 - 15	178
16 - 20	127
21 - 25	9
26 - 30	15

It is not possible to draw from these figures any conclusions as to the extent that the Sixth Form College could be more efficiently and economically organised than separate sixth forms. The terms "efficient" and "economical" are subjective and may be interpreted in a variety of ways. Nevertheless, the Sixth Form College should enable pupils to be taught in larger groups where necessary, although teaching in smaller groups would be possible, where justified by its greater flexibility. Apart from possible economies in man-power, such a College would also enable economies to be made in specialist accommodation and equipment.

On the other hand, the Sixth Form College would change the nature of secondary schools - especially grammar schools - since all older pupils would attend it. The"high-flyers"in the 11-16 school would be less in contact with the highly gifted academic specialist. Thus, the system might create yet another division in the teaching profession. Furthermore, the 11 - 16 school would lose the influence of the sixth former, particularly in such fields as societies, games and athletics, not to mention the less material way in which the sixth form atmosphere and character can influence the general well-being of a school. A further argument against the Sixth Form College in Wallasey is that Wallasey secondary schools are too small to become viable comprehensive 11 - 16 units. Assuming a 6 or 7 form entry to be the minimum reasonable size for such a school, only at Moreton would it be possible to provide a 6 form-entry school and this could only be done by integrating a proposed new girls' school with the existing boys' school at Moreton.

Elsewhere the only way of securing the requisite form entry would be by combining separated buildings as one school.

SUMMARY

It is clear from the consideration of these various schemes that the size and distribution of the buildings of existing secondary schools in Wallasey must strongly determine for some time the shape of organisation which could be operated in Wallasey. This applies not only to existing buildings, but to some extent to the future, since possible sites for secondary schools are so limited in an almost fully developed borough that there is little choice of location - as recently shown by the difficulty of siting St. Bede'a Roman Catholic (Aided) School, and the siting of the new Wallasey Grammar School.

Although the Education Committee obviously wanted to make the most efficient use of existing buildings, the cost of re-organisation was not a major consideration in selecting the Three Tier System. The teachers' organisations maintained that it would be the most expensive of the schemes considered; but the fact is that detailed costs of the various schemes were never prepared. Such details would have required extensive surveys which could have delayed for many months further thought of re-organisation. In any case, rough estimates seemed to show that there would be little difference in the cost of any schemes and, indeed, little difference from the cost of completing the proposals in the 1944 Development Plan. If it appeared to the teachers that the Three Tier System would incur the greatest cost, they ought to remember that children of 9 and 10 would have vastly improved accommodation in the new Middle Schools, and considerable improvements would be effected by the provision of more space in primary schools without undue expenditure.

The Doncaster and Leeds plans would appear to cause less disturbance to the present system, because of the hope that guided parental choice would result in the existing grammar and technical schools remaining selective to the extent that pupils capable of following a course to the age of 18 would opt for them. Nevertheless they have some major disadvantages, viz:-

a) there is no final means, other than by some form of selective process, by which a child can be prevented from entering an unsuitable course.

b) the system whereby children of the same age are in different types of schools is maintained.

c) Some children would be in a school for a period of only two years.

d) Under the Doncaster system, the school from which children left by parental choice to go to a school with a five year course to age 18, would undoubtedly lose by comparison. The difference between the two types of school would be no less marked than that between the components of the present tripartite system.

The Sixth Form College scheme seemed to me to be most attractive in its approach to the older student and its obvious economy in the use of specialist highly qualified teachers and specialist equipment and accommodation. The distinction between 'O' and 'A' level work appears to conform to the school of thought which believes that C.S.E. will replace 'O' Level in the not too distant future. Although there was little criticism of the VIth Form College, on paper, privately every selective school head was against it, and no doubt the staffing

problems of the secondary schools with the limitation of their social contacts with an age range limited to 11 - 16 are matters which led to this view.

Detailed consideration of the Three Tier system follows in subsequent chapters. It can already be said that the Committee noted that it shared with the VIth Form College the advantage of breaking the long 11-19 course. Its initial stage covers the first period of social adjustment and the acquisition of basic skills of reading, writing and number. Its second stage is untrammelled by the limitation of examination requirements. In other Authorities where selection at 11+ has been abolished, there had been a liberating effect on primary schools, and the Committee anticipated that the removal of examination pressures from the 9 - 13 age group would have a similar liberating effect on Middle Schools. The Third Tier Schools could take their place with other secondary schools in academic, social, and sporting activities in a way impossible for the Sixth Form College or an 11 - 16 Comprehensive School.

The Education Committee at its meeting on 2nd November 1964 resolved (a) that a three tier system of education with transfer between schools at age 9 comprehensively and age 13 on guided parental choice to schools offering different courses, be developed from the present system of county schools in Wallasey, (b) a Working Party be set up to prepare a detailed scheme and timetable of development for submission to the Department of Education and Science for approval and with a view to the first stage operating from September, 1966.

(c) The Roman Catholic School Authorities be informed of this decision and invited to co-operate in a similar development of Roman Catholic Schools.(1)

This resolution was amended in Council to read as follows:-

That (a) a three tier system of education with transfer between schools at age 9 comprehensively and age 13 on parental choice to schools offering a common basic adademic syllabus with varying specialist emphases, be developed from the present system of county schools in Wallasey (b) as an immediate first step the observations of the Secretary of State for Education and Science be obtained on whether or not he would be prepared to sanction a scheme for Wallasey based on transfers at 9 and 13 years and, if his decision was negative, a Working Party should proceed to prepare a detailed scheme and timetable of development embodying the principles contained in part (a) of this resolution but with transfer ages acceptable to the Secretary of State and within the existing law.(2) The remainder of the resolution was unaltered.

(1) Wallasey Education Committee, Minute No. 214 of 2/11/64
(2) See Education Committee Minute No. 243 of 7/12/64

V. Towards a Three Tier System, 1964-67.

Towards the end of 1964, the teachers' opposition to these proposals became more voluble. The Secretary of the Teachers' Consultative Committee wrote to the Secretary of State complaining that the plan approved by the Education Committee and Council had never been considered or discussed by teachers' organisations, because they had had no copy of it. They reiterated their unqualified opposition to it; this, despite the fact that the Director of Education had personally attended a meeting of the Consultative Committee at which he distributed copies of the plan, which he explained in detail and on which he answered questions. The Headmaster of Wallasey Grammar School, Mr.H.J.C. Oliver, who had already resigned his post, carried his opposition so far as to cause embarrassment to the Mayor and other members of the Corporation on the occasion of the School Speech Day, which resulted in all employees of the Corporation receiving a reminder about their limitations under Standing Order 58.(1) I mention the feelings of teachers here, because when the scheme subsequently submitted and approved was discussed at Education Committee, Mr.D.R.Mason, the Teacher Representative, said about the same three tier system to which he and his colleagues had been so bitterly opposed: "I am happy to bring the support of the teaching profession to these proposals".(2)

(1) Standing Order 58 - "no official servant, pensioner .... shall unless required by law, communicate to the public the proceedings of any Meeting of a Committee or Sub-Committee of the Council, or, without the authority of the General Policy Committee, communicate any information, or the contents of any document, relating to the business of the Council, or enter into any public correspondence or address any public meeting with reference to the business of the Council."
County Borough of Wallasey, Standing Orders of the Council and the Watch Committee as revised May, 1966.

(2) Personal notes kept by officers of the Department.

One of the most pleasing features of the progress of re-organisation once the decision had been made, was the consultation with teachers and their co-operation and help in the preparation of detailed schemes, a side-effect of which was the bringing together of teachers from all kinds of schools with mutual advantage.

The Director wrote to find out the Department's reactions to the proposals for transfer outside the ages permitted in the Act, and received a reply which indicated that the Secretary of State intended in due course to issue a statement of government policy on the re-organisation of secondary education together with its policy in regard to proposals under Section 1 of the Education Act of 1964 (as set out in Circular 12/64); he preferred not to anticipate his conclusions in these matters by answering Wallasey's specific questions now!

It may be noted here that the Education Committee and the Borough Council had approved on 1st August 1964 a scheme for safeguarding the interests of headteachers and teachers, particularly those holding posts of responsibility. Details of this scheme are at Appendix A.

The Working Party called for in the Resolution began its deliberations in April 1965; by this time the Education Committee had increased the teacher representation on the Working Party by the addition of two non-voting headteachers to ensure that all types of schools were represented. The Working Party's task was to develop on the framework of the Council's Resolution a system which would be not only acceptable on educational grounds and offer improvements on the present system, but one which would also be administratively practicable.

The Resolution included terms which would require more precise definition. For instance, Councillor C. Smith wanted a definition of "basic academic syllabus" and, assuming the present selective schools as the basis of the Third Tier Schools, wanted to know whether this meant that they would all provide a basic course to 'O' level with some sixth form work in each school; it would hardly be practicable to provide 'A' Level courses in all subjects in each school, and even at this early stage the idea of "varied specialist emphases" began to take shape. Allegedly the purpose of varied specialist emphases would be to give parents some difference between schools on which to exercise their choice, but Councillor C.J. Wells thought this desirable but unworkable. Mr. Pettit, headmaster of the Technical Grammar School, thought that all schools should be equal and parents given no choice at all - "the more you emphasise differences in courses, the more impossible parental choice becomes".

At the Municipal Elections in 1965, the Conservative Party had as one of its main aims "the preservation of the grammar schools". On being returned to power with a clearer majority, the Chairman of the Education Committee began to work towards this end, seemingly trying to change the existing system but to retain the privileged position of the grammar schools. By a successful Notice of Motion he had the first section of the resolution on re-organisation amended to read as follows:- "that a three tier system of education be developed from the present system of County Schools in Wallasey, with transfer between schools at age 9 comprehensively and age 13 to a range of schools offering a variety of courses and levels of study to meet the varying

aptitudes and abilities of children, retaining the grammar schools, avoiding zoning, and increasing the element of parental choice".(1) At a meeting of the Working Party held on 20th December, 1965, the Chairman of the Education Committee, enlarged on his ideas on re-organisation. There were, he said, five existing selective schools; one of them, Wallasey Grammar School, was soon to move to a new building, so he could talk in terms of six buildings. He conceived of the Third Tier Schools providing different kinds of courses on a two-layer basis - the existing Grammar Schools (which he defined as Wallasey Grammar School, Wallasey High School and the Oldershaw Schools) providing one type of course; and the existing Technical Schools (Technical Grammar and Technical High School), plus the sixth school providing what he called "technical" courses. This would preserve the Grammar schools; he went on to say that"the town would be very unhappy if the grammar schools were taken away or changed out of all recognition". He thought of 50% of the children going to the Grammar Schools and the remaining 50% to the Technical Schools. This division presupposed some differences between academic levels in these schools; parents would have a choice between two types of school, and it is possible that there would be more options for the Grammar Schools than places available. This, he said, would leave "problems to be solved, but there would be an advantage on the school side" (presumably in choosing from the total of parents' choices a number equivalent to the accommodation available). Throughout the long negotiations on re-organisation, the Chairman always laid emphasis on parental choice;

(1) See Education Committee Minutes No. 88, 12/7/65.

at this stage he was saying that in order to exercise effective choice, parents should be fully informed - even by making school records available to them. He expected that parents would be advised by heads of both Second Tier and Third Tier Schools and that selection would not be nearly as rigid as at 11+. The parents' choice he envisaged was largely between single sex or mixed schools, and geographical position rather than between the two layers of schools - but there would be a wide degree of flexibility. With sixth forms in all schools and the need to satisfy demands for parity, the quality and level of work in these schools would vary as in the LeicestershireScheme or in the Doncaster Plan. Sixth forms would be designed for a much wider range of ability and he suggested the transfer to these schools of courses at the College of Further Education then designed for secondary non-selective leavers at the age of 15. In the answers to questions which followed, it became clear that the Chairman did not envisage a straight 50-50 division of ability between these schools - there would have to be considerable overlap. The Chairman thought that at least the top 20% of the ability range would be in the grammar schools and the bottom 20% would go to the Technical Schools. It seemed to me that he had not seriously considered "sixth forms in all schools" in this context. It was obvious at this meeting that the Chairman's suggested scheme - subsequently known as the "Hutty Plan" - was not popular with the teacher representatives, especially with the heads of the technical schools, who feared that the second-layer schools would become "rump" schools for the least able and the least interested.

The teachers began to work away at the theme of parity, and it would be a fair summary to say that at this meeting it was generally agreed that each third tier school should have a sixth form and provide courses for the full ability range, although the level of ability need not be distributed between the third tier schools evenly. The meeting had devolved into a discussion on third tier schools, and in order to prevent undue emphasis on this aspect, it was decided that the teachers' representatives on the Working Party should form (with whatever co-opted members they felt necessary) three separate working parties, one for each tier; these should consist of teachers only, and "elected members" were specifically excluded. Meetings of these three sections took place between January and June 1966, and details of their recommendations are incorporated in the chapters which deal with first, second and third tier schools. The full working party met for the last time on 5th July 1966, and decided that the reports of the various sub-committees should be submitted to the Education Committee for consideration. When the Education Committee met on 18th July, there was all-party agreement to the proposals for re-organisation and the Borough Council at its meeting on 28th July approved the scheme, a copy of which is at Appendix B. Introducing the Scheme in Council, the Chairman of the Education Committee claimed that it gave improvements at all stages of education, and if it appeared that one stage was given more at first, this was solely because the programme of change demanded it. He promised that the Third Tier Schools would have their material surroundings brought up to date first "and if the Secretary of State cannot approve the proposed expenditure, then he must be told that the scheme must be deferred until he can".

(In the event, this did not prove to be necessary, though there were times when it seemed that shortage of money would cause the scheme to be shelved; it was largely due to the prodigious efforts of Alderman Hutty and the Director of Education that the almost £900,000 required was forthcoming.) The Chairman was adamant that the scheme must start in appropriate accommodation - "there is sufficient evidence" he said, "in the country generally, of schemes which will do no good, but harm, because they do not have the requisite preliminary essentials of the right accommodation".

The second tier schools would give to 10 and 11 year old children much better accommodation than their present schools, and the primary schools, by the early reduction of numbers on roll, would gain the much valued improvement of more space. He claimed that the expenditure to be incurred would be little greater than that involved in executing the Authority's Development Plan - though expansion would have to be much more rapid than in the recent past, to meet the timetable, the key date in which was 1971 - the date when the raising of the school leaving age would become effective. Alderman Hutty's election platform had been to save the grammar schools - but on this occasion he emphasised that whilst the grammar schools would continue to provide the type of education for able pupils which they had done in the past, "the schools will change considerably, offering a much wider range of courses to a full range of ability of children. Parents must not be led to believe that all children in these Third Tier Schools will receive a grammar school education leading to academic studies at a high level".

He pointed to some of the difficulties which lay ahead - more travelling for many children (though in a borough the size of Wallasey this is hardly significant) more children requiring school meals, the need to ensure the maintenance of standards in the absence of such measuring rods as those provided by the 11+ procedure, and the need for a fuller and more informative system of documentation. He said that the scheme involved change in every school in the Borough. This was thought by some to be a disadvantage - "but if the new is to be better than the old - and this would be the only sound reason for change - it is well that the whole of the service should examine its purpose anew, as this scheme will demand".

The scheme was submitted for the consideratinn of the Secretary of State for Education and Science on 12th August, 1966, and was finally approved on 7th June, 1967. The submission contained a tribute to the co-operation of the teachers and said "The Committee are pleased in putting forward these proposals to have received the support of the Consultative Committee of the Wallasey Teachers' Organisations whose members have been actively concerned in the deliberations of the Working Party". In December 1966, the Secretary of the Consultative Committee, and two of his colleagues, saw the Director to draw his attention to what they claimed was a discrepancy between the scheme which they supported and the scheme as submitted.

The scheme recommended by the Working Party had provided for all children at 13+ to be divided into "three broad bands" of ability, and for each of the Third Tier Schools to receive a proportion of children from each broad band. They alleged that this system had been amended in Education Committee by the deletion of all mention of the three broad

bands, and whilst they did not dispute the right of the Education Committee to make the alteration, they made it clear that it was not done with their support.

The Secretary, Mr. Trapnell, wrote to the Secretary of State for Education and Science, claiming that without the three broad bands "the Technical Grammar School and Technical High School ...will develop into ... rump schools with intakes predominantly in the lower 50% of the ability range".(1) He pointed out that the Consultative Committee had always opposed any scheme which could lead to the establishment of rump schools, and particularly welcomed the note in the informal observations of officers of the Department which said that "there should be a common procedure for the allocation of pupils to Third Tier Schools, and no school should receive a privileged quota of the ablest pupils". The Consultative Committee hoped that proper safeguards would be incorporated in the plan to ensure that "a preponderance of the ablest pupils is not allocated to particular Third Tier Schools".

The teachers suspected that Conservative support for this scheme was merely a cloak for their real intention of preserving the status of Wallasey Grammar School. The answer is that the purpose of the scheme of allocation was to give maximum effect to parental choice, and this is not necessarily compatible with identically balanced schools over the whole ability range. The Committee intended that there would be pupils covering the whole range of ability in each school, but did not pretend that there would be identical distribution of ability between all schools.

(1) E.B. Trapnell - letter to Secretary of State dated 16th January, 1967.

The scheme approved by Education Committee would probably achieve a more even distribution of ability than would a simple geographical distribution of schools serving discrete areas of the Borough. The Director considered that the possibility of any single school recruiting the majority of its intake from a single ability group was unlikely, and in any case could be dealt with by a later amendment.(1) Commenting on the Authority's scheme in his letter of approval in June 1967, the Secretary of State said that he considered the arrangements acceptable, but hoped that the Authority would keep them under review "to make sure that they do not impair the equality between third tier schools which is esential to the development of a truly comprehensive system". In a letter to the Consultative Committee the Secretary of State said "The Authority's allocation procedure does not in itself discriminate in favour of particular third tier schools. He would, he said, deplore the emergence of "rump schools" but he did not regard this as a likely consequence of the present plan; he thought that the procedure adopted by the Authority would have much the same effect as broad banding in moderating potential differences between schools.

The approval had been so long coming that it was by this time doubted whether the plan could be implemented, as originally intended, from 1968. To enable the interim scheme to come into operation, there would have to be increases in third tier buildings to allow more than 1200 additional pupils to be accommodated by 1970 - and at least 240 of these additional places would be required for the first year of operation; moreover, it was not simply a matter of adequate accommodation, but suitable accommodation - especially in practical subjects.

(1) Director of Education - letter to Permanent Under Secretary 23rd March, 1967.

The Committee had always maintained that in re-organisation, no pupil should be denied any opportunity which he would have had under the existing organisation, and that physical and material conditions at all stages of the change should be at least as good the the particular age group concerned as they are under the present organisation. Thus, pupils might want to transfer from Moreton Secondary School for Boys - with quite splendid metalwork facilities - to Oldershaw Grammar School, where metalwork had never featured on the timetable and where practical facilities for boys were limited to one outmoded woodwork room. The Director told the Committee that it was not, in his view, possible to adhere to the timetable set out in the Submission. "First and second tier schools could, by 1968, fulfil the demands which the scheme would have made upon them, but it would be quite unrealistic to assumethat the number of places required at Third Tier Schools could be available by this date"(1) The Committee considered three ways of putting the scheme into operation:-

a) to defer for one year the programme as submitted to the Department of Education and Science - the same programme would be carried out but would be spread over the year 1969/71 instead of as originally proposed 1968/70.

b) to adjust the timetable to enable a start to be made in 1969 but to speed up the process so that the interim scheme could be fully operational by 1970 as originally planned.

(1) Director of Education: Memorandum to Education Committee 30.6.67

Both of these possibilities would involve the retention of a form of allocation of pupils of the 11+ age group to existing secondary schools in 1968; the idea had already taken root in parents' minds - nurtured by some politicians - that the 11+ procedure had been held for the last time, and it would be very difficult in the time available to devise a system different from the traditional classification procedure which would be acceptable to the Committee, the parents, and have the confidence of teachers. A further alternative scheme to permit a 1968 start and avoid the need to allocate to secondary schools at 11+ would be possible if in 1968 the 11+ age group was transferred comprehensively to second tier schools, but the 13+ age group remained for the first year of operation in the existing secondary non-selective schools. There was in fact sufficient accommodation in the non-selective buildings to provide for the whole of the 11+ age group, and it was suggested by the Director that any pressure would be eased by the transfer from these schools of those pupils remaining for a fifth year, to complete that year at a third tier school.

Administratively, a deferment for one year would offer considerable advantages; it would give greater opportunity to advise parents and the general public, to consult teachers in detail, and to prepare generally for this change. It would, however, pose the problem of some form of classification for 1968. The need to abolish selection immediately won the day, and it was decided to seek the views of teachers on this proposal. The general feeling of the teachers was that it would be wrong to transfer pupils from the secondary non-selective schools to third tier schools at the beginning of the fifth year, when they would be in the middle of a two-year course leading, in most cases, to C.S.E.,

and it was suggested that the Committee should examine the possibility of leaving the 15 year olds to complete their courses in their present schools, but that instead an option should be given to the 14 year olds to transfer to third tier schools for a two year course.(1). This would avoid the interruption of a two year course leading to C.S.E.: it would give as much relief - or probably more - to the second tier schools, to enable them to accommodate the whole of the 11+ age group (the number of fifth formers to be transferred would have been about 150; the number of fourth formers estimated as at least 300 and in fact turned out to be 328) and would have the advantage that throughout the whole of the scheme no child would be transferred to a school for less than two years.

The Director recommended the acceptance of this amendment because it was a thoroughly sound change - one of the few - and the acceptance of this suggestion would involve the teachers in partnership with the Committee in the operation. At its meeting on 11th July, the Education Committee approved this variation in the scheme, which was subsequently approved by the Borough Council on 27th July, 1967. A letter had been sent on 20th July - just before the end of term - to the parents of every county school child in Wallasey, informing them of the changes which would come into force in 1968; but although publically the road was established for implementation, the way ahead was not yet clear.

(1) Miss D.W.E. Slade, Secretary of Joint Four - letter to Director of Education - 7.8.67.

In his letter of 7th June conveying approval for the Committee's scheme, the Secretary of State had said that "having regard to what is said in paragraph 24 of Circular 10/65, such building work as cannot be carried out within programme allocations already made will need to be considered in the light of current programme priorities". He could not promise the early approval of any additional work required solely to enable re-organisation to take place at a particular date. "Whilst, therefore, the Authority's building proposals will be considered as sympathetically as possible, it will be necessary to defer a decision on the timing of re-organisation until the necessary building work has actually been approved". It was already known that none of the Authority's proposals for the 1968/69 building programme had been approved - and worse was to follow when it was announced that the Authority's allocation for the 1969/70 programme was nil. It had originally been estimated that the gap between the Authority's resources and requirements was in the order of £350,000. On the one hand, the Authority looked again at its proposals, cutting expenditure wherever possible, and on the other hand both the Director and Alderman Hutty made trips to Curzon Street to see anyone who might be in a position to help. It is only fair that tribute should be paid to the officials of the Department of Education and Science - who were obviously keen to help the Authority to discover a way of implementing the scheme without delay; by prodigious efforts on the part of Alderman Hutty, and by the fortuitous announcement of what was called a "Supplementary Minor Works Programme" - prompted one feels by reasons not solely educational, (The real purpose was to relieve unemployment on Merseyside) the General Policy Committee finally gave the go ahead on 18th September 1967.

The deferment of the raising of the school leaving age and cuts in government expenditure announced in 1968 were to cause further revisions.

VI. First Tier Schools.

The scheme finally approved by the Secretary of State provided for a phased development of the Three Tier System. The first change in the existing primary schools would not come about until September 1970, by which time Middle Schools would cater for children from 10-13. The establishment of schools for children 9-13 would not be achieved until some time in the mid 1970's. It was agreed that until this time primary schools should continue to be organised as at present, in infant and junior departments. There was, of course, the benefit of being freed from the pressures of the 11+ tests - held for the last time in 1967 - so that, spurred on by Plowden and in the absence of any reorganisation pressure, primary schools were able to continue with their main task - education. The First Tier Sub-Committee met only three times. It was evident initially that the teachers would have preferred consideration to be given to alternative forms of organisation - they considered that all the educational advantages of the proposed system could be gained from a system of education based on the age range 5-8, 8-12, 12-16 without the upheaval that would be caused by the 5-9, 9-13 system. The teachers ignored the fact that upheaval is not always disastrous - the system they preferred would merely have resulted in the perpetuation of the status quo, whereas the 5-9, 9-13 system involved new concepts. In any case, the teachers' proposals did not make the best use of existing buildings. However, the teachers on the Working Party accepted the brief given to them - to advise on the development of a system of First Tier Schools for childred aged 5-9.

Subject to the reservation already mentioned, they considered that these schools could provide a desirable extension of infant method - an extension particularly desirable in the case of the slow learner; at the same time the school would offer to the more able child the stimulus of a junior school approach. The teachers were strongly of the opinion that the ideal size for such a school would be 2 form entry, i.e. ten classes. They considered that one form entry schools should be accepted only in exceptional circumstances, since they were too small administratively, economically, and educationally. The period since the war had seen the development of a number of one form entry infant schools, apparently with the teachers' blessing, since there were never any objections from them. They thought that anything greater than 2 form entry was completely unacceptable, because a five year-old child would be plunged into too large a community. Eventually, the sub-committee agreed that it was not necessary for all schools to be organised in exact multiples of 5, and accepted a degree of flexibility which could result in First Tier Schools containing seven to ten classes. The Director produced a schedule of accommodation based on 36 pupils per class - and the sub-committee, whilst accepting this, reminded him that the aim of 30 per class should not be overlooked.(1) The sub-committee felt that allowing for specialisms there should be no better staffing ratio in second tier schools than in first tier schools and any readjustment in size of classes in the 5 - 13 age group should be in favour of the younger children.

(1)The 30-per-class in primary schools theme, so much favoured by the teachers, is in my opinion unrealistic (see page 101 below) and is not necessarily even desirable.

Accommodation based on one classroom per class would not be adequate to provide a full range of opportunity in this Tier, and the final schedule of accommodation should take account of the desirability of having at least one extra teaching space per school, proper provisinn for headteacher and staff, and the provision of accommodation for those activities which at present interfere with the work of the teacher in the classroom (e.g. medical inspections). The need to keep the size of first tier schools to roughly ten classes led to some difficulties in the effective use of existing buildings. To take one example, Birket Junior School at present accommodates 681 pupils, and the adjacent Birket Infant School provides for another 235. If the 2 form entry limit were applied, these two schools could provide for only 720 pupils between them, and many places would be wasted. Birket is a post-war school; the problem is much worse in older establishments - such as Egremont - where at present one building houses the junior school on the top floor and the infant school on the ground floor. The thought of two schools on one site presents difficulties (how to decide which children go to which school and how the development of one prestige school can be avoided?), but the thought of two schools in one building is even worse! The final schedule in the scheme approved by the Secretary of State provides for first tier schools ranging in size from five classes to fourteen classes.

Another matter which caused the sub-committee some concern was whether sufficient men teachers, given a free choice, would be willing to teach in 5 - 9 schools.

It was pointed out that many of the junior school male teachers in the Borough, recruited after the Emergency Training Scheme, are now 40+; the majority are experienced in teaching children from 9 - 11, and would wish to continue to do so - if not in this Authority, then in another. It was felt that when teachers whose experience had been in a 5 - 9 school apply for promotion in another Authority, they may be at a disadvantage. The Sub-committee thought that there ought to be some men teachers in 5 - 9 schools - probably three men in a ten class school, and one man in a five class school - but that it would be necessary to pay inducement allowances to persuade men to teach in them. In schools of this size, promotion prospects would be limited, and this in turn might have an adverse effect upon recruitment.

VII. Middle Schools.

"The advances made in the last decade by children of all ability levels in those primary schools which have come to rely more on the exploitation of the pupils' indivudual experience and less on the inculcation of subject knowledge justifies the extension of this approach in intermediate schools up to the age of 13+ - and justifies Wallasey's choice of 9-13 rather than 8-12 on the grounds that it prolongs the primary experience for as long as possible".(1) Plowden on no very certain grounds came down in favour of Middle Schools 8-12. However, in Wallasey it was considered that extending infant schools to 8 and junior schools to 12 would result in no rethinking but merely in a prolongation of the present approach. Middle Schools 9-13 would involve changes in every school in the Borough and, because of this, the Middle School would not be a pale imitation of any other school, but a completely new entity. The Middle School would exist as a school in its own right, free of the image of the secondary school and because of the absence of any selective procedure at 13, free to serve as an educational laboratory for the early adolescent. It would serve as a transitional phase between the paternalism of the primary school and the varied departmentalised atmosphere of the secondary school. S.C.Mason, the Director of Education for Leicestershire, speaking to a Middle School Conference at Woolley Hall, West Riding, in February 1967, described 9-13 as "incomparably better than Plowden".

(1) K.A.Rowland - "Avoiding Fragmentation" - The Teacher, 27th January 1967.

Moreover, in Wallasey, it fitted the buildings better. The sub-committee on second tier schools at first agreed that, to provide for the full ability range, a 5 form entry school would be necessary; and assuming an age group of 1200 in classes of 35, it would be necessary to have 7 x 5 form entry schools - which could conveniently be based on the existing secondary modern schools. The Department of Education and Science said that the size of Middle Schools for children 9 - 13 was the principal point of interest - "we have no experience to enlighten our views on this". They suggested a 4 form entry would be more likely than a 5 form entry school to achieve the nearest balance of the needs of the oldest and youngest pupils - but recognised also the need to achieve an even geographical distribution of second tier schools.(1) The First Tier sub-committee welcomed these views and came down in favour of 4 form entry as the maximum size of a second tier school. "On educational, social and emotional grounds, the Sub-committee would regret a system which involved nine year old children in moving from a two form entry to a five form entry school"(2) The Second Tier Sub-committee accepted this point, and decidéd that although 5 form entry schools would be necessary in the first phase of re-organisation (10-13 by 1970), the ultimate aim should be to establish second tier schools with a maximum of 4 form entry.

(1) Informal Observations of Officers of the Department of Education and Science in letter to Director of Education, dated 20th April, 1966.

(2) Minutes of First Tier Sub-committee dated 28th June, 1966.

(3) Minutes of Second Tier Sub-committee dated 29th June, 1966.

It was agreed that these schools should be accommodated in the buildings at present used by the secondary non-selective schools. It was I think, this decision which held up approval of the plan for so long - because the Department had assumed that second tier schools would be based on existing primary schools, and thought that to base them on non-seldctive secondary schools was uneconomical. Wallasey considered that existing primary schools should not be used as second tier schools, because the removal of one primary school from the First Tier structure would endanger the neighbourhood system, and it would be an error of judgement to provide for children in different areas in schools where facilities were appreciably different - for instance, existing primary schools have no gymnasia; many have no playing fields; and few have facilities for practical subjects. In any case, the expected increase in primary school population would take up any apparent surplus in primary school accommodation within five years. The Wallasey scheme provided for re-organisation in two stages; by 1970 there should be established Middle Schools for children aged 10 - 13; the extension to 9 - 13 would follow, as finance permitted, in the mid-1970s. Second Tier Schools for the whole 10 - 13 age groups would need to accommodate 3600 (a 37 form entry) and, at approximately 32 pupils per class, the Sub-committee recommended the following distribution:-

Gorsedale	5 f.e.	480 pupils
Moreton Boys	5 f.e.	480 pupils
Moreton Girls	4 f.e.	384 pupils
Quarry Mount	5 f.e.	480 pupils
St. Georges I	4 f.e.	384 pupils
St. Georges II	4 f.e.	384 pupils
Somerville	5 f.e.	480 pupils
Withensfield	5 f.e.	480 pupils

In the final submission these were adjusted to read as follows:-

	Present accommodation in classes of 30	(Arranged in Classes of 32)	
		INTERIM (10-13)	FINAL (9-13)
Gorsedale	450	5 f.e. = 480	4 f.e. = 512
Somerville	450	5 f.e. = 480	4 f.e. = 512
Moreton Boys	450	5 f.e. = 480	4 f.e. = 512
Quarry Mount	550	5 f.e. = 480	4 f.e. = 512
Withensfield (W.G.S)	550	5 f.e. = 480	4 f.e. = 512
Moreton Girls	450	5 f.e. = 480	4 f.e. = 512
St. Georges I	700	4 f.e. = 384	4 f.e. = 512
St. Georges II		4 f.e. = 384	4 f.e. = 512
		3648	4096
		(3600 places required)	(4800 places required)

It is interesting to note that in September 1968, despite a major rezoning scheme, the actual admissions to the first years of all-ability Middle Schools were as follows:-

School	Admissions	No. on Roll	Form Entry
Gorsedale	120	366	4
Moreton Boys	164	454	5
Moreton Girls	165	445	5
Quarry Mount	169	429	5
St. Georges	275	685	9
Somerville	155	361	5
Withensfield	178	433	5

The proposal to split St. George's into two schools arose because St. Georges - with accommodation for 700 pupils - would be too large for a single Middle School. Nevertheless, it would have the added advantage of creating at an early stage an additional headship, and it was hoped that the Committee would give a lead to the purpose of Missle Schools by appointing a primary school Headmaster to this headship. St. George's is already in two separate buildings on the same site; it serves two widely differing social areas - the "executive class" Wallasey Village on the one side, feeding from the much favoured St. George's Junior School - and a large council estate on the other, feeding from less fashionable establishments such as Birket Junior School. It would be necessary to devise machinery to prevent the establishment of one school for children from Leasowe Estate and another for children from Wallasey Village. The decision to make two schools at St. George's was not welcomed by the headmaster, and later it was decided not to effect the split uhtil September 1970 when other schools in the town would become co-educational and when another revision of zoning would make changes necessary all over the Borough. The nction of appointing a primary head to a middle school headship early in the day was conveniently forgotten and is referred to in my concluding chapter. The Sub-committee also recommended that the proposed use of buildings in the Moreton area should be reviewed; it obviously had in mind the fact that Moreton Girls' School in Upton Road compared unfavourably with other secondary modern schools, and an examination of the provision in Moreton showed that it would be possible to accommodate all the first tier pupils without using Lingham Junior School.

It was therefore decided that Lingham Junior - with the addition of a suitable Conversion Unit to provide a gymnasium and whatever practical facilities were considered necessary, should become a second tier school. Moreton Church of England School, which had long been unfit for use as any sort of school, would be transferred to the buildings in Upton Road, probably with aided status; and the Church of England School in Hoylake Road would cease to exist. (The improvements proposed for Moreton C. of E. did not please everyone - there were those who felt that because of its limited accommodation, the school had long been a "selective primary school" - selecting not on grounds of religion but on social status - and that an enlargement of the school in Upton Road would lead to even greater creaming.

The Sub-committee recommended that Middle Schools should provide a broad general education - there should be a common core of a wide range of subjects, and at their meeting on 19th January 1966 said "there should be no specialisation by pupils". After the scheme had been submitted, there was a series of meetings of the second tier panel which considered these matters in detail - at this stage I shall report briefly on the Working Party opinions. The N.U.T. in its evidence to the Plowden Committee had recommended an extension of primary school method and there would obviously have to be some combination of the class-teacher approach of the junior school with specialised subject teaching of the secondary school.

Junior School headteachers on the sub-committee drew attention to the dangers of specialisation with junior school children.

The sub-committee thought that one foreign language should be introduced at the very beginning of Middle School courses and that that language should be French (any other languages need not be introduced until the Third Tier stage). The sub-committee recommended that "craft" in these schools should be "pre-craft" leading to "light craft" - much of the sophisticated machinery in non-selective schools could be dispensed with, although some should be kept so that children could be introduced to it at an appropriate stage. The requirement for craft was a number of general rooms, useful for a variety of crafts, rather than specialist workshops. The sub-committee also recommended that consideration should be given to the kind of physical education done by both boys and girls - and the stage at which separation of the sexes should take place. In the full meeting of the Working Party (8th March, 1966) ex-Councillor Dann wondered whether the Middle School would provide enough academic pressure for the abler child. Mr. Pettit, the Headmaster of the Technical Grammar School, thought that there was very real advantage - even for the abler child - in the relief frompressure of external examinations which the Middle School would provide, avoiding as it would the present division into "crammed and damned," deferring for another two years the pressure at present exerted in selective schools.

Mr. Dann, whilst admitting that many junior school teachers were good, thought that their specialist knowledge must be limited - and, if the junior school approach were extended, this might result in, say, science being taught in the Middle School by someone with only very limited scientific training.

Some members obviously felt that the Middle School might develop into an aimless four year spell, and the Chairman suggested that the second tier report "required expansion". At its next meeting, the Sub-committee discussed four questions:-

1. What steps will be taken to ensure that the academically able child is suitably extended? The Sub-committee considered this to be a matter of internal organisation - teachers have always considered it their function to help a child to develop his potential to the fullest possible extent and there is no reason to suppose that this situation will alter. Furthermore, there would be, in each school, sufficient able children to ensure a group demand - there might be little formal streaming, but there would probably be some setting towards the end of the course.(1)

2. How will the specialism of the secondary school be married to the junior school approach? The sub-committee did not envisage any rigid horizontal division - or the imposition of a specialist teacher system throughout Middle Schools. There would, in fact have to be a graduated change; the balance of staff should enable the junior and secondary elements to be adequately represented. In any case, the sub-committee observed that in the early stages of existing secondary schools there is no complete specialisation, and the tendency would seem to be for specialism still to be the exception. Specialist teachers would be used most carefully and in a very limited fashion, increasing towards the upper age range.(2)

(1) Minutes of Second Tier Sub-committee, 29th June, 1966.
(2) Ibid.

3. What steps will be taken to ensure that the second tier school does not become an aimless four year spell? The Sub-committee envisaged the setting up of a means of co-ordination between the various stages to discuss this kind of problem. Furthermore it was pointed out that transfer from first to second tier school would co-incide with an age of natural curiouity, and this in itself would give added impetus to learning.

4. Can a wider curriculum be introduced in the second tier school? The Sub-committee considered this to be one of the strongest reasons in favour of the three tier scheme - a wider curriculum could be introduced by the extension of the junior school approach and the avoidance of narrow subject barriers. "In these schools all children will have an opportunity for a full range of experience, covering cultural, creative and craft activities as well as the basic subjects".(1) High sounding sentiments, these platitudes of the pedagogues! And how speedily given the rubber-stamp of Education Committee approval! But how different in the implementation.

The issue of specialisation versus the junior school approach soon sorted out the hidebound conservatives from those willing to change, yet, what is more disappointing - this Middle School concept - the most exciting feature of the whole plan - quickly became that part of the scheme which could most easily be neglected. The Third Tier Schools HAD to be expanded to take in increased numbers in 1968 and 1969 - and vast changes were planned in these schools to provide for the varied ability range. But, up to 1970, the second tier schools could accommodate the whole of the age range 10 - 13 without addition and little special preparation was made for the varied ability range in these schools.

(1) Ibid.

Two schools had £50,000 each included in the estimates. One was the old Wallasey Grammar School in Withens Lane; but it had always been intended that Withensfield School should move into this when the new grammar school was completed. The Development Plan had provided £100,,000 for necessary improvements to that building to turn it into a non-selective school; the other £50,000 was intended to provide a Conversion Unit at Lingham - a Junior school which would require improved facilities to bring it up to the standard of other premises being used as Middle Schools. Two hundred yards away from Lingham, there is a primary school called Barnston Lane - a wooden structure erected thirty five years ago as a temporary school for five years.

In the original plans for Re-organisation, Barnston Lane would have disappeared and this temporary building would at long last cease to be used as a school. In 1967, fire destroyed most of the premises. However, the Director saw in this an opportunity to turn what little remained into the Lingham Conversion Unit. The estimates included only £30,000 for all the remaining Middle Schools - a sum hardly adequate to permit the conversion of toilet accommodation for co-education, let alone any educational improvements. Moreover, the timetable of development to a 10-13 stage made it almost inevitable that these schools would be staffed largely by secondary school teachers, and, far from leading to an extension of junior school method, they would in fact become secondary orientated from the beginning. The new timetable provided that in September 1968, all children of 11 would transfer to Middle Schools - children already regarded by teachers as "Secondary children".

In the same year, 14+ children could transfer to a third tier school - but specialist secondary staff would have to be kept in second tier schools, not only to cater for the 14+ children who did not want to transfer, but also for the 15+ children who still had one year to complete for C.S.E. So long as these teachers remained, there would be little room for primary teachers: and in any case, since the primary schools remained virtually unaltered until 1970 when they would lose an age group, there would be no opportunity to transfer primary teachers without impairing primary school staffing.

Miss C. Wilkinson, the headmistress of Somerville Secondary School - and designated as headteacher of the 1968 Somerville Middle School - conducted a survey of the opinions of primary school teachers on questions of organising and teaching of nine year old and ten year old children, and found that "there is complete unanimity that children of this age should be taught in classes by their own class teacher". She found a general admission that some degree of exchange of subjects between teachers is necessary, notably because a number of good class teachers cannot teach Music effectively. Exchange is also general to ensure that girls are taught Needlework by a capable woman teacher. Occasionally there is provision that children should have Physical Education with a younger teacher rather than with a teacher who either because of age or other disability would find Physical Education a real difficulty - but she found that "all headteachers are agreed that these exceptions must be kept to the absolute minimum, and that ideally, there should be no exception at all".

It was held that younger children cannot cope with a number of teachers and need one person to whom they "belong" - and that the timetable needs to be kept fluid. Divisions between subjects should not be rigid, so that a situation where interesting work has to be brought to an abrupt end because "the bell has gone" is avoided.

Miss Wilkinson found the headteachers more cautious in their approach to non-streaming. There was general agreement that this practice had much to commend it - that for social reasons it is desirable and that it leads to better discipline and better tone; there was evidence to show that neither are the cleverest children held back not are the least able neglected - but headteachers were alive to the difficulties of this type of organisation. They point to the wide differences of ability within one class and insist that "reasonably sized classes are an absolute requirement for a non-streamed school." She also said "it is obvious that in the present tri-partite system children pass at 11 years of age not only to a different school but to a very different type of organisation and, except for the very dull stream, a set-up of complete specialisation involving generally a "one-teacher, one-subject" plan. While I cannot think that this has been very greatly injurious to many of them, when the children are within one school such a break should be avoided". Miss Wilkinson called for "half-way measures", and suggested what she called "the grouped subjects plan" - in which one teacher would be responsible for say (a) Maths and Science, (b) English, History, Geography and Religious Instruction (c) two or more of Physical Education, Music, Art, Light Craft, Needlework. Under this plan children would meet only four teachers instead of about twelve, and each teacher would be with the children for a proportionately greater amount

of time than is the case with pure specialisation and would thus know the children better; the timetable could be kept fluid within fairly wide bounds, and teachers could be relieved of teaching those subjects for which they really have no aptitude, interest or training.(1)

The Director had suggested that the staff ratio in the Middle School would represent the mean of existing ratios in primary and secondary schools, so that in a four form entry school, with classes of 32 children, (again, the mean between average class sizes in primary and secondary schools), there would be sixteen classes and eighteen teachers. Miss Wilkinson thought that girls should begin Housecraft at 11+ and that boys should begin Woodwork at the same age - the typical secondary school approach; and furthermore that these subjects require half classes (whether this is so is questionable) so that at any one time 17 teachers would be teaching, leaving only one teacher to cover staff absences, free time for teachers, supervision of expeditions, etc. The staff/pupil ratio in Middle Schools became a source of great concern to the teachers. It should be borne in mind that the Authority's quota of full time teachers would not be increased because of Re-organisation, and that more teachers in the Middle School would have to mean less teachers elsewhere. Moreover, 28.4:1 represents a considerable improvement for children in the primary age group.
Mr. Sims, the headmaster of Poulton Junior School, led the argument for non-streaming. "Schools of this kind require the least possible fragmentation, and much of the work will be on a class basis; it is essential that children of this age should feel that they belong somewhere and have an anchorage, this being their classroom and their own particular teacher."

(1) Miss C.M. Wilkinson - paper read to Second Tier Panel in November 1966.

Fragmentation by streaming should also be avoided. He admitted that there must be some specialisation, as there is now for Physical Education and Needlework, and that in the fourth year of the Middle School specialisation should feature much more prominently so that children of 13 would be prepared for the kind of thing they could expect in the Third Tier School.

Mr. Pettit - a grammar school head - speaking to me on this subject said that the Middle School should be a place for the extension of class teaching - but that it was a link between the first tierand the third tier school. He expected that in the first year, it would be as much like the school from which the children had come as possible; and, in the last year, it would not be very different from the Third Tier School. Whilst he was absolutely convinced of the merits of non-streaming, he pointed out that in his own school the I.Q. range is limited and non-streaming for a 75-150 ability range would be a very different matter. Most of the Third Tier heads seemed to be thinking along the lines of three broad bands, and Mr. Pettit felt that this division ought to be arrived at before children reach the Third Tier School. In the Third Tier School there is no time for a diagnostic year, and parents need to know something of their child's ability so that they can make an informed choice at 13+. The issue of streaming/non-streaming ought to be a matter for the discretion of the individual head teacher; the primary school heads are the only ones so far dealing with an all-abilityage-group; some of the sedondary non-selective schools have limited non streaming, and one - Quarry Mount - has non-streaming throughout.

The new headmaster of Wallasey Grammar School has introduced non-streaming in the first three years of the school - but all these deal with limited ability ranges.

The Wallasey Middle Schools are to be based on existing secondary non-selective schools - an advantage in that these schools generally are in superior accommodation; but a disadvantage in that because of the transitional period when these schools would function both as all-ability schools (in the early years) and secondary non-selective schools (at the senior end), they would tend to be staffed by the incumbents - i.e. secondary teachers.

The disadvantage was apparent at subject panel meetings, where demands for specialist teachers and specialist accommodation came from secondary school teachers. Indeed it was apparent that many imagined that in the Middle School they would continue to teach the 11 - 13 year old children with whom they already had experience, and there were some who could not see how an effective Middle School education need not be fastened to the academic requirements of the third tier - a far cry from what was described in one of my early papers for the Second Tier Study Group - a school "not geared to academic examinations, linked with but not fettered by the Third Tier Schools, so that the Second Tier provides a wide, varied, free exciting education with the 13 year old child ready proceed at the next Tier in any special direction with depth".(1)

(1) Working Paper prepared by me, 1967, for discussion by future Second Tier headteachers.

I had raised a number of points - whether there would be in the Middle School any choice of subjects by pupils and had suggested that whilst headteachers were not likely to welcome subject choice, some would want individual choice within subject groups, and there should be a generous supply of time in which activities of choice can be exercised - including those of a practical nature such as modelling, painting, needlecraft, and the study of topics of interest to the individual child.

I threw in a number of provocative comments:

Domestic Science:- "I would not make any distinction between Art, Craft and Needlecraft - this barrier is very artificial and the 9 - 13 school could well do without it. I personally deplore any separation of the sexes - it certainly should not happen in practical work".

Science:- "I strongly deplore any differentation into separate sciences at this stage, and would ask that the Third Tier School entrants at 13 should have done no formal class experiments at all. The ability to observe intelligently and with sustained interest over a considerable time, and to record concisely with selection and clarity would be most valuable. I suggest no laboratories in a 9 - 13 school (this was just provocation - in fact I think there is a need for laboratories at 12+) - but would like every classroom to have a sink and a window bench to accommodate microscopes."

Mathematics:- "the only subject in which it would be necessary to have an agreed standard of skill and a body of knowledge reached by the more able sets or groups"

I had asked questions about Music - will there be aspecialist teacher? or a music room? and what provision will there be for instrumental playing at 9? Will there be a P.E. specialist? - or, since all Middle

Schools will be mixed, will there be two Physical Education specialists in each Second Tier School or serving two schools? At what age will segregation of sexes be enforced, and what use will be made of specialist apparatus in the gymnasia if teaching is done by non-specialists?

Subject panels were slow to materialise - it was at first thought that the subject panels of the Wallasey Secondary Schools Certificate of Education would discuss Middle School content; but they did not include teachers in primary schools and selective schools. The C.S.E. Advisory Groups - which function effectively in only a few subjects anyway - did not include teachers from all schools or from all types of school. The Consultative Committee agreed to draw up a list of members of all subject panels, in conjunction with Officers of the Authority who were familiar with all schools; but the idea of a kind of officially approved list was abhorrent to others - notably the headmaster of Oldershaw Grammar School and these groups never met. Eventually, partly through the persuasiveness of the Authority's advisory staff and partly on their own initiative, some teachers began to meet to consider the place and content of their own specific subjects in Middle Schools. Others, more enlightened, considered that a subject approach was altogether wrong.

A.G. Razell, a Lecturer in Child Development at the University of London, said at the Schools' Council Conference in Warwick in July 1967, "As soon as we begin to think in terms of subjects we face the danger of being imprisoned by the discipline.

If we don't actually think in terms of what we ourselves were taught (the voyage of the White Ship, Rufus and the Arrow, the Coming of the Northmen) we are still likely to feel that every child ought to be taught A,B,C and D because everyone has always known about A,B,C, and D". A case, for instance, could be made out for the abolition of English as a subject from the timetable. Student teachers in training have been told from time immemorial that "every teacher is a teacher of English" - and the Middle School might make this a reality - we best learn a language by using it, and the teaching of English might well form an integrated part of the everyday life in the middle years of schooling. We might consider linking under one umbrella those individual studies now classified as Literature, Art, Craft, Drama, Movement and Religion. This would not be in an effort to depress or suppress them, but to help enlarge the concept that we have of them and give them a more dignified treatment than has been true in the past. We can make something of a mockery in school of what is meant by "Art" when we incarcerate it between the ringing of two bells on Friday afternoon. Forty years ago the pioneers were struggling to obtain a timetable spot for any art at all - perhaps the time is now ripe for an eaven greater break-through. There would seem to be grounds for considering periods for Relationship Studies - this would give children opportunity for considering their relationship with their environment with historical past, the community and the community's relationship with the wider society and the world. This would develop in the higher age groups into the disciplines of History, Geography, Sociology, Natural History, Civics etc; but initially it would be planned as periods when children begin to discover the framework of inter-relationships in time and space that makes up modern society.

UNESCO's Curriculum Report mentioned one writer who suggested that we taught the history of Joan of Arc in our schools because every educated adult knew the history of Joan of Arc but they only knew it because the schools had taught it. Thus, if schools stopped teaching it, then, in time no educated adult would know the history of Joan of Arc, and the need to continue teaching it would finally have vanished - unless, that is, we examine the needs of the children in society and discover that there are other good reasons why we should go on teaching it. It is in this critical light that the curriculum of the Middle School needs to be considered. Benjamin Franklin said "It would be well if they could be taught everything that is useful and everything that is ornamental, but Art is long and their time is short. It is therefore proposed that they should be taught those things that are likely to be the most useful and the most ornamental."

It would be impossible at this stage to review the findings of every subject panel, nor is it desirable to lay down even a broad map of the curriculum. I will, however, through the detailed consideration of one subject, indicate a possible approach to Middle School teaching. The teaching of science in secondary schools broke into a gallop after the war, and so successful were the protagonists of science that the Science Masters' Association was able to publish syllabuses of Physics, Chemistry and Biology to be taken as separate subjects in secondary schools by pupils aged 11 – 16. In recent years there has been some attempt to restore a balance by those who would like to see Science taught as a single subject for some part of the school curriculum instead of as disparate studies of physics, chemistry and biology.

These developments were reflected in the primary schools, where Nature Study was broadened to include physical sciences by teachers anxious to widen their pupils' experience. When the Nuffield grants (which had made changes in the curriculum possible at the secondary level) were extended to the primary stage, the project that followed showed - for the first time to many - that science was an ideal field in which to exercise the best of primary school practices. The work that developed showed childen to be able to investigate at first hand in order to answer their own questions, and to be critical in their capacity for assessing evidence and fluent in their ability to record the results of their experiences - in short, to be responsible for part of their own learning. This was not universally true - nor was this experience new for some teachers: indeed, in the infant schools, where allegedly all educational innovations had been made it had been done for twenty years. The change was sufficiently general for science to be welcomed in its own right as a primary school study; moreover, it linked well with mathematics, geography, art and craft, English and History, and proved to some children and teachers to be a catalyst which integrated much of the curriculum.

Difficulties arise at a stage that mostly affects the Middle School. The main difficulty is the transition from the area study that suits the younger children to the subject course that is the adult's traditional solution to the problem of subject development at the secondary stage. This form of development may not be the best solution, but, if the subject is put first, there is no doubt that the practices we now have will continue for many years. 'O' Level at sixteen is a formidable hurdle.

It is sometimes thought that a five year approach was laid down by the Medes and Persians; or that a four year run from twelve is not so bad; or again that three years from thirteen is too short. If 'O' level is retained in its present form, it might well be necessary to equip some Middle School leavers with an agreed syllabus of knowledge - but this would be unwise. Middle School children should be given the subject matter that this stage demands rather than meet the demands of the secondary stage. The problem is to know what these demands are. For the youngest I am sure it would be well for them to follow the course of the wide ranging investigation recognised as a proper pursuit in primary school science. For some this will be a long lasting stage - indeed, for the least able, knowledge of science might not be the main objective of their study. As interest deepens, however, and the natures of children begin to change, and, as the circumstances of the school set closer bounds to studies, it may well be that the frameworks within which children pursue their investigations will become closer and more controlled by the teacher.

Science provides certain areas of study which children can scarcely avoid. They can, however, consider them freely oblivious to any subconscious restrictions they may have assimilated in their choice of the study. If of their own volition pupils do not meet a wide enough range of these areas, most teachers would not consider it educational violence to attract them into fields not yet entered. In any case, whatever degree of freedom is possible in their studies, it will be subject to the discipline of good educational principles.

The children will not simply be left in a room to discover Newton's Laws on their own. They will plan their work both on their own and with their teacher who will already have made some preparation. What is learned through these studies they should be clear about; but if they are in small groups, or if the work is individual it will be difficult for the teacher to plan effectively for this to be achieved. Group and class discussions will draw threads together, and written records help to crystallise knowhege. The unobtrusive supervision of such diversity will remain a skilled business and a key activity.

Consideration has been given to the kind of teacher who will do this work in the Middle School and also to the means by which these teachers should be trained. Much will depend on the organisation of schools and the staffing ratio - which in Wallasey will give eighteen teachers to sixteen classes in Middle Schools, thus leaving little room for specialisation. For the youngest pupils the teacher may well be the kind of class reacher who is now doing such effective work with the older pupils in the junior school add who might even continue to be expected to work in the same way. But if the oldest pupils are to be taught by those who now teach science in secondary schools, there will have to be some changes in method. Science teachers in secondary schools are specialists; specialists will be needed in Middle Schools, but not the kind only at home in one branch of science whose place is still in the secondary school. The need is for the teacher interested in a wide field of science who would like to see secondary school subject dispipline allied to the primary way of working. Unfortunately, many of those who might like to transfer to Middle Schools are prevented by financial considerations.

The Middle School specialist need not be a graduate; he needs only to be knowledgeable in science and the techniques science uses; ready to enquire and to inspire enquiry, and both sympathetic and honest in his assessment of what has been discovered. He is as likely to be the product of a three year course at a College of Education or four year B.Ed course as of a University course with post-graduate training. His position in the school as a science specialist will vary from school to school. In some schools he might be expected to advise only when approached by other members of staff. It is more likely that he will exert his main influence as a member of a team teaching perhaps the oldest pupils, perhaps groups made up from pupils of all ages. This is where school organisation can make a decisive contribution to subject development and both can enrich the child's whole education. I develop this idea further on pages 98 seq.

The general position envisaged is that of a school in which the youngest children are engaged in exploring their environment under the guidance of a class teacher while the oldest are investigating topics, still drawn from the environment, in a more controlled way supervised by a team of teachers among whom there is a science specialist. Much of this work will be through first hand experience in which practical work will play a large part; thus the material provision and the accommodation for the work will be very important.

Much of this work will originate in the classroom - and the classroom of the future should be so designed as to provide areas specially adapted for the different activities of the class, such as reading and reference, craft activities, discussion, writing and practical work of the kind likely to be carried out in environmental studies

Such an area would suit the younger pupils but is unlikely to provide all the facilities required by older pupils for work in Science. The same would probably be true for subjects such as Mathematics and Geography. Clearly there will be a need for some extension of classroom facilities suited to work that may well be an integration of several subjects. There will be many ways of providing such accommodation - some in large shared spaces, some in enclosed spaces. If there is to be team teaching - and it seems likely that there will be - then probably the main accommodation for practical work in environmental studies might be a large room in which there are bays that have facilities specially adapted to some aspect of the work such as display, work in chemistry or electricity, or in which long-term experiments can be left undisturbed. The design of the room would need to be flexible. Service points would be needed for gas, water and perhaps a low voltage electricity with plentiful mains power points. Working surfaces might be tables heavy enough to be stable, yet still portable, and large enough for two pupils to work at. These could be moved to service points when needed and could be arranged in positions to suit different kinds of work.

The Plowden Report asks that Middle Schools should not be dominated by secondary school influences - but the French teachers' panel - meeting on the initiative of a Third Tier headteacher, with a Third Tier chairman, a Third Tier secretary, and what virtually amounted to a Third Tier Front bench, met on 5th February 1968 to approve a draft report which said "It is desirable that agreement should be reached on the ground to be covered and on the basic method to be followed.

Agreement should be ... along the following lines:- ....." and goes on not only to suggest an audio-visual course to be used by all schools, and a common textbook - but attaches in an appendix a "useful guide to the basic ground to be covered in the first two years".

Admitting that Middle School courses should be designed in consultation with Upper Schools for the sake of continuity, nevertheless the French teachers' report can hardly be said to be in the spirit of Miss Slade, the headmistress of Wallasey High School, who, when President of the Joint Four, said to the Middle Schools "We do not want to tell you what point you should reach - we want you to tell us the point from which we should start".

A meeting of Middle School headteachers was held on 11th January, 1968, which made clearer than ever the difficulties caused by Wallasey's phased development. All the headteachers designated to Middle Schools in September 1968 were at this stage heads of non-selective secondary schools. Most of them had been very successful in their present schools; some - nearer retirement than others - were averse to change; others had tried experiments such as non-streaming. Yet all, without exception, thought in secondary terms, and in view of the imminence of September 1968, were willing to impose a virtually unchanged secondary system. They discussed introducing French, and the need for five full periods per day (which in most schools would give 25 periods per week in the first year alone) and then talked of the need for peripatetic specialist teachers - from Wallasey potential Middle School headteachers not a single voice was heard to say that the teaching of French is ideally done by the class teacher or a trained teacher with French as a main subject and capable of teaching other subjects.

They discussed arrangements for transferring grammar school language specialists to Middle Schools - but none of them mentioned the possibility of primary school teachers moving to Middle Schools, and the prospect of extending the desirable benefits of primary school approach faded beyond 1970.

There had been exciting talk about adapting buildings for Middle School purposes, "the picture which emerges is of a school with large classrooms, supported by plenty of storage space and alcoves in which children can do group work of various kinds ..... well equipped with moveable tables, plenty of display space, sinks and books in great variety;..... no specialist rooms as we know them, but a number of large sparsely equipped practical rooms, possibly one for each year group". (1) And yet the actual financial provision in Wallasey's scheme was pruned so far that it included £50,000 for the adaptation of Lingham Junior School - the only non-secondary school proposed for use as a Middle School which would obviously need additional places; and £50,000 for the adaptation of the old Wallasey Grammar School - a building already rejected as sub-standard for secondary purposes and recently vacated by that school. The estimates included a total of only £30,000 for all the other Middle Schools put together - and this was supposed to cover all the adaptations needed to make single-se x schools into co-educational schools, over and above making Middle Schools fit their new purpose. The adequacy of this figure can be judged from the fact that at one future Middle School alone - Quarry Mount - the provision of indoor toilets would cost at least £18,000.

(1) "The Re-organisation of Education in certain areas of the West Riding" Working Paper submitted to Policy and Finance Sub-Committee, West Riding County Council - 8th October, 1963.

VIII. Development of Middle School Philosophy.

During the spring of 1968, a formidable in-service training programme was mounted by the Authority and teachers attended courses on Art in the Middle School, Needlecraft in the Middle School, Domestic Science in the Middle School, the Retarded Reader in the Middle School, Science in the Middle School, French in the Middle School, Mathematics 5-13. A Working Party was set up to discuss the place of English in the Middle School - and there was a course on the Use of the Library in the Middle School ..... and a host of other topics to do with the curriculum content of Middle Schools. At each of these courses, much the same problems were posed and it was clear that the chief source of anxiety was the problem of specialist teachers adjusting themselves to the demands of a Middle School - the problem of how to extend primary school methods without primary school teachers - the problem of how to combine class teaching/non-specialisation with the more specialised approach which, it was said, would be needed for children of 13.

In these circumstances, the teachers began to think of new approaches and, under the leadership of Roy Hopwood, the Deputy Head of Ruffwood School, considered the application of Team-teaching to the Middle School situation. Basil Bernstein, Professor of the Sociology of Education at London University in an article in "New Society" (1967) identified a trend in education which had been gathering force as first junior schools and latterly comprehensive schools have grappled with their own problems. He wrote "We are witnessing a shift in emphasis away from schools, where the subject is a clear-cut definable

unit of the curriculum, to schools where the unit is not as much a subject as an IDEA - a topic-centred interdisciplinary enquiry"."
If the subject is no longer dominant, the position of the teacher as a specialist can change. His allegiance, his social point of gravity, may tend to switch ffom his commitment to his subject to the bearing his subject has upon the IDEA which is relating him to other teachers.

It is not pretended that team-teaching reduces the number of teachers required - but its advantages in the efficient use of teachers cannot be ignored by those who, planning the Middle School years, are faced with the facts of teacher-supply and teacher-quality. There will be a teacher shortage from the mid 1970's onwards. The first "bulge" has begun to give birth to a second "bulge" and has already begun to knock at the infant school door seeking an entrance for its progeny. The primary school approach - "learning rather than teaching, child centred rather than subject or teacher centred" calls for a review of the traditional role of the teacher (at any rate as envisaged by most secondary school teachers). The teacher should be not so much a purveyor of information as an organiser of a sequence of carefully prepared and structured learning experience. The capacity of all teachers in an ever expanding teacher force to undertakethis new role is doubtful. It is necessary that there should be a better career structure for the key middle school teachers, and especially for those (say 10%) who are capable of undertaking the new role, who can organise not only the sequence of structured learning experiences for children but also the activities of three or four adults as well.

The "unit total" is no way of arriving at the just reward for master teachers of this quality. It is not surprising that headteachers in Wallasey have come back so often in their discussions to team teaching in an open plan school. There are as many interpretations of team teaching as there are practitioners - but for me it is a form of teaching organisation in which two or more teachers have the responsibility, working together, for all the teaching of a given group of pupils in some specified area of the curriculum. It involves the proper use by professionals of sub-professional staff and, of course, mechanical aids. It is highly desirable that any redeployment of teaching power should retain the provision for pastoral care which has always been the strong point of the British class-teaching system. In a team-taught middle school, it may not always be the case that the headmaster can claim to know each child, but he should certainly be required to organize the school in such a way that if he does not know the child, someone else does.

The West Riding of Yorkshire has placed this point high on its list of priorities - so that in the West Riding each Middle School child should know where his home is, and will continue to speak, as in his primary school, of "my teacher". There will clearly be a teacher who is "his". At Bradford, the design of the new Middle School seems to imply a wish to encourage teachers and children to feel that they belong not so much to a single home base but rather to a sector or area of the school, an area which flows in and out of the different learning spaces, incorporating smaller spaces, than to a room which can be cut off.

This latter approach may well be more realistic in the light of the teacher supply/teacher quality problem, and may also lead to the evolution of a more efficient pedagogy.

There seems to be a certain amount of smug satisfaction with the teacher supply situation - perhaps because the National Advisory Council on the Training and Supply of Teachers has been allowed to lapse. It is true that birth rates have declined a little since 1964, and that Colleges of Education are surpassing the Robbins targets, but it would still be unwise to plan Middle Schools on a secondary school staff: pupil ratio. The ninth Report of the National Advisory Council on the Training and Supply of Teachers calculated that if all primary classes as well as secondary were reduced to 30, we should need about three quarters of a million teachers in the 1980s. "To build and sustain such a force requires more than half the total output of the higher education system as envisaged by the Robbins Committee."

Secondary teachers in Wallasey have looked with abhorrence on a staff-pupil ratio of 1:28.4 - but a system which assigns 30 children to one qualified teacher may well lead to a desperate situation in ten to twenty years. It would be wiser to think of how best to use the teachers we have and particularly the most gifted amongst them. It is better to devise a system which organisationally and architecturally allows a team of teachers to direct (assisted by sub-professionals) the learning of larger numbers of teachers. As the teaching shortage becomes more acute, the question must be "how can I increase the productivity of the teachers I have got". Whilst it is too early to say how Wallasey Middle School headteachers will organise the eventual 9 - 13 school, it is clear that many of them are intending to use some form of team teaching.

The Authority's submission on Middle Schools calls for the provision of a broad general education for the whole ability range. From this it follows that narrow specialisation is out; it may well be that all children in an age group can benefit from the same team-teaching stimulus lesson, and can work at their own speeds following the stimulus. The issue of streaming/non-streaming has still to be decided: some heads seem to be very concerned about the able pupils - a problem to which I shall return shortly, but I hope that, in some enlightened Middle Schools, children will return after stimulus to mixed ability groups for much of the teaching time. In large schools it might be necessary to have some form of parallel grouping, but Wallasey Middle Schools will eventually be four form entry, and may well find, as others have done, that mixed ability grouping helps children to come to terms with diversity. These schools are intended to meet the needs of pupils of varying ages and abilities, and it has been suggested that there should be a gradual introduction of specialisation, particularly in the last year.

Team teaching, using as it does the skills and expertise of the specialist teacher in an effective way could well provide the link between class teaching and specialist teaching. By the beginning of the fourth year, it may quite well be superseded in favour of specialist teaching so that the usual subject divisions may begin to appear on the timetable. Personally I do not accept that any specialisation is necessary in a well taught Middle School - but few heads would agree with me and most feel that an introduction to specialisation is necessary so that the break between second and third tier schools is not too severe.

By the end of their time in a Middle School, pupils should have mastered the basic problems of literacy and numeracy. Here again some kind of team organisation can help. This may well take place across two different years - for example, it is conceivable that by the use of film and television in one year, it may be possible to release teachers to swell the ranks of those taking the less able pupils. Two teachers might take 120+ pupils in film or T.V. (or Music) thus releasing two teachers to join four from another year to make 6 teachers for 120+ pupils - this would enable special attention to be given to the very bright pupils at one extreme and the least able at the other, and the group might be divided into 32 + 32 + 32 (mixed ability groups), 18 (able) + 8 + 8 (least able). The least able pupils taught in small groups with one teacher to eight pupils can be pushed hard along the paths of literacy and numeracy: this organisation for a limited period - say 6/8 periods per week - might be preferable to separating the least able all of the time from the rest of their fellow pupils. In any event a four form entry all ability age group, in many parts of Wallasey, will not produce a viable backward group.

Team teaching can be as simple as a group of teachers divi ding an age group into teaching groups of different sizes; or bigger teams can cover more than one age group. There may be some heads who will want to run their schools pretty well entirely on team lines, and others who will quite properly limit team approaches to part of the teaching time. One of the most depressing things about teachers is their reluctance to move with the times - but one of the undisputed advantages of team teaching is its ability to cope with modern teaching aids.

Chalk and talk will lose their exclusive monopoly and be replaced by film, film loop, film strip, colour slide, tape, teaching machines, programmed texts, and open and closed circuit television - and the proper use of these aids will free teachers to be used where they are most needed; in helping children in a personal and individual way.

The Middle School should give to children the wide range of experience they need to render meaningful the concepts which their subject specialist teachers in the third tier school will expect them to have, so that when they reach that school they can push ahead quickly, because 'O' Level or something very much like it - rightly or wrongly - is still there. These concepts are abstract and children will arrive at them better if they are first given a broad range of school experience. This would include training in observation, recording the results of their observations accurately, comparing their recorded observation with what others have written, learning how to draw some of the conclusions which can legitimately be drawn from the particular observations they have made. I am sure that children who have been given this kind of experience will be better equipped to undertake the study of history, geography, social studies, economics etc, than children who have been treated in Middle Schools to the old-fashioned secondary approach.

One of the commonest fears expressed by parents in Wallasey about the new system was that "my child is losing two years grammar school". Circular 10/65 promises that in no way would the opportunities open to the bright boy in the present grammar school be diminished inside the comprehensive school system.

There are boys and girls in school who, under the kind of system we are now moving away from, would have had opportunities of experiencing really high pressure teaching. I am not saying that this diet was good for them; but I accept that really able children need the particularised attention to which they can respond. This is necessary not only to help them fulfil their potentialities but for the good of the country at large. We cannot afford to neglect the nurture of the talents of any of our children. Dr. A. Ross, the Professor of Educational Research at Lancaster, said in a lecture to a Schools Council Conference at Warwick in September 1967, "In any system of education, if you start with the youngest children in that school and move up with them to the top, you keep your priorities right. The Middle School ought to use its 9 year old children as its touchstone. It ought to get the programme right for them, as the infant school gets its programme right for its babies and follows on from there". Our educational system almost always inverts this process - the secondary school is always geared to 'A' and 'O' levels, primary schools work back from the 11+ and in some cases even infant schools work up to that awful moment when the junior school head asks "And how many non-readers are you sending me this year?" We tend to work from the terminal point backwards. Development is working forward from the beginning. The surest guides are the children themselves, and that is why it is vital that practising teachers who are in day to day contact with children of this age should play a key role in ascertaining what should be the curriculum of the middle years of schooling."

In basing Middle Schools largely on existing secondary non-selective schools with a continuing function as non-selective schools for two years, and in relying almost entirely in these formative years on teachers with

negligible primary experience, Wallasey may be building for itself a situation from which it will be extremely difficult for the Middle School to develop as an entity with a personality of its own.

IX. From Middle School to Third Tier School.

The Council's resolution on reorganisation of education required the transfer of children at age 13 "to a range of schools offering a variety of courses and levels of study to meet the varying aptitudes and abilities of children, retaining the grammar schools, avoiding zoning and increasing the element of parental choice". The way in which Alderman Hutty, the Chairman of the Education Committee, thought that this might be achieved is explained on page 60 seq. - he envisaged six third tier schools - providing courses on two levels. Three existing Grammar Schools - Wallasey Grammar School, Oldershaw Grammar School, Wallasey High School - would cater for the most able; and three - Wallasey Technical Grammar School, Wallasey Technical High School and one of the existing non-selective schools (Withensfield) - would cater for the remainder. There would be some overlapping of ability levels, and all these schools should, in his opinion, have sixth forms.

The idea was not popular with members of the Working Party and the lower-ability schools in the Hutty Plan were christened immediately by Mr.Pettit as "rump schools". Ex-Councillor Dann pointed out that the difference between the two layers of schools proposed by Alderman Hutty would be greater than the difference between existing selective and non-selective schools since the former would be on a half and half basis and the present division was on a 40-60 basis. According to Mr.Pettit, this would mean that all the present pupils in the Grammar and Technical Grammar Schools, plus about half the A-stream pupils in

secondary non-selective schools, would be going to Third Tier Grammar Schools, and the second layer in this tier would take the remainder - it is in this context that sixth forms in all schools should be considered. Parents would obviously choose the top-layer, and some system of allocation would be necessary. Presumably there would have to be "guided parental choice" - a task which teachers did not relish. One member felt that lower-layer schools would be populated by pupils who don't wish to work and whose parents do not care. Councillor Philpin said that the scheme "would give us something worse than at present as the price of preserving the grammar school image".

The extent of agreement reached at the meeting of the Working Party on 20th December 1965 was that each third tier school should have a sixth form and provide courses for the full ability range; the grammar schools would probably have a greater proportion of higher ability children than the technical schools. The Working Party set up panels to study the problems of each Tier, and the Third Tier Panel met for the first time on 13th January 1966. There was general agreement that 8 form entry schools could be made to work, and that five x 8 form entry schools would meet the requirements in Wallasey. The panel could not support the idea of six schools, since, if dealing with the whole ability range in town schools, such a size of school would not produce a viable sixth form. The Panel drew a distinction between fully comprehensive schools and schools taking in the full ability range, and rejected the idea of fully comprehensive schools because this was not in line with the requirements of the Resolution. Within the five schools now proposed, there would be some differences in distribution

of ability, with safeguards against the establishment of "rump" schools. It was suggested that the five 8 form entry schools should be based on the existing selective schools, providing four single sex schools and one co-educational school. These five schools should each admit the full ability range, but the distribution of able and less able pupils between the schools would vary. Each of the five schools would have a sixth form, and each should be encouraged to develop special emphases in addition to a broad range of studies in the generally accepted subjects.

It was obvious that any suggestion of externally imposed emphases would be resisted. It was stressed that specialisation in a subject in one school should not exclude even 'A' level work in the same subject in another school, and attention was drawn, in considering specialist emphases, to the needs of the less able children. The panel felt that it was essential that these emphases should be in addition to basic subjects because parents must not be forced into an irrevocable choice; if given a choice they will choose the school which leaves open the greatest number of career possibilities. Moreover, it is difficult to select or recognise specialisors at 13. There must be reasonable parity between the Third Tier Schools if parental choice is not to be overwhelmingly at variance with the number of places available in the schools. There must not be excessive difference in the distribution of able and less able pupils between schools if "rump" schools are to be avoided.

The following system of allocation was submitted for the consideration of the Third Tier Panel:-

a) The same procedure should be followed for each Third Tier School.

b) Two-fifths of the boys from each Second Tier School should go to Wallasey Grammar School or Wallasey Technical Grammar School; two fifths of the girls to Wallasey High School or Wallasey Technical High School; and one fifth of the boys and of the girls should go to Oldershaw Grammar School. This would ensure that each Third Tier School, by drawing proportionately on zoned,Middle Schools, became a Town School.

c) The ability range in each Second Tier School should be divided into able/less able - or alternatively into able/less able/least able, either by a non-verbal I.Q. test, or by ordinary internal examinations in the second tier schools.. The quotas referred to in (b) above should apply to each section separately, and thus excessive difference in the distribution of able and less able pupils between schools would be avoided.

d) Pupils with a brother or sister who attends or has recently attended a first choice school to be given that choice.

e) Where a quota as reduced by (d) is not exceeded, all the choices in that school or schools are to be allowed.

f) The remaining pupils to be placed in I.Q./attainment order, able and less able listed separately, boys and girls listed separately, and allocated to schools in proportion to the number of places remaining in the schools in the following manner:

ABLE BOYS:

	W.	O.	T.
Places remaining	14	7	8
Approximate proportion	2	1	1

Take the top four names, or any agreed number (it might well be necessary to use more than 4) and consider in that order. The first choice will be given wherever possible - otherwise second choice and finally third choice (which means no choice!) Each group of four (or the agreed number) is to be allocated in proportion 2:1:1. The same procedure should be followed for boys/girls, able/less able.

It was claimed that this system would give a greater element of parental choice than is allowed at present, and it would allow the most popular school(s) to attract more of the best of the able and less able pupils without making the distribution overwhelmingly different. If the premise is accepted that the Third Tier Schools are each to be 8 form entry, no other scheme allows more first choices to be made. The effedt of this scheme is to allocate a number of pupils, equal to that by which any school is oversubscribed - and this would be necessary under any scheme. There may be a tendency for the less able pupils to choose the nearest school; and thus a Third Tier School may become a neighbourhood school for the less able and a town school for those with greater ability.

A subsequent meeting of the Third Tier Panel - attended inter alia by all the selective secondary school headteachers, reaffirmed that the scheme should be based on five third tier schools - if only because six schools could not provide viable sixth forms.

Even with five schools, there was some concern for the future of the academic sixth. The headmaster of Oldershaw Grammar School observed that a co-educational school (planned for his school) would have a smaller sixth form than a boys' school, and he wondered whether such a school could offer something as good as the present system. The Headmaster of Wallasey Grammar School thought that a decrease in the size of sixth forms would lead to a decline in opportunity; on the other hand, if sixth forms are concentrated in certain schools, parity and parental choice disappear. (Wallasey Grammar School has at present by far the largest sixth form in the town, but under the new system this will eventually be reduced by the time the present selective element has disappeared from the school). Looking at the system of allocation described on page 114 the panel drew attention to the great responsibility which would fall on headteachers of Second Tier Schools in advising parents on choice of Third Tier Schools for their children and wondered whether the fact that children had been educated in co-educational schools from 5 - 13 would lead to a greater demand for co-education than had been anticipated. However, the panel agreed that the proposed system offered the best way of avoiding geographical zoning; and providing there is no great discrepancy between the schools, the scheme seemed to them "to be as good as any other."

These proposals did not please the Chairman when the Working Party met again on 8th March 1966. He regretted that "this scheme appeared to offer a series of comprehensive schools, the only difference between these and comprehensive schools being that bodies are specially transferred.

(1) Personal note kept by officers of the Department present at this meeting.

He alleged that the system of allocation very largely denied parental choice - "If all you do is to take the bodies and draw lots, you have no parental choice". The Chairman said that the only parental choice in this proposal is between single sex and co-educational schools, and for schools which are not full - "those who want to go to the less popular schools will get their choice and those who want to go to the more popular schools will draw lots". Mr. Pettit claimed that under the proposed scheme, first choice would be given wherever possible and estimated that well over 60% of parents would get the school of their first choice. Miss Slade thought the proportion would be nearer 80% The Chairman said that in his opinion only about 50% would get first choice - whereupon Mr. Pettit claimed that that was very much better than the existing system anyway! The Chairman, Alderman Hutty, said that he was distressed to hear that these schools would take in the whole ability range. He referred to the Newsom Report and alleged that nowhere does the Third Tier report suggest that the schools would provide special treatment for the non-grammar school child. He regretted the implication that sixth forms would not grow (the headteachers denied that they had/this said) and said that children who would not normally have stayed for the VIth form must be encouraged to do so - and if the VIth form then expands, would it not be possible to have the six schools he had suggested?

Mr. Pettit argued against schools catering for specific ability groups. He did not accept that the proposed schools would be identical, but held that differences should not be imposed on them from outside.

The Chairman insisted that to have such similarity of schools as this scheme suggests would be an abandonment of the Council's intention. He hoped that schools would be separately attractive, but that did not mean that they must not have general education. He thought that parents are well aware of the academic limitations of their children - they know their children - and, if parents are capable of exercising a choice, they must be given something to exercise choice on. If as a result of re-organisation, the Third Tier Schools eventually became Comprehensive Town Schools, he would not cavil - and for the non-academic pupil there must be more choice and less allocation. He suspected that the proposed scheme had been worked out on the present five grammar schools and that to some extent it seemed to be designed to ensure their continued academic success. Alderman Hutty claimed that there was no magic number for a viable comprehensive school - he claimed that a school of 700 can function as a comprehensive school. Lancashire had schools of 1600, and the Chief Education Officer thought that they were too large; they should be about 1200 and this would cover an 11-18 age range. He wanted the panel to look again at the number and size of schools, and at the question of emphases and biases - although Mr. Pettit warned him that taking this back to the panel was a waste of time since all his colleagues had very firm views against the imposition of emphases. Alderman Hutty said that the grammar school heads seemed to have had particularly in mind the preservation of an academic sixth form (in the public eye, an academic sixth form is essential to the prestige of a school). He would not accept that there is a limited field of sixth form material which has to be evenly distributed - neither could the headteachers accept the idea of unlimited sixth form material.

They knew that schools without an academic sixth form would be of lower status and would not accept some schools with an academic sixth and some without. Alderman Hutty said that he had hoped for some imaginative development - particularly for the Newsom child - which was not shown in the proposed scheme. Educational arguments for the proposed Third Tier Schools had not been made, and he felt that there were some personal considerations involved.

It may seem strange after this account of the meeting that Councillor Smith observed that there was a greater measure of agreement than had ever been achieved since the discussions on re-organisation opened. Yet this is probably true - with the exception of the Chairman it seemed that the argument had now been reduced to that of the number and size of third tier schools. It was suggested at this meeting that the Director might usefully have informal talks with officers of the Department of Education and Science - whose comment was that the original intention to develop two distinct educational levels would clearly entail selection and would therefore be inconsistent with the principle of comprehensive education. Each of the eight form entry schools would be large enough to cater for the whole ability range and "there appears to be no convincing case for inbuilt restraints on the evolution of particular schools".(1) Whilst individual schools may well develop their own specialities and strengths, all should have the same educational status and aim to provide a common curriculum covering a broad range of subjects to advanced level.

(1) Informal Obsevations of Officers of the Department in letter to Director of Education dated 20th April, 1966.

There should be a common procedure for the allocation of pupils to schools and no school should receive a privileged quota of the ablest children. The officers thought that the proposed system of allocation appeared equitable and offered the advantage of moderating the effect of geographical and social influence. They suggested that some weighting might be given to parental second choice in filling the places remaining after all available first choice places have been filled, and assumed that exceptions to the general rule would be considered on, for example, compassionate or medical grounds.

Needless to say these comments pleased the Third Tier heads, who, meeting on 27th June 1966, were still very concerned about the difficulties facing Middle School headteachers in advising parents on choice of Third Tier Schools, and agreed that they themselves would give information and professional advice to help Middle School heads in their guidance to parents. They reiterated that a system of random allocation was necessary to safeguard the stability of the intake, and reminded the Authority that in co-educational schools the balance of sexes must also be safeguarded. Members had obviously heard a suggestion going the rounds that perhaps a certain proportion of the age group should be given automatic first choice and told the Director that if the Working Party entertained this idea it must be on the basis of a proportion of each ability group in each school and not on a town order of merit.

Another interesting point made was that, in the initial stages, only two thirds of an age group would be transferred to the Third Tier Schools, the other third being there already.

There should therefore be an interim system of allocation taking account of the fact that the most able were already in Third Tier Schools. I know that Mr. Pettit would have felt that an interim system of allocation ought to try to remove an existing imbalance whereby the majority of pupils in this intake were less able than those who entered the Grammar School or Oldershaw. The system of allocation eventually approved by the Secretary of State included a provision for automatic allocation on family association, i.e. where brother, sister or parent had attended a school. I had always imagined that this provision - which turned out to be highly controversial - was worked in by the politicians; but in fact it appears fof the first time in the minutes of the meeting of the Third Tier Panel held on 27th June, 1966. The panel insisted that allocation to Third Tier Schools must be in three ability groups, i.e. able, less able and least able. There must be some way for each Second Tier School to arrange its pupils in three broad bands, approximating to 40%, 45% and 15% of the age group, and those remaining after family association preferences had been met should be distributed between schools in accordance with the system of allocation, previously described. The Working Party decided thatthis report should be submitted to the Education Committee for consideration, and made no specific comment on any of the Third Tier recommendations.

It was expected that the Chairman would resist the Third Tier Panel proposals - but at the subsequent meeting of Education Committee he readily accepted that emphases should not be imposed and himself suggested the substitution of the words "actively encouraged to develop their own strengths and specialities.(1)

(1) Personal notes kept by officers of the Department.

Two points of interest arise in connection with the system of allocation. The automatic allocation on family association (i.e. where father, mother, brother or sister have attended) was practically the only cause of dissension, and was steadfastly opposed by the Labour group - but, because they could not afford to carry their opposition to this to the extent of referring back the whole scheme, having registered their disapproval they dropped their opposition, so that the whole scheme was approved nem.con. The system of allocation approved by the Education Committee was not, however, the one put forward by the Working Party Third Tier Panel. The "three broad bands" with allocation to each school from each broad band of ability, disappeared and the system approved by Committee provided that:-

1. Parents be asked to express a first and second choice,

   i.e. 1. School A
   2. School B

   or an alternative choice, i.e. Either School A or B.

2. A parental choice based on family association with a particular school (i.e. where brother, sister or parents have attended) be granted automatically.

3. Parental choice of school to be granted automatically when the total number of first choices for that school does not exceed the total number of places available in that school.

4. The remaining pupils to be listed in order of ability, boys and girls separately, by the headteacher of each Second Tier School, and allocated in proportion to the number of vacancies remaining at the Third Tier Schools by a similar system to the present ward scheme (1) of allocation between Wallasey and Oldershaw Grammar and High Schools, so meeting parental first and second choice as far as possible at every level of ability.

(1) Ward Scheme - see note on page 15

5. The wishes of parents for single sex and co-educational schools would be met as far as possible by the co-educational Oldershaw Grammar School and the other Boys' and Girls' Third Tier Schools. Any appreciable imbalance between provision and demand could be met by later adjustments. The intake to a co-educational school must be approximately equally divided between boys and girls.

The Consultative Committee sent a deputation to see the Director, and in January 1967 complained to the Department of Education and Science: "Under the present procedure for entry to selective schools the entire intakes to the Wallasey Grammar School and Wallasey High School and to the Oldershaw School are met from the top 25% of the ability range while considerably less than one third of the intakes to the Wallasey Technical Grammar and High Schools are from the same ability group. The former group of schools is also of much earlier foundation and has a longer tradition in the selective field. Subsequently these schools obtain a high degree of academic success and undoubtedly enjoy a high reputation within the Borough which is reflected each year in the overwhelming number of options for them from the ablest 11+ entrants. The amended plan will certainly preserve this lack of parity and will extend it to the second 25% of the ability range thus creating in the Technical Grammar and High Schools, "rump" schools with intakes predominantly in the lower 50% of the ability range. The 'three broad bands' and the quotas for each band were deliberately introduced to eliminate the possibility of rump schools and to introduce some degree of stability in the intake to Third Tier Schools. The Teachers Consultative Committee has consistently and vigorously opposed any scheme which could lead to the establishment of "rump" schools and

was pleased to note in the informal observations of the officers of the Department of Education and Science on the outline Three Tier Scheme that"there should be a common procedure for the allocation of pupils to Third Tier Schools and no school should receive a privileged quota of the ablest pupils".(1) The Director was invited by the Department of Education and Science to comment on this letter, and said:- "The purpose of the system of allocation is to achieve the maximum success in granting parental choice and this is not necessarily compatible with identically balanced schools over the whole ability range. It is intended that there will be pupils covering the whole range of ability in each school but it is not pretended that all schools will necessarily achieve identical distribution of ability. This does not to us appear in any way to conflict with the purpose of all ability schools and indeed may result in a more equal distribution of ability than would a simple geographical distribution of schools serving discrete areas of the Borough. I should add that the element of parental choice, with the aim of establishing a sound relationship between the family and the school, is held as of great importance by the Authority and it is hoped to reach a percentage of the order of 85% - 90% of choices. The scheme accordingly provides for automatic entry to a school for son, daughter,brother and sister of pupils and past pupils of a school. Thus, the admissions to a school will be designed to spread the broad bands of ability between the schools, meeting parental choice so far as possible.

(1) E. Trapnell - letter to Department of Education and Science dated 16th January, 1967.

Ability will be assessed within each Middle School only, and there will be no town order of merit. The possibility which gives the Teachers' Consultative Committee concern is that a single school would attract all its options from pupils of low ability. If the options were less than the number of places available, on the scheme as submitted, all these pupils would be admitted automatically and perhaps only a few places would remain to be filled by ability group placings. This appears to be a most unlikely eventuality and could be dealt with by amendment of the scheme later if it proved to be necessary. To amend at this stage would be, however, to remove the high element of parental choice which, in the Authority's view, is of greatest importance".(1)

In a further letter to the Department, dated 18th May, 1967, the Director explained that so far as the co-educational school was concerned, automatic allocation on grounds of family association would apply also for boys in respect of sister or mother and for girls in respect of father or brother.

Academic balance and parental choice are probably incompatible - but in Wallasey it seemed to be the position that academic balance - (without which stability is impossible) was sacrificed to giving maximum effect to parental choice, however wrong that parental choice might be. In this system, since automatic allocations are an unknown factor, there can be no academic balance and the best one can hope to achieve is an even academic distribution of the places remaining after such allocations have been met.

(1)Director of Education, letter to Permanent Under Secretary for Education and Science, dated 23rd March, 1967.

The headteacher of each Middle School would be asked to provide lists, boys and girls separately, of all pupils in the appropriate age groups, in order of educational ability - determined on a basis to b e decided by the headteacher. After automatic allocations had eliminated, the shortened lists would be divided into what the Director called "ability groups" the size of each group being determined by the ratio of places remaining to be filled in the Third Tier Schools. The Director's favourite (and simple) example was to say that if there were 20:20:10 places to be filled in three third tier schools, then the lists would be divided into ability groups of 2 + 2 + 1. If indeed the blocks are as small as this all pupils within the block are of closely similar ability, and within each block allocations would be made in the proportion of places to be distributed - in this case 2:2:1, taking parents wishes, first or second choice, into consideratinn where possible. A number of different theoretical approaches were explored by myself and D.H. Creegan, an Administrative Assistant in the Department, based on simulations devised by ourselves and Mr. Pettit. We found that we could make these examples simple to work out or devise situations which were impossible of solution. For instance, in an undersubscribed school, there could be only two places left to fill - and say 60 in the second school and 30 in the third - total 92, providing a ratio of 1:30:15 and an ability group size of 46. Possibly the Middle School concerned, offering 80 pupils for transfer had 24 allocated automatically; the remainder would then provide little more than one complete "ability group" and any pretence of academic balance would be lost, especially if weight were given within this group to parental first and second choices.

It is conceivable that these 56 could, by parental choice, completely match the vacancies to be filled - and then there would in any case have been no point in ranging the pupils in order of ability!

In my opinion the scheme finally approved (See Appendix B) is deficient in that it does nothing to establish and maintain a balance of ability which is essential if academic sixth forms are to be maintained in each school: and without academic sixth-forms there will be no parity. It could lead to a situation where headteachers did not know whether they would have an academic sixth or not, with consequent repercussions on staff stability and recruitment. The only difference between individual schools was originally supposed to be one of emphasis. My objection to the approved plan is that it does not make for academic balance:-

(a) Alderman Hutty claims that automatic allocation on family association is a negligible factor, and justifies it by saying that there is nothing wrong with tradition and it is a good thing to build up a family association with a particular school. The fact is that at this stage nobody knows how far family association will affect allocations to schools and those like myself who have not had the honour of being educated in a Wallasey grammar school will continue to feel at a disadvantage.

(b) The extent to which parents will opt for co-education is not known and has not been tested - but with co-education being compulsory from 5 - 13, it might well be that Oldershaw alone will not be able to cope with the demand at 13 - 18.

(c) Automatic granting of first choices in an undersubscribed school can lead to a situation where a school might contain very few pupils of high ability. I agree that it is unlikely that if there are 600 boys to be allocated, the 240 for one school will be the bottom 240 - but it is clearly possible that the majority may be drawn from the lower-ability order. Parents may well tend to follow existing patterns. For instance, the Technical Grammar School has always catered for a number of children whose ability was not regarded as sufficient at 11+ to get them into the Grammar School. In catering for these children the Technical Grammar School has done a great deal of work on C.S.E. - whereas Wallasey Grammar School has done little C.S.E. work and at Oldershaw C.S.E. has not been pursued in its own right but merely as the "poor man's G.C.E.". Parents have the idea that "mediocre" children will be best catered for in the Technical Grammar School. Furthermore, many working class parents are afraid not of the academic reputation of the Grammar School but of its social implications. Thus it is at least conceivable that the Technical Grammar School could have a number of options from the academically and socially less gifted: and if all these options were granted automatically, for one reason or another, the character of the Technical Grammar School would develop very differently from the intention of the Scheme.

(d) Thus, an inferior school - a rump school - is a possibility. Perpetuation of the present school names tends to aggravate the distinction between schools to the disadvantage of the technical schools - but attempts to change the names of third tier schools have been effectively blocked by the Chairman - and one cannot resist the feeling that this is done to perpetuate the name of one school in particular.

(e) In 1969, only the non-selective part of the age group will be transferred to Third Tier Schools - the balance is already there. No consideration has been given, in planning the distribution of these children, to redressing any imbalance of ability which exists at present and thus to make a gesture, at least, towards parity between the schools concerned.

It may well be that many fears will eventually prove groundless - or perhaps worse - than anticipated. The system will have to be kept under close review and modified in the light of experience. Whatever the difficulties, one can admire the concept of five schools of equal status, differing in strengths and specialities; and at least the Wallasey system offers some choice to parents in a world where little choice exists.

Few three tier schemes offer parental choice for third tier schools. In some areas, the problem does not arise. For instance, in the West Riding of Yorkshire, in the only area where a three tier system has been implemented, there is only one three tier school. In Northumberland, reorganisation ona three tier basis is being introduced in three areas

of the County in September 1969. In only one of these areas - Wallsend- are there two high schools. Of these, one will be housed in the combined premises of the former Wallsend Grammar and Technical Schools; the other in the combined premises of two former secondary modern schools. The long term allocation of pupils will be based on a straight division between the east and west of the Borough - infact, the geography of Wallsend lends itself well to such a division. The Director of Education, Mr.C.L.Mellowes, in a letter to me says, "We expect thereby to achieve a reasonably equal distribution of ability". Mr.Mellowes goes on to explain complications which will arise from the fact that the present Grammar School pupils will transfer en bloc to the High School at the other end of the Borough; the present Technical School pupils will stay whe they are to form the nucleus of the second High School. This he says, "will achieve a kind of rough justice in the short term". The two High School Headmasters will be expected to work together in the provision of courses and the Authority will not be over-rigid where zoning is concerned.

The County Education Officer for Worcester in a letter to me says "The problem is not likely to arise here for some years and we have not attempted to solve it in any detail, though we have supposed that allocation to upper schools would generally be on geographical grounds. Whether the right allocation can be established by a general understanding that particular middle schools contribute to particular upper schools (much as primary schools do to secondary schools today), or whether we should require more formal zoning remains to be seen". In fact, in the

first area of Worcestershire to be reorganised - Droitwich - there is only one upper school, so that the question of allocation does not arise. In the next area for reorganisation - Bromsgrove - it will not arise before 1971 and the issue there is complicated by the fact that a measure of academic selection at 13 has to be retained for some time. The third area due for reorganisation in that County is Redditch and here the three tier system will be applied only in a self-contained area of the new town development, which will be separated by zoning from the rest of the town. The County Education Officer concluded "It will not be until we are reorganising the whole of a large area like Halesowen or Kidderminster that the problem will arise and this may be some years hence in circumstances which we cannot at present foresee in detail".

In the London Borough of Merton there are short-term complications in that, in 1969 and 1970, the only children to be involved in transfer are those who in 1967 and 1968 were admitted as a result of the then prevailing 11+ arrangements to secondary schools which are now to become middle schools. These children represent rather less than a quarter of the total age group. In planning the transfer to high schools during each of these two years of the 500 or so boys and girls involved, the Merton Authority endeavoured, so far as possible, to produce in all the high schools 13+ age groups roughly equal in size. It will not be possible to arrange for the age groups to be even approximately balanced in ability, for high schools which were non-selective in 1967 and 1968 will only receive, in 1969 and 1970, 13+ pupils from other non-selective

schools. It is not until 1971 that a complete 13+ age group will transfer from middle to high schools - and the Merton Education Committee has not yet laid down in detail how it wishes the transfer in that year, and subsequently, to be arranged.

Mr.Greenwood, the Chief Education Officer for Merton, told me that there is a strong feeling that each of the high schools ought to receive its fair share of pupils over the whole ability range, but the decision has not yet been taken whether to allow high school admissions entirely on parental choice (entry being controlled on geographical grounds only if a particular school is over-subscribed) and, later on, investigate by a testing procedure whether the schools have thereby recruited balanced intakes; or, in order to ensure that imbalance does not occur, to "band" children in some way before they leave the middle school and then control each high school's admissions of children within each band of ability. The former arrangement might result only in deferring a difficult decision which might ultimately be particularly difficult and take some years to apply any new policy to redress imbalance once it had occurred. Equally, a decision to adopt the alternative policy would not be an easy one to make at the present time, since parental choice alone could of itself produce the right kind of "mix" in high schools.

In the City and County of Kingston-upon-Hull, the town is to be divided into three broad geographical regions and Junior High Schools (middle schools) and Senior High Schools (third tier schools) within each region will be linked together so that close contacts can be built up

between them. Provision is made for groupings to be reviewed every two years to take account of the changing character of some areas. Every senior High School will be given a balanced intake in terms of the intellectual capacity of its pupils. No senior High School is to receive all its pupils from a socially advantaged or a socially disadvantaged area. Junior High School head teachers will be required to assess their pupils' academic ability and potential according to the following scale :-

A - those highly suitable for 'O' and 'A' level work at G.C.E.

B - those reasonably likely to be successful in G.C.E 'O' level and limited 'A' level work.

C - those likely to achieve modest success in G.C.E. 'D' level and/or C.S.E. work.

D - those unlikely to be candidates for any external examinations

E - those likely to require remedial help.

Head teachers will be invited to add any other relevant information - such as family association, details of particular problems, background disadvantages or advantages, and the Chief Education Officer is to arrange for up-to-date standardised assessments. Parents will be informed of the regional Senior High Schools open to them and asked to arrange them in order of preference. On the results of the standardised assessment, supplemented by the information given by Head teachers, the Chief Education Officer will allocate pupils so that each Senior High School receives a balanced intake. Where there are more parental requests than places at a particular school at a particular grade, four criteria - suggested by the Teachers' Advisory Panel and approved by the Education

Committee - are employed to evaluate the preferences. The criteria, in order of importance, are :-

(a) family association (brother/sister/father/mother)

(b) a specific preference for a single sex or a co-educational school. (The Education Committee does not say what it would do if parents' wishes and available places did not balance).

(c) the pupil's score in the standardised assessments

(d) ease of access.

It is interesting to note the emphasis in the Hull proposals on the Education Committee and the Chief Education Officer - the intention being specifically to protect junior high school head teachers and their staffs from the pressures of parents.

My investigations have not revealed any authority other than Wallasey which gives automatic allocation to Third Tier Schools solely on family association. Without doubt, allocation of pupils from middle to third tier schools is a serious problem for urban communities where parental choice can reasonably be taken into account and there is a good case for seeking to avoid neighbourhood third tier schools, since neighbourhoods may not produce a typical cross-section. But only in Wallasey does it seem to be believed that such a random factor as parental choice, except by incredible and unlikely coincidence, can possibly produce academically balanced third tier schools. The motivations of parents are often obscure, often unrelated to proper education.

It is difficult to anticipate what will happen as the allocation procedure develops. Only in the absence of random factors can there be a realistic hope of achieving any precise balance between third tier

schools. It seems to me that the greater the percentage success in meeting parental choice, the greater the likelihood of failure in producing academic balance and the greater the risk of undermining the intention of providing "town schools". It seems likely that the Wallasey system will result in about 70% of parents getting theor first choice - so that there is only room for manoeuvre within the other thirty per cent. Whatever efforts are made to adjust imbalance - perhaps by selective culling of the over-subscribed school lists, it seems unlikely to redress the fault fully. Moreover, I suspect that there may be some resistance from middle school Headteachers when asked to produce order-of-merit lists - and who is to say that different Heads using individual criteria will produce comparability?

Mention should be made at this point of a peculiar feature of the Wallasey scheme which gives non-selective pupils in the 14+ age groups in 1968 and 1969 (i.e. those born between 2.9.53 and 1.9.54 and 2.9.54 and 1.9.55 respectively) the option of transfer to Third Tier Schools for a two year course.

This proposal was not included in the original submission and arose from the fact that approval for the Scheme was so long delayed that some changes had to be made in the original timetable if the Scheme was to come into operation in September 1968.

It had been planned that the first 11+ all ability transfer to Middle Schools should coincide with the transfer out of these schools to Third Tier Schools of pupils aged 13+; but by the time the approval was received it was clearly too late to have Third Tier Buildings ready. It would nevertheless be possible to abolish selection at 11+ - the

first objective - and transfer comprehensively at that age if some slight relief could be provided on accommodation in secondary non-selective schools, i.e. the new Middle Schools. The first idea was that fifth forms should be removed from these schools, but Headteachers pointed out that the C.S.E. course was really a two year course and it would be inadvisable to transfer the 1968 fifth-form in mid-stream. It was, therefore, decided to offer transfer to those who would be in the 14+ age group in September 1968, that is, they would be transferred from the third-form of a non-selective school to the fourth form of a third tier school, for a course leading to C.S.E. or, in appropriate cases, to G.C.E. This optional transfer - for which we estimated a 50% demand - would have the effect of relieving accommodation pressures in Middle Schooles and, at the same time, would begin to remove external examination pressures from Middle Schools, thus facilitating the development of the new Middle School philosophy.

What I said about parents feeling that mediocre children would be best catered for in the Technical Schools is borne out in the way they opted for transfer ar 14+. The first options were as follows :-

SCHOOL	TO STAY		OLDERSHAW		WALL GRAM.	WALL HIGH	TECH GRAM.	TECH HIGH	TOTAL
	B	G	B	G					
Gorsedale	57		8		1		33		99
Moreton Boys	51		10		16		20		97
Moreton Girls		69		8		4		19	100
Quarry Mount		33		16		7		24	80
St. Georges Boys	25		7		5		28		65
St. Georges Girls		32		27		7		24	80
Somerville		36		11		3		20	70
Withensfield	28		11		1		42		82
	321		98		23	21	123	87	673

The Oldershaw options suited the Headmaster quite well - and these were granted immediately - as were the options for Wallasey Grammar and Wallasey High School. The Technical Grammar Schools were clearly over-subscribed and a letter was sent to the parents concerned explaining the situation and asking them if they would accept instead places in Wallasey Grammar School. Only a few moved :-

From Technical Grammar School 21

From Technical High School 23

and a system of random allocation had to be applied.

It was agreed that although the Technical Grammar School(1) would lose 90+ pupils in its first year, it could not take more than 80 in the

(1) The procedure we applied to the Technical High School was similar

fourth year options. The 94 applicants were ranged in alphabetical order by schools and every sixth one was allocated to Wallasey Grammar School (Oldershaw being taken as fully subscribed on parental choice). Those with family associations with the Technical Grammar School had already been allocated to that school and the precaution had been taken of removing a pair of twins from the allocation so that they could not be split. But what had been feared happened - a boy living at a house almost on the doorstep of the Technical Grammar School - whose parents had opted for Technical Grammar School - was allocated to Wallasey Grammar School two miles away. It was decided that geography was not a factor to be taken into account in allocations.

So far as the Middle Schools were concerned, optional transfers at 14+ left them with a rump of the least able. Thus, in September 1968, a Middle School would have an all ability first year, a non-selective second and third year, the least able remainder of a fourth year and a fifth form doing C.S.E. In September 1969, a Middle School would have an all ability first and second year, no third year and the least able remainder of a fourth year. This situation could lead to difficulties of staffing, where specialists might have to be kept on to deal with the non-selective element - specialists who saw their future in a third tier school and who were unwilling to adjust to non-specialised teaching for the all ability groups and difficulties of equipment where, for instance, expensive metalwork equipment might need to be kept in Middle schools for the benefit of the few fourth formers, when it could more profitably be used in the new all ability groups in the Third Tier Schools.

X. Third Tier Schools - some problems of organisation.

For the Third Tier Schools in September 1968, the 14+ transfer offered a foretaste of what was to come and highlighted some of the problems - especially the problem of integration - both of pupils and staff. Teachers in non-selective schools feared that there would be two societies and that they would perpetually be confined to teaching the least able pupils. From the pupils' side, questions such as compulsory school uniform and soccer versus rugby union began to arise.

Headteachers of third tier schools are working on their post 1969 organisation, but it is not possible at this stage to give a clear statement of the intentions of them all, and the amount of detail involved may well provide material for a separate work. However, the pattern at the Technical Grammar School is not untypical, where in 1969 it is intended that the 13+ entrance should be integrated through the House system and this entire age group will be divided into three broad bands - one consisting of pupils who will be following courses mainly to the General Certificate of Education Ordinary level examination, one consisting of pupils who will mainly be concerned with subjects at Certificate of Secondary Education leval and one group following courses with no external examinations in mind. A broad general course, which will differ to some extent for each band, will be followed for one year. This will be a diagnostic year, in which the pupils themselves become used to the new environment and different techniques and the staff will be able to get to know the pupils and assess their general ability and special aptitudes so that the allocation to the broad bands can be reviewed.

In the fourth and fifth years, pupils will follow a system of basic subjects with multiple options, the options being adjusted to meet the requirements in each band. Individual timetables can vary from the wholly academic at one extreme, as in the traditional grammar school, to increasingly practical and creative at the other. This method provides a greater degree of individual matching of abilities and skills than does a rigid group of subjects all of which are studied by each pupil irrespective of ability. Tentative groups of subjects for these options have been suggested, involving new subjects not at present taught in the school, but as thinking and planning on this matter are only in the early stages, it will be premature to attempt to outline them now. Similar broadening of the sixth form curriculum is being planned. There will continue to be an opportunity for advanced level courses in at least as many subjects as are offered at present. There will, however, also be a possibility of ordinary level subjects and courses of a general educational nature for those who wish to pursue their education until 18+ without the confining limits of external examination requirements.

A series of administrative memoranda issued by the Headmaster of Oldershaw Grammar School, for internal use only, show more clearly the complexity of the problems. In Administrative Memorandum No,6 dated 18.1.1968, he saw five main issues to be resolved :-

1. September 1968 - curriculum for new intake (i.e. 14+)
2. September 1968 - curriculum for present first years.
3. September 1969 - curriculum for present second years.
4. September 1969 - curriculum for first fully comprehensive intake at 13+
5. Future Sixth form curriculum.

(1) The School was expected to take about 30 boys and 60 girls into the fourth year for a two year course. Advance planning was well nigh impossible, since the school did not know until March 1968 who these children were, what their present courses are or what aims they have. It was expected that some would take a G.C.E. course, some would offer C.S.E. and some might well not be suitable for examination at all. Apart from this, there were several general problems - should the new intake be kept as three separate forms, or helped to become members of the school by mixing with the present school years? In the event, the school hit upon a compromise by keeping them as separate form units but putting them into existing G.C.E. and C.S.E. groups for certain specific subjects. There was a further complication arising from Oldershaw's recent development towards a co-educational school; some of the new intake would come from single sex schools, some from a mixed school; if they were to be mixed at Oldershaw there would be an anomaly in that the present third years are single sex but the new intake would be co-educational.

(2) The children in the first year in 1967, who would become the second year in 1968, would be joined in S ptember 1969 by their contemporaries at present in secondary modern schools to make the fully comprehensive year group of eight forms. The Headmaster asked whether he should anticipate the change of September 1969 by making the present first year boys and girls into Band 1; he thought it likely that there would in 1969 be three forms in Band 1, so that the less able of the present first year could be put into a C.S.E. form in September 1969 to provide the nucleus of Band 2. Should they be setted or streamed? Again, an

acceptable compromise seemed to be to have form groups for most subjects with setting in one or two subjects - this avoids the dispersive effect of having different sets for all subjects and gives greater stability, but involves some streaming.

(3) Looking at the 1968 third forms, the Headmaster asked whether he should continue the present differing pattern for boys and girls, or look ahead to the comprehensive pattern and regard this year group as Band 1 from September 1968 - a complication here arising from the fact that in the traditional grammar school course half the boys had done one year's German and half the girls had done one year's Latin. This school - in the conventional grammar school days - had an unusual streaming devise whereby boys were streamed into (a) non-German - i.e. those who had to choose Art, Woodwork or Music instead and (b) German - who were not allowed to do Art, Music or Woodwork. The girls were streamed into Latin or non-Latin by a system which appeared to equate academic ability with ability in Latin; all girls took art, needlework and cookery and there were no options.

(4) For the curriculum for the first year of a comprehensive third tier mixed school, we see the same pattern of "banding" as had been suggested at Wallasey Technical Grammar School. There would be three broad bands in the proprtion 40:40:20.

Band one - G.C.E. directed - comprised of forms of potential G.C.E. candidates with some C.S.E. entries.

Band Two - C.S.E. directed - comprised of forms of potential C.S.E. candidates, although there would be some who would not take any

examination. This band would also include some who would leave school at the earliest possible opportunity which, until the school leaving age is raised, might be five or six terms after their arrival at Oldershaw.

Band Three would consist of two smaller forms of weaker pupils and remedial groups and only exceptionally would any pupils in this band be entered for C.S.E. The Headmaster assumed that this broad-banding would be done in the Middle School, or that at worst the Middle School would provide information on which this distribution would be based.

(5) The Headmaster was also well aware that there may be changes in the existing sixth form pattern and that it would be necessary to devise a scheme which would cater at the same time for the really academic candidate who requires three 'A' levels; the academic candidate who requires one or two 'A' levels and some 'O' levels; and the less academic sixth former who requires a one year 'O' level course only - this third group would be an entirely new group at Oldershaw. In addition, it would be necessary to maintain and where possible extend the provision for general courses.

A further problem which occupied the attention of head teachers and teachers was the revision of super-scale payments, but it was not until 14th November 1968 that the Director of Education was able to say anything positive about the establishment of posts of Heads of Department and Graded Posts. The Director wanted to see established in all third tier schools a measure of the total value of Heads of Departments and Graded Posts considered under a single heading of "responsibility posts".

Within this over-all measure, each school would then have a considerable degree of flexibility in the establishment of responsibility posts in accordance with the individual development, specialities and strengths of each school, but with a reasonable correlation among all schools in the method for administrative and organisational responsibilities. Most teachers holding responsibility posts will have more than one responsibility i.e. a teacher may be a subject head and also hold a pastoral responsibility such as that of a Housemaster. A system of multiple responsibilities appropriately rewarded is probably the most suitable arrangement for third tier schools and it is to be hoped that whatever scheme Wallasey adopts will have built into it a considerable degree of flexibility.

Information was difficult to obtain about the probable organisation of third tier schools. They did not adopt the concerted approach of the middle schools, each apparently preferring to avoid the benefits of joint consultation and remaining masters of their own disparate destinies. In the case of the two schools I have quoted, headteachers specifically requested that details of internal organisation should not be discussed outside their own staffs and, therefore, the use I have been able to make of the material I gathered from them is strictly limited.

It may be helpful at this juncture to recapitulate the pre-existent structure, since this undoubtedly influences headteacher attitudes in third tirer schools. Up to 1968, the three allegedly "superior" grammar schools absorbed the top 25% of the age group, the two technical grammar

schools took the next 15% and the modern schools took the remaining 60%. Thus, whilst the technical grammar schools may have had an inkling of the problems to be faced by the absorption of less able children, the other grammar schools, protected by this 15% buffer from contamination, seemed to have little appreciation of what was coming to them. Up to the time I left Wallasey, perhaps with the exception of the Technical Grammar School, it seemed that the third tier schools had not begun to face up to the real needs of the new type of child with which they would have to deal. It will be seen that any information I have been able to get from these schools deals with the organisation and responsibility structures and not with the content of education in the new school. They seemed to me to be more concerned to resist the erosion of erstwhile grammar school ethos - whatever that might be - than to meet the challenge of an exciting educational experiment. To the problems of integration of pupils must be added the difficulty of integration of staff - and although some heads would undoubtedly give posts of considerable seniority to teachers transferring from secondary modern schools, this in itself did nothing to remove the mythological superiority of the graduate grammar school teacher. It seemed to me that the grammar schools were still wholly concerned to protect the interests of the able children, rather than the interests of all children, and their inflexibility makes me frankly pessimistic about the success of the whole scheme.

By mid-1968, the Secretary of State for Education and Science had begun to foreshadow changes in the relationship between secondary and further education, without indicating specific proposals. It may,

therefore, be appropriate at this stage to say something about the place of the College of Further Education in a reorganised system.

In January 1967, Mr.C.R. English, H.M.I., addressing the N.U.T Conference said :- "Schools would have to tackle the needs of young people who, though not necessarily academic, were able and keen to continue their education, but it would be disastrous to keep young people in schools without their knowing that the courses they follow were right for their ultimate purpose. Nor was it good enough to retain them in a sixth form which offered only a limited range of subjects. It would be disastrous if secondary reorganisation were undertaken without regard to the provisions of further education in a given area. The Department was most anxious that development schemes should be looked at from the angles of both Further Education and of Secondary Education". This awareness of making use of the facilities of Further Education is not shown at other levels - for instance, the Schools Council in Working Paper Number 5 on Sixth-form Curriculum and Examinations, devotes only 7 lines to Further Education, confining itself to the observation that it would be interesting to enquire why some young folk choose full time Further Education rather than VIth form.

It appears that a number of pupils were taking courses for which they were not fitted. In the country as a whole, 15% leave maintained Grammar Schools at 18+ with no 'A' level passes and 30% have only one 'A' level. 15% of students entering University will leave without a degree and, if the figures are restricted to science and engineering, failure becomes 30%.

At the local level, in Wallasey, it was well known that there was a marked reluctance on the part of the grammar schools to encourage the more practically minded students to O.N.D. courses in which they could possibly do better and advance themselves more rapidly on a business or engineering career.

The Principal of the College of Further Education in Wallasey, Mr. E.G. Knowles, in a letter dated 22nd June, 1967, saw in reorganisation an opportunity for close co-operation between the schools and the College to provide for the non-university type of student a course preparing him/her in a broad field for entry into industry and commerce. He quoted Professor Swan :- "It is of great importance to change a widespread belief that academic research is the only respectable outcome of scientific education - in this, influences at an early stage, particularly at school, play an important part". What Mr.Knowles suggested was that at 15+ there should be day-release from school to College for subjects with an industrial/practical bias and for which facilities are already available at the College, e.g. Shorthand/typing, Electrical Installation work, Mechanical Engineering, Engineering and G1 Science, Carpentry and Joinery, Plumbing. At 16+ there should be full-time courses for O.N.D. in Business Studies, O.N.D. in Engineering, Advanced Secretarial, Secretarial and Building Courses, with part-time day release courses such as 'A' level Engineering, 'A' level Commerce, Shorthand/typing, linked with school 'O' levels. G* or G2 Science, G* or G2 Engineering.

He claimed that the College is already well equipped both with staff and machines and these could not be deployed in schools without

ignoring the economics of the situation. What he had not taken into account was the fact that headteachers of grammar schools had accepted comprehensiveness - they would not have it up to 16 and VIth form college thereafter. Their schools would provide for the full ability range from 13-18 and most of the heads were strongly against day release from school on the grounds of impracticability. The Headmaster of Oldershaw, Mr.Mullett felt that to accept Mr.Knowles' ideas was to accept the inadequacy of third tier schools. Mr.Knowles' proposals amounted to nothing less than a non-academic sixth form college, fed by five third tier schools. The headteachers were not opposed to co-operation with the College; some schools, such as Wallasey Grammar School and Technical Grammar School, sent pupils to the College for courses where the College's equipment and availability of staff with industrial experience made its facilities clearly superior. Nevertheless, it was clear from discussion of Mr.Knowles' letter with headteachers that they were not in favour of day releases to the College. It seems to me that full time 'O' and 'A' level courses might well disappear from the College altogether - although there may always be a certain amount of salvage work - and that the college will concentrate on Industrial Training Board activities and part-time courses.

XI. Reorganisation of Catholic Schools.

About one fifth of the children of Wallasey are Roman Catholics, and the fact that they have been ignored so far in this account of reorganisation reflects the attitude of the Roman Catholic Authorities, who whilst making sympathetic cooing noises in the direction of a three tier scheme similar to that of the Authority, were so far daunted by difficulties described below that they failed to make any practical proposals for the implementation of any scheme up til March 1968!

Catholic Primary Schools in the east of the Borough are either incomplete (St.Albans), overcrowded (St.Peter and Paul) or in dire need of replacement (St. Josephs). (The junior school at St.Josephs is to be rebuilt in 1968/69 and has been designed basically as a 5-9 school). Catholic primary schools in the west of the Borough are in modern buildings and to say that they are more than adequate is an understatement. Similarly, secondary non-selective schools are very much over-provided, since the Church recently opened a third non-selective school at St.Bede's. The three non-selective schools have a nominal accommodation of 900 and can comfortably house rather more than that; but they have at present only 713 pupils on roll. If the Roman Catholic authorities wished to reorganise on the same lines as the local authority, their primary schools could easily accommodate the 5-9 age groups (in fact, St. Joseph's Infant and Moreton R.C.Infant would be surplus to requirements) and thus additional building in the future on limited sites could be avoided.

Children from 9 - 13 could be provided for in existing non-selective secondary schools. The difficulty in re-organisation lies in the Third Tier Schools. The only Roman Catholic grammar school in the town is Maris Stella High School; this is part of a convent of the Sisters of the Holy Family, and has a teaching area of only 10,004 square feet. By building regulation standards this would provide accommodation fof 210 pupils but, since it has at present 334 pupils on roll, the Department of Education and Science says that its capacity is at least 334. In 1952, when there were 186 girls on roll with a sixth-form of 15, Her Majesty's Inspectors reported that "the accommodation is barely adequate, and the number of rooms are too small for their purpose". There has been no significant improvement in accommodation since then but there are now 334 girls on roll with a sixth form of 55. Only one classroom is over 500 square feet, and the library is accommodated in two rooms of 260 sq. ft. and 154 sq.ft.

Whilst the position for girls is bad enough the position of Roman Catholic boys is even more complicated. Roman Catholic boys selected for secondary grammar education had been provided for to some extent in Direct Grant Schools - mainly (about 24 per year) at St. Anselm's College, Birkenhead) and partly (about 2/3 per year) at St. Francis Xavier's, Liverpool. About 45 boys per year, classified for grammar schools, have been admitted to the Authority's schools, and in addition about 15 girls per age group have been admitted to the Technical High School. Thus at the time of writing there is a total of about 300 Roman Catholic pupils in the Authority's secondary schools.

The Authority's approved proposals in the Third Tier were based entirely on a take up from the Authority's own schools, and the Birkenhead proposals for re-organisation involved plans for the future of St. Anselms which would result in St. Anselm's becoming the Upper School (13+) of a comprehensive school formed by joining with the non-selective St. Hugh's nearby. At the time of writing this has not been approved: but clearly the absence of 60 places per year in the Authority's schools and the possibility of being deprived of 24 places per year at St. Anselm's constituted a serious problem for the Roman Catholic authorities. Part of the reason for the delay in the production of firm proposals from the Catholics lay in the future of St. Anselms and the fact that the Catholics were concerned with finding a scheme for their pupils in Wallasey which would fit in with schemes of re-organisation in the area as a whole, (i.e. including Cheshire and Birkenhead) and would not harm St. Anselm's - the Irish Brothers at St. Anselm's had provided selective education for Catholic boys when none else could and it was clearly impossible to throw aside St. Anselm's because of re-organisation.

Once the Wallasey scheme had been approved and it became clear that the Authority intended to press on with re-organisation in September 1968, the position appeared to a number of Catholic teachers to be that either they had to re-organise - which in the absence of a third tier school for boys seemed impossible - or they must stay as they are: but if they continued with classification in 1968 the parents would consider themselves unfairly treated by comparison with the Authority schools, and might opt in large numbers to leave denominational schools (an embarrassment both for the church and the Authority).

In any case, even if they classified, they had no scheme to which they could send boys classified for secondary grammar education.

The Catholic teachers formed a Working Party in the spring of 1967 and attempted to devise a scheme which would ensure:-

(a) that all Catholic children are taught in Catholic schools in Wallasey and that they are taught comprehensively.

(b) that as far as possible the scheme should be parallel with that of the L.E.A.

(c) that use must be made of all existing buildings.

(d) that parish units should be maintained - the longer the child remains in the parish schools, the better.

(e) children should be taught in schools near their homes, thus eliminating unnecessary travel.

The Authority's Working Party had consisted of 6 representatives of the teachers and 6 representatives of the Education Committee, and it made its recommendations to the Education Committee. The Catholic Working Party seemed to consist of a vast number of teachers and headteachers - including representatives from private schools, on the one hand, and Monsignor Rees, representing the Catholic Authority (i.e. the Shrewsbury Diocesan Schools' Commission) on the other - usually supported by the attendance of an officer of the L.E.A.
It must be stated that there has throughout been the closest consultation between the Local Education Authority and the Catholic Authorities; but the Catholic Working Party seemed to have no official standing as such, other than to represent the views of teachers to Monsignor Rees, which provided an opportunity for Monsignor to try to explain to Catholic teachers the difficulties which he faced.

Moreover, it was evident that parish rivalries were at least as important to some of the teachers as educational considerations.

A number of schemes were considered - but they all depended ultimately upon the provision of additional accommodation in the Third Tier. Following a visit to the Department of Education and Science, a scheme for ultimate re-organisation was submitted based on the use of primary schools as First Tier Schools, St. Bedes, St. Hilda's and St. Thomas Becket as Middle Schools, with pupils of 13+ accommodated in an enlarged Maris Stella and a new Third Tier School for Boys.

The Authority followed up this submission by a strong bid for inclusion of a Catholic Third Tier School in the Educational Building Programme for 1970/71. The attitude of the Department at this time was that "there was no money for re-organisation as such, only projects which contributed to the development of a comprehensive system would be approved. The Authority made out a very strong claim on basic need, and it is understood that the strength of this claim is admitted by the Department; but by this time Circular 6/68 had called for a revision of the 1968/69 programme - which would undoubtedly be followed by a revision of the 1969/70 programme - so that consideration of the 1970/71 programme was delayed indefinitely. G. Porter, the Territorial Officer, went so far as to say "the project enjoys our goodwill", but went on to say that in view of the revisions of building programmes called for in 6/68, the project would have to be examined again in the light of other contenders in the north-west and "at this stage I am quite unable to commit myself." (1)

(1) G. Porter - letter to Director of Education dated 6th February, 1968.

A possible solution to the dilemma so far as Catholic boys were concerned was for the Authority to allow the Catholics the use of Withensfield School buildings in Manor Road. It had long been intended that the school in Manor Road would move to the buildings in Withens Lane vacated by Wallasey Grammar School when the new Grammar School opened in Leasowe in September 1967. When the time came, the long promised move did not materialise, because, by this time, extensions to the College of Further Education were supposed to be in hand, and the old Grammar School was to be used as an annexe of the College whilst these alterations were carried out. Even when the College alterations are completed, the former Grammar School will have to be adapted for use as a Middle School, and it seems unrealistic to expect the building to be available now before September 1970.

The possible use of Withensfield was one which most Catholics viewed with concern - their concern being that once they accepted this and had roofs over the heads of their children, they would be stuck with it for evermore and, on the principle of roofs over heads, the Department would count Withensfield as existing accommodation. What the Catholics quite properly wanted was an end in view - if they had had an assurance that provision would be made in a forseeable building programme for a new Catholic school, and that the use of Withensfield, however long, would be purely temporary, they would undoubtedly have accepted this situation. However with no such assurance, and with no prospect of a building, and with no reply from the Department on their final scheme of re-organisation, Catholic parents became increasingly frustrated as they saw the Authority's scheme swinging into shape and only the prospect of total confusion for their own children in September 1968.

The Authority began to receive more and more enquiries on the possibility of transferring from Catholic schools to Authority schools, and parents began to exert mounting pressure on the Catholic authorities and in particular on Monsignor Rees. With the approval of the Bishop of Shrewsbury, Parents' Associations were set up in all Catholic schools and this led to the establishment of the Central Committee of Catholic Parents' Associations which very quickly began to make its influence felt.

Monsignor Rees had indicated at the time of the submission of the Catholic final scheme, that if approval was not forthcoming, he might find it necessary to object when Section 13 notices were issued in respect of the Authority's proposals. He would, of course, do this reluctantly but he felt, and I think with some justification, that he had strong grounds. If the Authority's scheme included provision for Catholic children, he would object on the grounds that they wished to educate their children in their own schools and additional County provision should be pruned accordingly. If the Authority's scheme contained no provision for Catholics, he would object on the grounds that Catholics formerly enjoying a number of places in County Schools were now not provided for. In the event, Monsignor Rees did not object - but a number of parents did - on the very grounds that no provision was made in the Authority's scheme not any assurance given for any Catholic scheme for Catholic children who had previously been provided for in the Authority's schools. Some parents went so far as to demand that if satisfactory assurances could not be given to the Catholics, then the Authority's own scheme of re-organisation should be deferred.

On the whole, the Catholic parents seem to have found it rather difficult to get information or satisfaction from the Department - but one group of parents did receive a reply from an officer named T.E. Cleeve to the effect that "until the Authority have been able to establish a case on grounds of overall need in Wallasey, for the provision of an additional third tier school, they are responsible for maintaining arrangements for the accommodation of Roman Catholic pupils in County Schools."

In March 1968, the Authority received from the Shrewsbury Diocesan Commissioners proposals for the interim re-organisation of Catholic schools, which would enable Catholic pupils to transfer comprehensively at 11+ in 1968 to Middle Schools based on existing secondary non-selective schools. The proposals - details of which are attached at Appendix C closely resembled the Authority's own scheme with minor differences in timetable. The Catholic proposals contained no provision for optional transfer at 14+ partly because there was no Catholic Third Tier School to which boys could transfer, and the accommodation for this kind of girl at Maris Stella was inferior to that provided at St. Hilda's, and partly because there was not in the Catholic Middle Schools the same pressure on accommodation which had caused the Authority to propose this transfer to relieve accommodation pressures in its own schools.

In the Catholic proposals, the first transfer at 13+ would be a comprehensive transfer of a complete age group in 1970 (the Authority's plan transferred secondary modern pupils at 13+ in September 1969 and the first comprehensive transfer of a full age-group was planned for September 1970)

Transfers of two age-groups simultaneously to give effedt to interim 10-13 Middle Schools would take place for Catholics in 1971 - for L.E.A. pupils in 1970. A Boys' Third Tier School would be required for the first time in September 1970 and the Commissioners expressed the hope that if they did not have a building of their own by this time they might be granted the temporary use of a disused Authority school (i.e. Withensfield) This would temporarily solve the problem for the boys - but, by 1970, accommodation pressures on Maris Stella would be acute. These proposals were sent up to the Department on the very day on which they were received by the Director - in advance of Education Committee approval - but with an assurance that this would undoubtedly follow.

The Director indicated that there would be little objection to the use of Withensfield, and suggested two ways in which pressures at Maris Stella might be relieved. Not very far away from the school was a building belonging to the Authority known as the Field Road Centre - once a Technical School and now an Adult Class Centre, also used by the College of Art. The domestic science facilities on the ground floor were already available during the whole of the day for the use of Maris Stella, and the Director proposed to move all day-time classes to the main College of Art in Central Park. This would make available about 130 places for Maris Stella; and the Director also suggested that the Catholics should apply for a Minor Work from the Voluntary Schools Minor Works to provide at Maris Stella a two-story block on the lines of those being provided in other Third Tier Schools.

As late as 26th March, 1968, a letter from the Department of Education raised great alarm because it seemed to indicate that the objections raised by the Catholic parents were very well founded. V.H. Stevens said, "Frankly, this objection strikes me as being very well founded and I have no reason to believe that Ministers would think otherwise. You will have seen a number of resolutions on the subject circulated recently by the newly-formed Central Committee of Catholic Parents' Associations.(1) These resolutions cannot be brushed aside and we must be able to answer them."(2) Stevens went on to say that if "Roman Catholic re-organisation should prove to be impracticable in 1968 and Roman Catholic pupils have perforce to continue to attend County Schools, the question raised in the Central Committee's third resolution becomes a live one." As Stevens pointed out, the concurrent operation of different but over-lapping schemes with different transfer ages would be the most complicated and the practicalities of Roman Catholic re-organisation are therefore closely linked to the proposals for County Schools. It turned out that this was more in the nature of a warning blast than a serious threat, and on 21st May, 1968, Stevens wrote again,(3) conveying the approval of the Secretary of State for both the long-term and the interim scheme of Roman Catholic re-organisation.

(1)Minutes of the meeting of the Central Committee of Wallasey Catholic Parents' Association, 4th March, 1968, resolved that if written undertakings must be obtained from the Department of Education ..... that Catholic children can either (a) be adequately accommodated in new third-tier Catholic schools with facilities equal to third-tier County Schools by September 1970, or (b) be accommodated in County Schools at third-tier level in September, 1970. Should this not be possible the re-organisation scheme for Wallasey as a whole should be put back for one year.

(2) Letter to the Director of Education from V.H. Stevens, Department of Education and Science, 26th March, 1968.

(3) Letter to the Local Education Authority, Wallasey, from V.H. Stevens, Department of Education and Science, dated 21st May, 1968.

Stevens said, "It is essential that interim re-organisation next September should be capable of being sustained at a satisfactory level of efficiency in the immediately succeeding years without reliance upon the provision of new buildings, "and noted with approval the arrangements proposed by the Authority which I have mentioned above.

The Secretary of State expressed his appreciation to both the Authority and the Diocesan Schools Commission for "their resourcesfulness in producing a satisfactory plan in the face of difficult problems." (1)

The receipt of this approval was followed by a series of meetings at which Monsignor Rees, the Vicar-General, the Director of Education and members of his staff, explained the new system to Catholic parents. Although there were at these meetings some heated exchanges, the general result seems to have been an acceptance by the Catholic parents of the Scheme, and several wrote to the Director expressing their appreciation. The parents who had originally objected under Section 13 wrote formally withdrawing their objections.

(1) V.H. Stevens, ibid.

XII. Conclusion.

To those who have been actively concerned with the development of reorganisation in Wallasey - politicians, administrators, teachers and parents - it may appear that the march of progress has been a matter of staggering from one crisis to another, but a detached observer would no doubt feel that the long period of negotiation, admittedly including a number of setbacks, has not been without its value, since it has involved a great deal of rethinking and revision of plans. Also, there is little doubt that familiarity with the proposals has made them more acceptable to both teachers and the puplic.

In this period, teachers have been brought together on a scale never before known in Wallasey and, even in advance of the scheme's implementation separatism has given way to liaison and co-operation. There has been a programme of in-service training on an unprecedented scale, facilitated by the establishment of a Schools Development Unit. There can be little doubt that as a result of the improved liaison between schools and the activities of the Schools Development Unit, the changes in education in Wallasey, particularly in the middle years of schooling, will not be limited only to the organisational changes entailed in the Three Tier System.

On pages 67-69 I have described the dilemma in which the Authority found itself in the summer of1967, when the scheme originally submitted in August 1966 was approved by the Secretary of State without any assurance that approval for the buildings necessary to allow implementation would be forthcoming and I have outlined the three alternatives which were considered by the Authority.

Two involved delay of implementation and a continuance of some form of of classification at 11+. (I might add that teachers generally were of the opinion that if classification were to continue, it should be on the tried and tested 11+ examination, and with one or two exceptions headteachers were unwilling to consider other methods of classification, if only on the grounds that it was not worth changing at this late stage). The public had been led to believe that the 11+ had been held for the last time in 1967, and the only acceptable way of ensuring that this would be so appeared to lie in the commencement of the implementation of the Three Tier Scheme in September 1968. It was not possible to anticipate the difficulties which would arise through government retrenchment and the non-raising of the school leaving age (made all the more troublesome by the fact that, although money for the raising of the school leaving age has been withdrawn, 75% of Wallasey pupils will stay on voluntarily to 16+)

It would perhaps be fair to say that more consideration should have been given at this stage to problems which would arise if the scheme of re-organisation of County Schools was not accompanied by a scheme for the re-organisation of Catholic Schools - particularly in view of the fact that the re-organisation of County Schools involved the use, for county school purposes, of places previously occupied by Roman Catholics, for whom no alternative provision had been made. There were times when the Director fell to thinking that it might have been better, in July 1967, for Committee to have deferred the commencement of re-organisation, but this is not an opinion I can share, nor one which he would have wished to uphold in his more cheerful moments.

Deferment would have led inevitably to some loss of momentum. Partly in response to a good deal of propaganda work by the Authority, public opinion had become increasingly sympathetic; teacher tolerance was also increasing and some primary schools had even then begun to adjust their teaching to the freedom arising from the abolition of classification at 11+. Increasing support and goodwill from all sections of the community would have been frustrated, and the "patient might never have recovered from a relapse" at this stage. Furthermore, hindsight reveals that, had the Authority deferred for one year, it would not have been possible for its Building Programme to escape the government's axe, when building programmes were cut back, and the scheme could not possibly have begun to be implemented in the sixties at all.

I referred on page 109 to the difficulties likely to arise from the fact that Wallasey Middle Schools are based on and developed from existing non-selective secondary schools. The Department of Education in its early thinking about Middle Schools, had envisaged that they would be based on primary school buildings - not, I think, on any educational grounds, but purely on grounds of cost. I think it was a good idea in Wallasey to house Middle Schools in secondary non-selective buildings, since these are generally superior to the buildings of other schools and the child at 9 is immediately put into buildings far superior to those he had known in primary school. Nevertheless, I think the greatest weakness in the Wallasey scheme is that adequate precautions have not been taken to avoid the domination of the Middle Schools by non-selective mentality.

I have referred to the timetable of implementation which results in September 1968 in Quarry Mount Middle School - which is typical of the others - being composed as follows:-

Year One	6 f.e.	...	all ability pupils
Year Two	3 f.e.	...	non selective pupils
Year Three	3 f.e.	...	non selective pupils
Year Four	½ x 3 f.e.	...	non selective pupils mainly of the lowest ability group.
Year Five		...	C.S.E. pupils

and in September 1969:-

Year One	5 f.e.	...	all ability pupils
Year Two	3 f.e.	...	all ability pupils
Year Three	Nil	...	all transferred to Third Tier
Year Four	3 f.e.	...	non selective pupils mainly of lowest ability group and including about 200 Easter leavers.
Year Five	Nil	...	all potential fifth formers transferred on 14+ option last year.

One of the declared intentions of the Three Tier Scheme is to extend the desirable benefits of primary school education - but, for the all ability intake in September 1968, not a single primary school teacher is being transferred to Middle Schools. Staff movements brought about solely by re-organisation in September 1968 number less than 12 and are mainly concerned with the provision of craft teachers for the 14-plus transfer group, thus involving some domestic science teachers moving from second to third tier schools and one metalwork teacher moving from a second to third tier school. There are no moves from third to second tier: since third tier schools will generally have less pupils in

September 1968, it had been assumed that some teachers - particularly teachers of French would be available for transfer - but a higher than usual degree of "natural wastage" has meant that there is not a surplus of teachers in the Third Tier Schools. The difficulties confronting Middle School heads can be seen from the position at Gorsedale School, - where the head of the Mathematics department has been appointed to a Third Tier School. The headmaster is advertising for a Mathematician, and needs someone who is capable of teaching the subject to C.S.E. level (but for one year only), thereafter, his need will be for someone who is fully conversant with recent developments in primary school maths.

When parents expressed concern about the calibre of "secondary modern" teachers who would be teaching in Middle Schools, Alderman Hutty, the Chairman, in a statement in the Wallasey News, made a strong plea in their defence, pointing with pride to what their achievements were with non-selective material, arguing that they would now be able to do even greater things with the increased ability range. But what they can do is what they have been doing in secondary schools - and that is not what is needed in the new Middle School. Secondary School teachers, uninformed of primary school progress, and perhaps unable to see how they could function in a Middle School (without considerable inconvenience to themselves), have by and large shown an unwillingness to change. I fear that by the time primary school teachers arrive in Middle Schools in and after 1970, the character of these schools will already have been shaped.

This secondary school domination is made the more inevitable by the fact that all the Middle School heads are at present heads of secondary non-selective schools. Middle School heads, like Topsy, "just growed". There has never been a Committee decision on this - it was just assumed that grammar school heads would be Third Tier heads, and secondary non-selective heads would become Middle School heads. This avoids the embarrassment which might have arisen if the posts had all been advertised and a sitting head had not been appointed, (and would therefore have to be found a post in the authority on a protected salary), but to primary teachers and headteadhers, this "just growed" system gives the lie to the Committee's intention that Middle Schools should provide for the extension of primary school influence. They point out - with some justification - that in every case except one, the headship follows the building - that is, the head of the school at present using a building is the head of the post-1968 school in that building - except at Moreton, where it is intended that Moreton Girls' School should transfer to the present Lingham Junior School buildings (in 1970) and Lingham Junior School will cease to exist. The redundant headteacher will be the headmaster of the Junior School - and primary teachers want to know why this should be so and who took the decision.

The situation is admittedly difficult. Primary teachers cannot be transferred without impairing present primary school staffs; but I think that this is a risk that ought to be taken, and what I would have done would be to transfer at least two primary teachers to each Middle School this year and to have replaced them in primary schools either with experienced teachers from outside the Borough or with new entrants to the profession.

Furthermore I should have liked to have seen the Committee announce the appointment of "headteachers designate" where vacancies can be foreseen in Middle Schools - for instance, it is already known thatthe headmaster of Withensfield (Middle School) will retire in July 1969, and that an additional headteacher will be required for St. Georges in 1970. I consider that to regain the confidence of primary school teachers, a dramatic gesture is needed to prevent some of the ablest primary school headteachers from becoming so dissilusioned that they seek a career outside the Borough. The Committee would, in my opinion, be well advised to give urgent consideration to the structure of over-scale payments in Middle Schools. Most of these schools in Wallasey will be Group 5 schools, with a graded post score of 4. The Authority is obliged to keep within this score in the award of graded posts, but Heads of Departments appointments are within the discretion of the Authority, and I should hope that the 10 - 13 Middle School of the early 1970s will have in addition to the headteacher, a Deputy Head, a Senior Master/Mistress, and three Heads of Departments plus the statutory graded posts. No consideration has been given so far to the provision in Middle Schools of technicians and other ancillary staff, but if the Middle Schools are going to develop group resource areas and specialist areas, teachers will be placed under a heavy burden unless they have appropriate assistance.

I have mentioned on page 121 what I consider to be the shortcomings of the approved system of allocation to third tier schools.

The last difficulty to which I wish to draw attention is not peculiar to Wallasey but will apply to all areas where a three tier system is to be introduced.

I refer to the truncated primary school - for years the poor relation of the education service. One can see how, in professional and public esteem, the primary school could become the poor relation in terms of staffing (the only tier with classes of over 40), buildings, equipment, salary and career prospects. The larger the school, the more above-scale posts. This hierarchical structure could be a serious divisive element within the profession at a time when teachers have begun to move towards a spirit of greater understanding and integration than in the past hundred years.

"The task before the Middle School is to create teaching and learning situations in which pupils pass gradually and naturally into more adult stages, maturing at their own best pace, to establish the continuity of the educational process, making a bridge between primary and secondary, dominated by neither. If what they can offer to children at this stage in their lives is the stimulation, guidance and help which will ensure that the quality of interest, responsibility and confidence which so many older children in to-day's primary schools possess can continue to grow for a further two years, the Middle School will fulfil its educational function of enabling children to satisfy the needs of their growth at the stage they have reached. To pursue to the age of thirteen the mode of learning through discovery and experience, to enjoy at leisure some of the creative arts, to follow the by-ways as well as the highways of literature, of science and the humanities, while developing at a natural pace a respect for disciplined study - this will be true education."(1)

(1) L.J. Burrows - "What is in store for the children" - Middle School Symposium, published by the Schoolmaster Publishing Co., 1967.

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