

The History of Our School



We are surrounded by history at Gorefield School. The head teacher and secretary's offices are in what used to be the downstairs of the head teacher's house, the staffroom is in what was her bedroom and when we took down a notice board, we found a window that would have let in light from the kitchen (now the waiting area) to the pantry - now the caretaker's cupboard. Some of our pupils are the fourth generation of their family to have attended this school, and when we look in the punishment books, which record the canings and beatings, we see names which appear on our registers today!

The school has all the old log books, from the day it first opened in 1878 until the 1990s. They tell the story of the school, beginning with 55 pupils and one teacher, who reported despairingly in her first entry 'find that only 5 of those present can work any sums; they read fairly, but all are very bad spellers.' However, she soon recovered, appointed her sister as an assistant teacher and the school roll increased to 86 within a year.

The log books tell the story of holidays for the chapel treat and the Wisbech mart; school closures for potato picking and fruit picking; children absent to watch a skating match on the frozen fens, and missing school to catch larks or help their parents on the land. We can learn about the diphtheria epidemic in the 1890s, which led to the deaths of several pupils; about the first world war and the problems when the head teacher went off to fight; about the arrival of evacuees in World War Two and the building of the air raid shelter (under what is now the bike rack), the purchase of the playing field and the building of the swimming pool.

We use the log books as a teaching resource when we study the Victorians and life during the Second World War, and history came to life when grandparents and family members told the children about their experiences of wartime, and how the school has changed. They told us about the buckets used before the school had flush toilets and how during the war, the playing field was full of pigs!

In 1978 the school celebrated its 100th anniversary and as part of the celebrations, the head teacher at the time wrote a history of the school. This is available on our website, if you would like to know more, or (when they are studying the Victorians) just ask your children...

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Inclusion

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Health
Humanities
Literacy
Maths & Computing
Science & Technology

Home & School
Working Together
Communication
The School Library
Homework
Helpers

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