

**BEDFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL,
EDUCATION COMMITTEE; EDUCATION ACT,
1918: SCHEME FOR THE PROGRESSIVE
DEVELOPMENT AND COMPREHENSIVE
ORGANIZATION OF EDUCATION WITHIN THE
AREA, SUBMITTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE
PROVISIONS OF SECTION I**

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Bedfordshire County Council, Education committee; Education Act, 1918: Scheme for the progressive development and comprehensive organization of education within the area, submitted in accordance with the provisions of Section I by Various

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VARIOUS

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EDUCATION COMMITTEE.

EDUCATION ACT, 1918.

**Scheme for the Progressive Development
and Comprehensive Organization of
Education within the Area, submitted
in accordance with the provisions of
Section I. of the Education Act, 1918.**

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INTRODUCTION TO THE SCHEME.

GENERAL.

1. GENERAL SURVEY.

The Area of the Bedfordshire Education Authority consists of the Administrative County of Bedford, containing 302,942 acres with a population (census 1911) of 194,588 (now estimated to have increased to 200,000), being 364 to the square mile. Though the smallest County in England, with the exception of Rutland, Hunts, and Middlesex, this population per square mile is equal to, or exceeds that of many counties of larger area. There are no County Boroughs, and therefore the County Education Authority is responsible for Education other than Elementary throughout the County. There are, however, two large Municipal Boroughs, Bedford and Luton, with a population (census 1911) of 39,183 and 49,978 respectively (now estimated at 42,000 and 60,000), both of which are autonomous areas for Part III. of the Education Act, 1902. The other Urban areas are the Borough of Dunstable (8,057), and the Urban Districts of Ampthill, Biggleswade, Kempston, and Leighton Buzzard. With the exception however of Kempston, which is practically a suburb of Bedford, none of these districts can be regarded as exclusively urban in character. Adjoining the Borough of Luton there are certain villages, the inhabitants of which are mostly engaged in the Luton industries, and in consequence of the recent establishment of aircraft works at Henlow and Cardington, a large population of an urban character exists in these localities. Apart from this, the County is mainly agricultural. In the northern and central parts, comprising the basin of the Ouse, the soil is mostly clay of a more or less heavy character, the farm holdings are large, and are mainly devoted to the growth of cereals. Permanent pasture occupies about a quarter of the area. Since the war the tendency to lay further land down to grass has been checked, and some 15,000 additional acres have been brought under the plough. Throughout this area the villages as a rule are small and scattered. To the south of the Ouse valley a long belt of lighter land extends from Potton at the north-east to Woburn at the south-west, which, in many parts, especially on the eastern side, is extremely fertile and well adapted to market gardening, especially in the valley of the Ivel and its tributaries. Potton, Sandy, Biggleswade, and further west, Shefford and Flitwick, are the principal centres of this industry. The land is mostly divided into small holdings, and the villages have as a rule a larger population, which will doubtless increase with the additional housing accommodation which is urgently required.

In the market-garden areas there is considerable employment of women at certain seasons of the year, especially in such occupations as carrot-bunching, pea-picking, onion-weeding, etc.

Industries other than agriculture are, with the exception of the newly-established aerodromes at Henlow and Cardington, mainly centred in the Boroughs of Bedford and Luton. In the former Howard's Agricultural Implement Works and the Queen's Engineering Works employ a large amount of skilled labour, while the latter, in addition to being the centre of the hat industry, contains an increasing number of engineering and other factories.

A special industry in connection with Bedfordshire is that of lace-making, for which the County was formerly famous, but which became almost extinct towards the end of last century. A recent attempt to revive it, towards which a grant is made by the County Council on the recommendation of the Education Committee, has been attended with considerable success.

From the above sketch of the character and occupations of the inhabitants of Bedfordshire, its educational needs would appear to be sufficiently indicated. They do not differ materially from those which obtain throughout the country, except that owing to the existence of two large industrial centres, neither of which enjoys the status of a County Borough, a larger responsibility for the adequate supply of secondary and technical instruction is incurred than in the case of most County Councils.

2. SUMMARY OF EXISTING EDUCATIONAL PROVISION.

(A) Elementary Education.

Premises.

The existing accommodation comprises:—

	Schools	DEPARTMENTS					Recognized Accommodation
		Boys	Girls	Mixed	Infants	Total	
Provided ..	75	5	5	61	26	97	15,189
Non-Provided	65	4	5	58	18	85	9,698
	140	9	10	119	44	182	24,887

The number of scholars on the roll on 1st April, 1920, was 17,310, of whom 1,172 were under five years of age. The average attendance for the year ended 31st March, 1920, was 15,595. In the aggregate there is ample accommodation even after making allowance for the raising of school age, but it is probable that in one or two centres some extension of the accommodation will be necessary.

Teaching Staff.

An analysis of the Staffing Schedule for 1st April, 1920, shows that the Local Education Authority makes provision for staffing its schools in the following manner:—

GRADE	No.	Staff Value.
Certificated Head Masters	70	2,450
" " Mistresses	104	3,640
" Asst. Masters	14	840
" " Mistresses	71	4,260
Unattached Certificated Masters	3	180
" " Mistresses	3	180
Uncertificated Head Mistresses	8	280
" Asst. Masters	3	105
" " Mistresses	157	5,495
Unattached Uncert. Mistress	1	35
Supplementary Mistresses	136	2,720
Sewing Mistress	1	—
Total	571	20,185

Instruction in Domestic Subjects may be divided into two types:— Practical Instruction.

- (i.) The instruction given at Domestic Subjects Centres and recognized under Schedule III. of the Code.
- (ii.) Instruction given in a homely way by the ordinary class teacher or some other suitable person.

Of type (i.) there are ten Centres conducted by four fully qualified teachers, and during the year ended 31st March, 1920, 293 girls received instruction for one whole day per week.

There are 18 cases where instruction of type (ii.) is given.

There are four Manual Training Centres with two fully qualified Instructors, and during the year ended 31st March, 1920, instruction was given to 360 boys.

There are 48 School Gardens recognized under Schedule III., and instruction has been given during the last Gardening Year to 712 boys and 31 girls. Instruction in gardening is also given on less formal lines in a number of other schools.

The provisions of the Education (Administrative Provisions) Act, 1907, as to Medical Inspection have been put into operation so far as they impose a duty upon the Local Education Authority; with regard to the powers enabling them to make arrangements for attending to the health and physical condition of scholars, these powers have been exercised in the treatment of defective vision, tonsils and adenoids, and dental treatment. Medical Inspection.

Blind children and deaf and dumb children are placed in specially selected Schools or Institutions in accordance with the provisions of the Elementary Education (Blind and Deaf Children) Act, 1893; mentally defective children are referred to the Committee for the Care of the Mentally Defective. Exceptional Children.

In two districts of the County it has been found necessary to provide conveyances for taking children to school. Conveyance of Children.

School Attendance.

The area of the Local Education Authority is divided into four districts with one School Attendance Officer for each district. The work of the four officers is centralized and co-ordinated in the Education Office. Questions relating to matters of School Attendance are dealt with by a School Attendance Sub-Committee.

Border Children.

Arrangements have been made with the Local Education Authorities for Hertfordshire and Huntingdonshire whereby an agreed amount per child is paid in respect of children from Bedfordshire attending schools in Hertfordshire or Huntingdonshire and children from those areas attending Bedfordshire schools. A somewhat similar arrangement, though on a different basis, has been made with the Local Education Authorities for Cambridgeshire and Buckinghamshire.

Endowments.

The following table gives particulars of sums received by the County Council in respect of Elementary School Endowments. The various parishes are credited with the respective amounts in relief of the Education Rate.

NAME OF PARISH	Amount of Endowment, if fixed	Amount Received 1918-19	Average Amount received for each of the three years ending 31st March, 1919
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Barton	8 10 0	8 10 0	8 10 0
Bolnhurst	Uncertain	—	11 13 4
Cranfield	Uncertain	5 13 7	5 13 8
Dunstable	100 0 0	—	100 0 0
Henlow	Uncertain	50 0 0	50 0 0
Houghton Regis	20 0 0	20 0 0	20 0 0
Milton Bryan	Uncertain	—	53 13 4
Pertenhall	Uncertain	—	1 10 0
Ridgmont	21 18 4	21 18 4	21 18 4
Yielden	12 10 0	12 10 0	12 10 0

In addition, there are a number of Endowments the proceeds of which are devoted to School Prizes, School Libraries, Exhibitions, etc.

(B) Education other than Elementary.

Secondary Schools.

The following is a table of the Public Secondary Schools in the County :—

NAME OF SCHOOL.	Responsible Body.	Estimated Accommodation.	No. of Pupils on 1st June, 1920.
Bedford School (Boys) ...	Bedford Charity ...	895	765
Bedford High School (Girls)	Bedford Charity ...	550	429
Bedford Modern School (Boys)	Bedford Charity ...	660	677
Bedford Modern School (Girls)	Bedford Charity ...	400	485
Dunstable Ashton Grammar School (Boys) ...	School Foundation ...	234	252
Luton Modern School (Boys)	Bedfordshire County Council	315	258
Luton Modern School (Girls)		250	229
TOTALS ...		3,304	3,095