

## "The Handicapped at School" A Display of the Work of London County Council's Special Schools

HER ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER has kindly consented to open an exhibition of the work of London's special schools at the County Hall on the morning of Tuesday, July 6th. The Chairman of the London County Council, Mr. Victor Mishcon, will preside at the ceremony.

The exhibition coincides with the fiftieth anniversary of the Council's becoming education authority for London. It will be open to the public from 1 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Tuesday, July 6th, and from 11.30 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily from Wednesday, July 7th, until Saturday, July 10th inclusive. There will be no charge for admission.

This is the first time since before the war that the L.C.C. has organised an exhibition devoted exclusively to showing how handicapped children are taught to overcome their disabilities. Many aspects of the work and life of both day and boarding schools will be represented, ranging from the display of exhibits to performances by groups of children. In addition, two of the rooms at County Hall will be arranged as classrooms in which children will be carrying on their normal activities.

### The Schools and the Children.

The L.C.C. conducts 93 special schools of which 28 are boarding schools—many of these being in the country or by the sea. In addition, there are teaching groups in 10 hospitals as well as 16 classes for maladjusted children. Four units for partially deaf children are accommodated in ordinary schools. Provision is also made for some children in establishments not run by the Council but which provide for the needs of particular children.

Nearly 10,000 handicapped children in need of special education (apart from those suffering from speech defects) are provided for by the L.C.C. 6,670 are in day special schools, 1,486 in boarding special schools, 260 in special classes, 399 in hospital schools and 900 children in non-Council establishments. There are also 72 children receiving home tuition because they are too handicapped to be able to attend special schools or classes.

Children in need of special education may be blind, partially sighted, deaf, partially deaf, delicate, diabetic, educationally subnormal, epileptic, maladjusted, physically handicapped or suffering from speech defects. It is the educational achievement of many of these children which will be shown in the exhibition.

### The Exhibition.

The exhibition will have three main aspects:—

- (a) Display of craft, needlework, school work, furnishings of boarding schools, etc.
- (b) Dramatic and musical items, and displays of physical education.
- (c) Classroom activities.

#### (a) *Static Exhibits.*

The entrance to the exhibition will show examples of painting done in various special schools.

Three bays of the Conference Hall will be arranged to show samples of typical furnishings in boarding special schools. The furniture will be that to be seen in a children's common room, a dining room and a dormitory and will be of contemporary design. Other bays will be devoted to the work of the "ancillary services" which are essential to the complete care of the handicapped child. Thus the school medical service, the care committee organisation, youth employment service and the L.C.C.'s fleet of school buses will set out their role in the service of children needing special educational treatment.

In two rooms (152 and 153) the children's school work will be on view. Every school has been invited to contribute examples of craftwork, written work, projects, etc. From these a selection has been made. A "rural activities" corner is to be seen in room 152 with flowers, rustic furniture made in a school, and live pets. Children from schools for the delicate will be responsible for this corner and will tend the plants and animals during the exhibition. Window boxes will be supplied and maintained by children from these schools. Other work will be shown by deaf, blind, educationally subnormal pupils, those with physical disabilities and so on. Children who are in hospital groups or receiving home tuition labour under great disadvantages and their achievements are perhaps worthy of especial note.

Some children will be seen at work in rooms 152 and 153 painting, weaving, making pottery and cooking. It should be of interest to the visitor to see both the finished products and work in process.

#### (b) *Performances.*

Musical, dramatic and similar performances by children are always of great interest to the public and these will be staged in the Conference Hall.

On Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday there will be performances of drama and music and on Wednesday and Friday displays of physical education and dancing. Each programme will take half an hour and there will be three programmes a day with different children contributing on each occasion. About 800 pupils will take part during the week in these "live" performances.

Among the other attractions will be the presentation of marionette and puppet shows and the display of films. There will be four film shows a day on different aspects of special education, some of the films being made at L.C.C. schools. With one of the films there will be an accompanying commentary by the children.

#### (c) *Classroom work.*

To show vividly how children learn it is necessary to look into the classroom. For the purpose of this exhibition some classes have been brought to County Hall and it is expected that children will enjoy their unusual surroundings as much as people will appreciate meeting the children at work.

In room 150 the visitor will see groups of physically handicapped children working and, at other times, groups of backward children. In room 151 there will be groups of blind or partially sighted or deaf children at work. Actual conditions will be reproduced as far as possible—even to the blanketing of walls and covering of the floor to achieve partial sound-proofing for deaf and partially deaf groups receiving instruction. Teachers will bring to County Hall from their schools the equipment which they wish to use in the classes. Material giving visitors further information will be displayed on screens in these improvised classrooms. Two teachers will accompany each group so that one may be available to answer questions on teaching methods.

Each day 20 to 25 schools will be sending parties to help in some aspect of the exhibition. The members and officers at County Hall are looking forward to a children's party lasting very nearly a week!

## "Orchard Dene."

### Short-Stay Home for Backward Children.

"ORCHARD DENE" IS A pioneer endeavour which has grown out of a need for service which is not met by the State. In 1951, The National Association of Parents of Backward Children, a young voluntary body with no large financial backing, decided to buy a house for the reception of backward children, with the object of giving parents a temporary rest from the burden of caring for a defective child at home.

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