June 78

OLD SWINFORD HOSPITAL

New Prospectus First Draft October 1978

1. Address: Old Swinford Hospital,
Stourbridge,
West Midlands
DY8 1QX

2. Telephone Stourbridge (STD 03843) 4144

Some day boys places are given to boys from Stourbridge, but during the next ten years they will gradually be replaced by boarders

3. The School

Old Swinford Hospital is a Voluntary Aided School for about 400 boys between the ages of 11 and 18, the great majority of whom are full boarders, though weekly boarders ~~and day boarders~~ are accepted. It is inspected and recognised as efficient by the Department of Education and Science.

who look after the governance of the Founder

The School was founded in 1667 by Thomas Foley. When he died in 1677 he bequeathed the School to Robert Foley and to his three sons, whose successors are still ex-officio members of the Feoffees or Governing Body of the Foundation: [at the same time he endowed the School with great generosity.]

descendants

Feoffees different from the Governors

From 1667 to 1949 the School was fully independent, but in January 1950 it was granted Voluntary Aided Status. Under this arrangement tuition fees are paid by the Local Education Authority; financial assistance is received from the Department of Education and Science for new building; and the Feoffees continue, under the Charity Trustees Act, to administer the Foundation's not inconsiderable incomes for scholarships and bursaries as well as for other purposes.

Within this context the School enjoys a very large measure of independence whilst still fully participating in the National educational system - an arrangement which can offer substantial financial and other advantages to [many] parents.

4. SITUATION AND BUILDINGS

The School is situated in 7½ acres of grounds on the outskirts of Stourbridge and has a further 15 acres of playing fields nearby at Big Moor. Stourbridge itself lies some five miles west of exit 3 on the M5 motorway. Trains from London (Euston) to Birmingham (New Street) take approximately 80 minutes and run every half hour, and there is a connecting link to Stourbridge Junction ten minutes walk from the School.

(Note to designer:

Here we would propose to place two maps.

Map 1. Showing M6 to Liverpool/Manchester (M62) and M1. Also M5 down to Cheltenham, Gloucester. Name: Stourbridge, Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Derby, Leicester, Northampton, Oxford, Cheltenham, Gloucester, Worcester, Shrewsbury. Add and name Birmingham Airport.

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Map 2. A more detailed map within a radius of about thirty miles from Stourbridge, and name: Stourbridge, Birmingham, Worcester, Redditch, Droitwich, Stratford, Bridgnorth, Kidderminster, Castle Bromwich. Wolverhampton?

The school buildings are conveniently arranged as a central unit immediately adjacent to the playing fields to the North and South. Over the past two decades there has been a continuous programme of development and improvement and there are plans for extensive re-organisation and new building in the next decade. The provisional development programme is indicated on the site plan on this page.

(Note to Designer)

Site Plan or Block Plan

We would propose to place here a simple site or block plan, keyed. The Plan would show Hagley Road, Heath Lane with main entrance to school, and Worcester Street. The key, 1, 2, 3 etc. would give the names of the main buildings.

In black hatching on the Site Plan we would also like to indicate "Provisional plans for proposed future building programme" and show priorities for the following:

Four new boarding houses
Sports Centre
Classroom Block
Sixth Form Studies for Day Boys
Art and Craft Centre
Music School
Pavilion

We would suggest that these are shown as circles rather than rectangular blocks to indicate general location rather than actual shape and size.

Panoramic Sketch

If possible we would like to prepare a simplified panoramic sketch of the buildings as seen from the Headmaster's House and relate this to the the Site Plan by means of similar key numbers. This would not include proposed new buildings.

5. TO PARENTS

For all parents the education of their children is of the greatest importance and the selection of the right school is a decision which will influence the whole of a child's subsequent life.

At Old Swinford we believe that there are three major elements to be taken into consideration and these, in broad terms, constitute our aims.

By providing each boy with the greatest possible individual attention and by involvement in a compassionate and disciplined community, we hope to enable him to attain the initial qualifications for a chosen career; experience and practical skills to match his natural gifts; a sense of community and citizenship; and habits of hardwork and unselfishness.

We then try to help each boy to find the things at which he can excel, by providing a wide range of out-of-school activities; for experience shows that the ability to do well at any occupation breeds a confidence which quickly spreads to all other aspects of his life.

Lastly, we see the education of a boy as a joint effort between the child, the parents and the School, and therefore we place great importance on mutual co-operation.

The following pages illustrate and describe the pursuit of these aims. They cannot answer every question, and so I hope you will feel free to come and discuss any matters of particular concern either to you or your son, and know that you will receive a warm and friendly welcome.

(Headmaster's signature)
Headmaster's Study
Old Swinford Hospital
Stourbridge.

6. How the boys live: THE HOUSES

Pastoral Care

For the purposes of day-to-day administration and competitive activities all boys whether boarding, weekly boarding, or day, are members of a House. Each House is in the charge of a Housemaster assisted by House Tutors who are concerned with all sides of a boy's education - his work, games, and general development.

They see that good order is kept and that boys know about the many opportunities available and are encouraged in the direction of those they are most likely to enjoy. In this they are assisted by the boy's Form Master.

The following paragraphs describe the principles which lie behind the House System. Details will inevitably change as the new building programme and re-organisation is put into effect.

Boarders

All eleven year old boarders are resident in a reception House where they spend their first year together. The House, which is in the charge of a married Housemaster, has its own recreation and hobbies rooms.

For their second year in the School twelve year olds board together in a separate House, again in the care of a resident married Housemaster. At this stage they are assigned to one of the four Senior Houses for the purposes of games and other competitive activities.

Boarders between the ages of 13 and 18 are accommodated in four senior boarding Houses. Each House has its own games' room, and study areas. Increasing privacy is given to the more senior boys in the Lower and Upper Sixth.

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Weekly Boarders

Weekly boarders are full members of their boarding House and their week extends from Sunday night or 9 a.m. on Monday morning until 3.30 p.m. on Saturdays after games or other school commitments have been met.

Day Boys

There are two day boy Houses each with its own Housemaster and tutors who, together with the boys' Form Masters are responsible for their welfare.

Their day starts at 9 a.m. and finishes at 4.15 p.m. Mondays to Saturdays, though they are encouraged to stay on later in the evening if they are taking part in extra curricular activities.

Meals

All boys take their meals in the 17th Century Dining Hall which is run by professional caterers on cafeteria lines. Boarders have four meals a day and the School prides itself on the high quality and variety of food provided.

Change of Status

Arrangements can usually be made for day boys to board for short periods if their parents have to be away on business or for some other reason, provided accommodation is available. A term's notice is usually required if parents of day boys wish them to transfer to full boarding or weekly boarding status.

The Sixth Form

The time that a boy spends in the Sixth Form tends to consolidate all that has gone before and helps to strengthen that sense of balance and emotional stability without which a young person cannot hope to develop effectively and happily in the turbulent post-school life.

Much attention is therefore given to the encouragement of a distinct ethos in the Sixth Form, but at the same time, it is recognised that the involvement of the Sixth in the wider life of the School is of immense benefit to the whole community.

This is not a matter of granting special and superficial privileges, but rather of providing a special structure within which Sixth Formers, who are essentially developing adults, may prepare themselves for life in the post-school world whilst still participating fully in day-to-day school life.

7. RELIGION

While the teaching of religion is in the Church of England tradition boys of other denominations and Faiths are welcomed and, whenever possible, arrangements are made for them to attend their own places of worship.

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The Chapel of the School has always been the parish church of St. Mary's, Old Swinford and the School attends parish communion there once a month. On other Sundays a short service is held in Great Hall conducted either by the resident school Chaplain, the Headmaster or a visiting preacher.

In broad terms our aim is to present religion to boys in an open-minded way, giving them opportunities for worship, for questioning and for discussion. In so doing we hope that they will develop a firm faith which will support them in their day-to-day life; that they will be encouraged to serve others; and that they will develop an awareness of the need for Christian service in its widest sense.

Boys are prepared for Confirmation when they themselves feel that they are ready, and appropriate guidance and instruction is given.

8. How the boys work: ACADEMIC ORGANISATION

As far as possible the curriculum is designed to suit every boy's talents and to provide the training for entry into the universities, colleges of further education and the foundation for a professional, business, or other career.

The academic organisation, therefore, attempts to provide not only a wide range of options in purely academic subjects but also, at the same time, to provide first class facilities for the development of a wide range of practical skills.

Below the Sixth

In order to postpone specialisation, every effort is made to maintain as wide a range of studies for as long as possible. At the same time each boy is encouraged to work within his own powers, at the best level of which he is capable.

In the fourth year a two-year course leading to the General Certificate of Education examination at Ordinary level is begun and a balanced set of subjects is offered which includes Mathematics, English, French, History and a Science together with additional optional subjects which may include Engineering Drawing, Metal Work, Woodwork, Technology, Agricultural Science and Craftwork amongst others.

Throughout the School there is a continuous assessment of a boy's progress so that weaknesses can be identified and, as far as possible, put right before they become a handicap, and strengths encouraged. For those boys who need extra help a part time specialist is available for remedial work.

The Sixth Form

All courses in the Sixth Form last for two years and lead to the G.C.E. examination at Advanced level.

The majority of boys take three 'A' level subjects, and in addition, follow a course of General Studies to 'A' or 'AO' level standard.

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The subject options available are:
English Literature, French,
History, Geography, Economics,
Mathematics,
Physics, Chemistry, Biology,
Agricultural Science, Engineering Drawing,
Archaeology, Art
Metal Work, Woodwork

Careers and University selection

The complexity of opportunities available to boys leaving the School has grown in recent years and will continue to grow - and this applies as much to the details of university courses and requirements as to other professional training.

In order to provide advice to boys and parents there is a close co-operation between the Careers Master, the Careers Officer from the Local Education Authority, the Headmaster and the boy's Subject Master: and all possible information is made available through the Careers Centre (? and the Independent Schools Careers Organisation?); by visiting speakers from the universities; and by visits to universities.

9. THE ARTS Music + Drama

Music. There is a strong school choir and band. Free tuition is given in a number of instruments except the piano which may be taken as an optional extra. ~~There is a well-equipped~~ Art room where a wide range of media is taught. School plays and musicals, the Drama Club, and the Junior Play are opportunities for boys to take part in Drama.

10. GAMES AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

While Physical Education is part of the curriculum for all forms except the Sixth, our general approach is to make games as enjoyable as possible and to provide the widest possible variety of activities commensurate with the maintenance of high standards.

Each week there are two compulsory games' afternoons which may be the main game (rugger in the winter terms and cricket in the summer) or one of the following activities:
Athletics, Badminton, Basketball, Golf, Sailing, Shooting, Soccer, Squash, Swimming, Tennis or Trampolining.

11. OTHER ACTIVITIES

C.C.F.

There is a strong Combined Cadet Force with over ninety per cent of the boys members of either the R.A.F., Army or Police sections. There is an imaginative training programme which include such activities as signalling, bridge building, car maintenance, the Sand, shooting and orienteering. There are annual camps in the holidays and weekend camping in the term time.

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Adventure and Holiday Activities

The School has its own adventure centre in Worcestershire which small groups use as a base for expeditions. Each year boys take part in activities away from the School such as those offered by Outward Bound and the Sail Training Association. There is also an active Scout Troop with its own wide ranging programme of activities. In the winter holidays a ski trip to the continent is organised.

Clubs and Societies

The range of Clubs and Societies tend to vary from year to year depending on current enthusiasms, but the more durable include Chess, Radio, Model Making, Metal Work, Model Railway, Photography, Drama and Craft Clubs.

Throughout the year the Foley Society meets regularly. This is a cultural society for Sixth Formers who are encouraged to invite their girl friends and parents.

Field Trips and Visits

Field Trips are arranged each term and are seen as extensions to work in the classroom. They are primarily associated with courses in Geography, Archaeology, Rural Science and Biology.

Visits are also arranged during the year to theatres, museums and concerts. Sixth Formers may be granted special exeats to visit films and theatres if they are members of the Film Society or Theatre Club.

Community Service

There is a strong Community Service Group which is associated with the Dudley Young Volunteers Group. The group meets on Saturday afternoons and Sundays and their activities range from working in the home for disabled children at Clent to carrying out local surveys in conjunction with the Social Science Department of the Local Authority.

12. GENERAL INFORMATION

(a) Health. The health of the boys is in the overall charge of a resident Sister and an assistant Matron. There is a newly equipped Sanatorium with its own surgeries and convalescent room. The school Doctor visits the School twice a week or whenever required. In the case of emergency there are excellent hospital facilities at Corbett.

In the case of infectious illness or contact with infection, the Headmaster must be informed immediately, and a certificate signed by a doctor must be produced before the boy may return to the School. A written note of explanation signed by a parent or guardian must be brought after a boy has been absent for a temporary indisposition.

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In order that the best use may be made of the facilities and services provided under the National Health Service every boarder must be registered on the list the school Doctor throughout his time at the School. During school holidays medical treatment can be obtained either privately or under the National Health Service Act as a 'temporary resident'.

If a boarder requires special medical treatment every effort will be made to obtain the prior consent of the parent or guardian. Should this be impossible in an emergency, the Headmaster, acting in loco parentis, will give consent to such treatment (including anaesthetic or operation) as may be recommended by the school Doctor.

Throughout the time that a boy remains at the School, the school Doctor shall have the right to give to his parents, or guardian, or the Headmaster, any confidential information about the boy if he considers it to be in the boy's interest, or necessary for the protection of other members of the school community.

(b) Exeats and Leaves of absence. There is a half-term in each of the three terms - a week in the Autumn term, and four days in the Spring and Summer terms. In addition there are two fixed leave weekends (from Saturday afternoon to Sunday night) on either side of the half term as well as two other Sunday exeats after Church.

The dates and times of exeats are announced termly in advance.

No cause except illness is considered a sufficient reason for absence from the school unless permission has been previously obtained in writing from the Headmaster. Consent for absence can only be granted in cases of urgent necessity, since, when lessons are missed, not only is the individual handicapped but the work of the whole class suffers.

(c) Clothes. The school uniform is kept as simple and inexpensive as possible. Second-hand clothes are often available and enquiries should be addressed to the Domestic Bursar.

(d) Overseas Parents . The School does all it can to help parents who live overseas. Arrangements can be made for the booking of tickets and the renewal of passports, vaccinations, transport arrangements, and escorts to and from the mainline stations and airports. Luggage can be stored at the school during the holidays and arrangements are made for the provision, replacement, and repair of school dress. Courses of dental treatment can be supervised.

It is important, however, that overseas parents specify a guardian, preferably within easy travelling distance of the school, who will have power to make decisions on behalf of a boy if there is any emergency.

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(e) Admission. The majority of boys enter the School at eleven years of age, though places are specifically reserved for entry at thirteen years of age from Independent Preparatory Schools.

There is also a Direct Entry into the Sixth Form.

(f) Registration procedure. In the first instance parents should complete the Registration Form and send it together with the Registration Fee (as specified on the Fees sheet) to the Headmaster's Secretary. Provided that a place in the School is available the submission of the Registration Form will normally lead to a place being offered, though this is dependent on the following:

1. An Application Form must be submitted to the Dudley Education Authority.

2. A satisfactory interview and report from the Principal of the boy's previous School.

3. Assuming that these provisos are met then the School offers a place to the boy and requires the payment of a Confirmation of Entry Fee which is refunded at the end of the boy's last term in the School.

Note: The tuition fee is paid by the appropriate Local Education Authority. A boy living in the Metropolitan Borough of Dudley may assume, other things being equal, that fees will be paid by that Authority.

Parents who register early will have an advantage in the allocation of Bursaries which are available from the School depending on circumstances.

(g) Bursaries and Exhibitions.

Bursaries. A substantial fund is available to provide Bursaries related to boarding fees for parents in need of help. These are means-tested. They may be as much as two-thirds of the boarding fee. They are awarded to parents of Sixth Formers without a means-test at the Headmaster's discretion.

Exhibitions. These are worth up to £150 a year; the first thirty pounds of which goes to the boy for the purpose of purchasing books. These Exhibitions are normally awarded at the end of a boy's first year at School, and are given to boys who show promise or excellence in any educational pursuit whether it be academic, music, art, technology, games, or citizenship.

Some Exhibition awards are made at 'O' level year and therefore can be gained by boys entering direct into the Sixth Form.

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(h) Fees. Details of fees are set out on a separate sheet in the pocket.

All fees are payable on or before the first day of the term for which they are due including the charge for school meals and any extras.

The School reserves the right to refuse to allow a boy to be admitted, or to return, to the School, if at any time the payment of fees or extras is wholly or partially overdue.

Whilst every effort is made to give at least one full term's notice of any intended fee increases, the Governors reserve the right to increase fees without such notice.

(i) Withdrawal. In the event of a boy's withdrawal for any reason, a full term's notice in writing must be given to the Headmaster. A full term's fees are payable unless such notice has been given.

The Headmaster reserves the right to require the removal of any boy

(i) who, in the opinion of the Headmaster, is not likely to profit from a further stay at the School.

(ii) who, by his conduct has, in the opinion of the Headmaster forfeited his right to membership of the School community.

(iii) whose fees are not paid.

In this event no claim shall arise for the remission or return of any portion of the fees payable for that term.

(j) Old Boys' Association. The Old Foleyans founded in 1929 exists to foster and maintain a vital link between present and past pupils of the School and to help the School wherever possible. Full details of the Association are available from the Headmaster.

(k) Insurances and Fee Payment Schemes.

(i) Fee Insurance. Remission of fees in case of absence from school through illness can be arranged through an Insurance Scheme, details of which are sent to parents of boys before entry. The School cannot grant remission apart from this voluntary Insurance Scheme.

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(ii) Insurance of property for boarders. The School insurance covers the essential items of clothing and other necessaries each boy brings back to School, but does not cover anything else. Parents are therefore advised to insure that their boy's other belongings (e.g. cameras, watches, etc.) are fully insured whilst at school.

(iii) There are a number of Fee payment schemes linked with Life Assurance policies. The younger the child, the more advantageous are the schemes. Parents are advised to consult their brokers or the School Bursar who will be pleased to put them in touch with firms who specialise in this service.

(l) Parents. Close links with parents are felt to be vital so that there can be consultation on common problems and on the needs of a particular boy. Parents are always welcome to visit the School particularly when there are home matches.

On the academic side there is continuous consultation with parents regarding the selection of subjects, the choice of careers, and the progress a boy is making as he moves up the School.

Detailed reports of a boy's progress and conduct are sent out at regular intervals, and meetings are held for parents to discuss their son's progress with masters each year.

Individual consultation about particular problems is always welcomed by Form Masters and by the Headmaster at any time..

The terms and conditions set out in this prospectus may be amended from time to time, and its provisions, subject to any such amendments will apply during the whole of the period while a boy continues to attend the School irrespective of age. Admission to or retention in the School of a boy is conditional on acceptance of them.

MEMORANDUM

To C.F.R. Potter, Esq., M.A.
Headmaster,
Old Swinford Hospital

From John Catt

Date 27th October 1978

Subject New Prospectus Text

May I make a number of points about my first draft?

1. It is important to bear in mind the fact that there will be a number of photographs which will tend to strengthen sections which at first reading may appear to have been rather thinly treated.

2. In section 3 I have tried to show the advantages of Voluntary Aided Status to parents now. I have therefore cut the History of the School to a minimum.

3. In section 4 I have tried to cope with the problem of future building plans in relation to what exists at the moment. I think this is the right place to do it.

4. Section 6. This is the difficult bit. My third paragraph, I hope, covers you against the "misrepresentation of goods" Act. But this section does need your careful attention. On the whole I have sailed closer to the wind than I would like.

5. Section 8. My second paragraph attempts to balance between pure academic work and "apprenticeship training". There will be a number of photographs here which will support the balance.

Indeed my second paragraph under "Below the Sixth" leans slightly towards practical utilitarian education.

6. Section 9. I am afraid this is very weak and it may be better to omit it altogether and leave the subject to pictures (band, choir in church, artroom, painting infront of Founders) and mention of the Drama Club (under activities).

7. Section 11. I have put CCF under Other Activities where I believe it should belong. I would be strongly against saying it is part of the curriculum - an arrangement which reminds one of those extraordinary pseudo-military academies in the Southern State of America.

8. Two General Points

(a) The text is slightly on the long side, but I thought it better to put in material for you to cut rather than the otherway round.

(b) I have put in a number of "Global" slightly philosophical sentences here and there. I think these are important as they tend to raise sights and generally to present an overall picture which is bigger than the sum of the individual facts.