Acts and facts in education

In 1846, The Reverend Henry Moseley, Her Majesty’s Inspector of Schools, wrote:
“We break off a fragment from the education we suppose necessary for our own children – its mechanical and technical part – and give it to the poor man’s child in charity. The inveterate prejudice that education in any higher sense is a privilege annexed to a definite social position and graduated by it, associates itself with our educational efforts.”

Medieval education

Grammar Schools
Medieval Grammar School – taught religion, literacy and Latin. French added later. No school books in these days. See The King’s School in Canterbury and King’s School Rochester.

Song Schools at cathedrals for teaching choir boys singing, reading, the hymn books and basic religion.

Parish priests were also expected to teach reading and writing.

1385 Formal date for ‘switchover’ from French to English in grammar schools. (But no concerted policy or action.)

Endowed, independent schools founded as royal or episcopal foundations: – Winchester (founded by William of Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester) 1382, Eton (founded by King Henry VI) 1440, Shrewsbury (founded by King Edward VI) 1552, Rugby 1567.

1550s Many grammar schools established, some of which were revivals of older schools, financed by benefactors. Some of them were created from confiscated monastic lands. There was some free tuition to poorer pupils. But the labour of children from poor families was required by farmers and small businesses, so most did not attend.

1660s Dissenting Academies for dissenters – non-conformist Protestants, Quakers, Catholics, Jews.

1698 Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge set up, establishing ‘Catechetical Schools’: charity schools for 7-11 “to promote Christian Knowledge”. Bible-based education, moral discipline and social subordination – the lower classes should know their place in society, but needed some education to be of use in the economy.

1700s
Development of charity schools for the poor.

1780s Robert Raikes established the Sunday School Movement for children from the slums – mainly teaching religious and moral education. Reading was taught through the scriptures. (Writing was considered to be potentially dangerous for the poor who might be empowered to criticise and organise against their social status.) By the end of the 1820’s most working class children would have attended such schools for a period of their lives.

1800s

1800-1870 Dame Schools Privately run schools for working class pupils. Tended to have very limited curriculum – reading, writing, etc. These were often run in an elderly person (usually woman)’s cottage.

1811 National Society founded to ensure that “the National Religion should be made the foundation of National Education”. The Society wanted all education to be firmly based on the Christian Gospel and Anglican principles.

1814 British and Foreign School Society established by liberal Anglicans and Non-Conformists. This movement was effectively in opposition to the National Society.
1820 First Infant School opened in Spitalfields

1825 Cotton Mills and Factories Act: the hours worked by children under the age of 16 years were restricted to 12 per day between 5 am and 8 pm with ½ hour off for breakfast and 1 hour off for lunch.

1833 First Government Grant — £20,000, — which was for school building, applied to BFSS and National Society. (However, 1839-1850, the National Society was awarded 80% of all elementary education Government grants.) Half cost of building had to be raised privately.

1833 and 1844 Factories Acts enforced the provision of part-time schooling in textile industries. Later extended to other industries.

1834 (-1930) New Poor Law transferred responsibility for the poor from the parish to the Poor Law unions. Poor Law Union schools for some workhouse paupers, some of which became ragged schools.

1836 Central Society of Education was formed to keep education secular — in opposition to the National Society — and to broaden the curriculum, reform ancient endowments and to research educational systems

1840 Grammar Schools Act expanded Grammar School curriculum from classical studies to include science and literature.

1840 Her Majesty’s Inspectors (HMIs) of Schools appointed to improve elementary education and to report on effective internal management, disciplinary processes, teaching methods.

1844 Labour in Factories Act: legalised 8 years as the youngest age for children starting work, and a maximum number of hours of work for children and women was prescribed.

1844 Ragged School Union and London School Mission set up schools for those who could not pay the fees for voluntary schools.

1857 Industrial Schools Act Homeless children, aged between 7 and 14, who were taken to court for vagrancy, were sentenced by magistrates to attend an industrial school. In 1861 other categories of children were included in this Act.

1864 Schools Inquiry Commission report, critical of the standard of girls’ education for lack of academic rigour. New girls’ schools established, under the provision of the 1869 Endowed Schools Act.

1870 Education Act (Forster Act) Introduced national system of education through elementary schools, run by locally elected School Boards (to become Local Education Authorities in 1902) and financed by local rates, and school fees in some cases.

London School Board established to provide elementary schools in London.

Boards were given discretionary powers to introduce compulsory education where practicable. Religious teaching was optional in Board schools, and where taught was Christian, but nondenominational. With the Government’s authority, School Boards were allowed to set up free schools to help the poorest who could not afford the fees charged by Board schools.

Voluntary schools continued to run in parallel with state Board schools. Over time, a number, especially of British and Foreign Society Schools transferred to Board or later, local authority, control.

1870 Formation of National Union of Elementary Teachers, which became the NUT in 1889.

1871 Code of Regulations created an infant stage for 5-7 education.

1872 Girls Public Day School Company established in 1872, became the Girls Public Day School Trust in 1905, and the Girls Day School Trust in 1998) to provide “excellent and affordable day schooling for middle – and upper-class girls”. Also for “exceptional girls from elementary or middle schools who gain scholarships” (93 in 1899). Fees averaged at “rather over £15 a year”.) (from The High Schools of The Girls Public Day School Company, 1872-1900 published in 1900).

1880 Bill enforcing the creation of local bye-laws to establish compulsory schooling across the country — to be set up by all School Boards and Attendance Committees (in areas where there was no School Board) .
1888 *Local Government Act* established County and County Borough Councils, which later managed local education.

1891 *Education Act*, providing for free elementary education.

1893 *Elementary Education (School Attendance) Act* raised school leaving age to 11.

1898 *Report of Committee on Defective and Epileptic Children* published. Assessment of children for special schools had to be a ‘team’ decision (medical officer, class teacher, head of special school). Schools were to give six hours-a-week manual training and prepare ‘feebleminded’ children for employment.

1899 *Elementary Education (Defective and Epileptic Children) Act*. Local authorities were encouraged, not required, to make provision for special instruction.

1899 *Board of Education Act* created Board of Education to co-ordinate the work of higher grade elementary schools, county technical schools and endowed grammar schools, and to provide a register of teachers.

1899 School leaving age raised to 12.

1900s

1902 *Education Act* (Balfour Act) merged higher grade elementary schools and fee-paying schools. School Boards abolished and Local Education Authorities established, which funded Board and some grammar schools. All LEA schools funded through local taxation.

1904 *London County Council* took over London’s Education from the London School Board.

1904 *Secondary School Regulations* introduced and legalised a subject-based curriculum.

1905 *Handbook of suggestions for the consideration of teachers*, published by the Board of Education, replaced direct government control of the curriculum.

1904 *Education (Provision of meals) Act*. LAs allowed to supply school meals.

1907 *Free Place Regulations*. Up to 25% of population entitled to free secondary school places.

1907 *School Medical Service* created by Board of Education.


1914 *Elementary Education (Defective and Epileptic Children) Act*. Local authorities were required to make provision for “mentally defective” children.

1918 *Education Act* (Fisher Act) raised school leaving age to 14 and provided for state-funding of endowed grammar and higher elementary schools. (Most children attended elementary school until 14.) Also made provision for non-compulsory 14-18 education, and for nursery education.

1919 *Burnham Committee* established national pay scales for elementary teachers.

1922 *Publication of Secondary Education for All* by Richard Tawney, proposing universal secondary education for adolescents and primary education as a preparation for secondary schooling. He introduced the concept of 11 Plus examination. His ideas which informed Labour Party education policy – proposed in the Hadow Reports.


1926 *The Education of the Adolescent* (Hadow Report). Recommended education for all to 15, and junior and secondary schools, with 11+ transfer. Introduced ‘modern’ in addition to ‘grammar’ secondary schools.

1929 *Local Government Act*. Poor Law Schools became state-funded elementary schools.
1931 Report of the Consultative Committee on the Primary School (Hadow Report) proposed that the curriculum be conceived and taught in terms of activities, rather than facts to be learnt.

1933 Report of the Consultative Committee on Infant and Nursery Schools (Hadow Report) proposed separate infant schools and national provision of nursery schools.

1944 Education Act (Butler Act) Replaced all previous education law. Board of Education replaced by Ministry of Education. All maintained schooling to be free. Three tier secondary state schooling – grammar (entrance based on 11+ test), secondary modern and technical – i.e. selective state schooling. Further education through county colleges for school-leavers to 18 years of age.

Local education authorities started to have a duty to identify and assess children suffering from ‘a disability of body or mind’ and to provide ‘special educational treatment’ in special schools or elsewhere.

1944 Teachers and youth leaders: report of the committee to consider the supply, recruitment and training of teachers and youth leaders (McNair Report); three years’ training and the raising of teachers’ status was proposed.

1945 Handicapped Pupils and School Health Regulations: created extensive increase in special schooling.

1947 School leaving age increased to 15.

1951 Introduction of General Certificate of Education (GCE) at Ordinary and Advanced levels.


1962 Education Act Parents responsible for ensuring suitable education for their children. LEAs responsible for school attendance.

1963 Local Government Act abolished the London County Council, replacing it with the Greater London Council (GLC).

1964 Education Act (Boyle Act) promoted middle schools.

1965 Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) established as consequence of the Local Government Act of 1963. Inner London’s education had previously been run by the London County Council (from 1902-1965).

1965 Circular 10/65 Labour Government asked LEA’s to move away from tripartite system, and to introduce comprehensive education.


1968 Education Act Legislation relating to comprehensivisation.

1970 Conservative Government withdrew compulsion to become comprehensive and allowed LEAs to determine future organisation of secondary schooling.

1972 School-leaving age increased to 16.

1975 Phasing out of grants to Direct Grant Schools.


1976 William Tyndale School controversy.


1980 Education Act Stopped free milk and obligation to provide meals. Brought in assisted school places in private schools (abolished in 1997). Increased powers and parent representation on governing bodies.

1981 Education Act, implementing the proposals in the Warnock Report for special educational needs.

1986 GLC abolished by Conservative Government.

1986 Abolition of corporal punishment in schools

1986 GCSE replaced GCE O levels for 15/16 yr olds. National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) to promote vocational training in schools and colleges.

1988 *Education Reform Act* introduced wide-ranging reforms, including National Curriculum and Local Management of Schools. Start of national testing (SATs) at 7, 11, 14. League tables published showing school performance.

Formula funding of schools – more pupils meant more money. Parental choice/open enrolment. Grant-maintained status for schools choosing to opt out of LEA control.

1990 ILEA abolished by Conservative Government.

1992 *Education (Schools) Act* created OFSTED, replacing Her Majesty’s Inspectorate. Its function is to “regulate and inspect to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages” (on Ofsted website).


1996 Education Act consolidated all legislation from previous education acts since 1944.


1999 Fresh Start scheme whereby ‘failing schools’ were closed and re-opened under another name and management.

1999 *Excellence in cities* initiative, launched, initially, in over 400 English secondary schools, introducing learning mentors, learning support units and gifted and talented programmes, city learning centres (to provide ICT facilities) and support for education action zones.

2000s

2000 First City Academies opened.

2003 *Every child matters* (green paper) led to 2004 Children Act. Education, health and social services provision for young children were brought under Children’s Services in local boroughs. Priorities in these three areas given to being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic well-being. Child protection also a key focus.

2004 Building Schools for the Future (BSF).

May 2010 Conservatives start overhaul of Education. More academies and introduction of parent-managed/initiated free schools (using Swedish model).

End of Building Schools for the Future.

Dec. 2010 The Importance of Teaching: Schools White Paper proposing extensive changes to the curriculum, teaching, teacher education, assessment and qualifications, behaviour management, creation of more academies and free schools.

March 2011 Support and aspiration: a new approach to special educational needs and disability. Green paper changes identification, assessment and provision for pupils with special educational needs, abolishing Warnock-style statements. New single multi-professional assessment, with options of personal budgets by 2014 are proposed.