Elementary and secondary education
As used in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, these terms referred to different levels of education, and to the social class of the pupils receiving it, rather than to their age. Elementary schools were for the poorer classes, children whose parents were engaged in manual labour, while secondary schools (grammar, endowed, proprietary or private) were for the children of the middle classes. Both types of school catered for a wide age range, although elementary school children usually stayed at school for fewer years. As time went on many middle class schools set up Preparatory or Junior Departments for their younger pupils.

Monitor
The term has been applied both to the boys and girls teaching groups of younger children in monitorial schools, and to pupils given special responsibilities in many different types of school. It was sometimes used as equivalent to “prefect”, a monitor may also be a pupil given a minor task, eg milk monitor.

Monitorial systems
Under these systems of teaching, popular in the first half of the nineteenth century, groups of children were taught by older pupils under the supervision of one adult teacher. Rival systems were devised by the Reverend Andrew Bell and by Joseph Lancaster, and adopted by the National and British schools respectively. They were gradually phased out as state funding allowed for the employment of trained teachers and pupil teachers.

Pupil teachers
These, as defined when state aid was given for their employment in 1846, were boys and girls of 13-16, apprenticed to the head teacher of an inspected school. Paid a small stipend, they assisted with teaching, and received daily tuition from the master or mistress. They were examined annually by the Government inspector, and on successful completion of their apprenticeship were eligible to compete for a Queen’s scholarship to be held at a training college. Their usefulness declined as more trained teachers became available, but for many years they had a valuable part to play in the schools employing them.

School log books
From 1862 schools receiving government grants were required to keep a daily record of events other than normal lessons. Entries commonly refer to attendance, weather, sickness and visits from local dignitaries.

School Boards
These were established under the 1870 Education Act, and were empowered to set up schools financed from local rates in order fill gaps in the voluntary provision of elementary education. Those in rural areas might be responsible for a small population, while other Boards covered densely populated cities such as London and Manchester.

Types of School
Dissenting academies
Their original purpose was the training of Non-Conformist preachers, but during the eighteenth century they came to provide an excellent education for those excluded by conscience from attending schools connected with the Established Church, and by law from taking degrees at Oxford and Cambridge. A wide curriculum offered preparation for business, commerce, law, etc. Among the best known were those at Warrington and Northampton. Despite their quality few survived beyond the early nineteenth century, partly because of the easing of restrictions on Non-Conformists and, later, the development of secular higher education institutions such as University College London.

Endowed schools
Were founded or assisted by a variety of benefactors — royalty, bishops, landowners and merchants — providing for their maintenance with income from land or other property. In the sixteenth century many endowments for education were created from confiscated monastic lands.
Endowed schools might be “grammar” — ie classical — schools, or “English” or “petty” schools offering reading, writing and basic numeracy. In the twentieth century many old endowed schools became independent public schools, while others are now part of the state system.

**Grammar schools**

The name goes back to early medieval times, when the “grammar” taught was Latin, with the possible addition of Greek. Many grammar schools were established using endowments from wealthy benefactors. Classical subjects dominated the curriculum until the nineteenth century, during which it was gradually broadened to include mathematics, science, history, geography and languages. Originally catering for a wide age range, they came to be part of the secondary system, for pupils aged 11 plus.

**Preparatory schools**

Boarding or day schools attended by pupils aged seven or eight to 13, in preparation for entry to a public school. Catering for smaller numbers than the schools to which they act as feeders, they have often been privately owned.

**Public schools**

The term is now associated with fee-paying — often boarding — schools for boys and/or girls aged 14-18. Some of the best known, however, such as Eton, Winchester, Harrow and Rugby were founded in the medieval period or the sixteenth century as endowed grammar schools providing free or subsidised schooling for local boys from about seven years of age. These and many similar schools have gradually evolved into modern “public schools”, joined in the Victorian period by new establishments for boys, eg Marlborough, Cheltenham, Rossall, Wellington. For girls, Cheltenham Ladies College and North London Collegiate were mid-Victorian foundations, followed later in the century by a considerable number of fee paying institutions for middle class pupils, notably those of the Girls’ Public Day School Company.

**Schools for the poorer classes**

**(eighteenth and nineteenth century)**

**Schools of the voluntary education societies**

The majority of children receiving an education in the nineteenth century before the Education Act of 1870 attended schools established by one of the voluntary societies. The principal ones were the National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church, and the British and Foreign School Society. The first was closely linked to the Church of England, while the BFSS was non-denominational. To start with most of their schools, known as National or British, were based on the monitorial system. From 1833 the two societies received government assistance with building costs, and in the 1840s partial funding for teachers, pupil teachers and equipment, making it possible to phase out the monitorial system. In the 1840s government funding was extended to schools established under the auspices of the Wesleyan Education Committee and the Catholic Poor School Committee. Some Non-Conformist groups (Congregationalists and Baptists) preferred to remain independent of state funding and the consequent inspection and regulation.

**Dame schools**

Privately run schools for young children, often conducted by elderly women in their own homes. They provided a basic education for a small number of young children.

**Schools for the “Defective”**

The Blind and Deaf Act of 1893 placed an obligation on parents of blind and deaf children to ensure that their children were suitably educated. Boarding and day schools for the blind and deaf were established. By 1910 there were also day and boarding schools for mentally and physically (“crippled”) children. In all these special school a priority was given to training the pupils in skills for work.

**Factory schools**

From 1833 on various Acts made part-time schooling compulsory for children employed in textile mills and other industries. This might be provided in the workplace or at a local school. Some mill owners — eg Robert Owen at New Lanark — had provided schooling for factory children before being legally required to do so.

**Industrial schools**

In the nineteenth century gave a basic education and taught trade skills to poor children, many of them referred by magistrates as homeless vagrants. These schools should be distinguished from earlier “schools
of industry”, which also prepared children for employment but did not have a penal connotation.

**Poor Law schools**
Some provision for schooling was made for children in workhouses: this might be in situ (in which case the teacher was sometimes one of the adult paupers), or in a Poor Law Union school, covering a wider area. Attempts in the 1840s to provide training specifically for Poor Law schoolmasters were short-lived.

**Ragged Schools**
Ragged schools were established from the end of the eighteenth century to educate the poorest and most destitute children. Lord Shaftesbury was a prime mover in setting up these schools. The 1844 Ragged School Union further encouraged the growth of such schools. In addition to basic education, children were fed and provided with shelter. Some offered skills and work training. Some offered treats, clubs and outings. Several were very religious. Dr Barnardo played a key role in the later development of ragged schools. The quality of such schools varied, and Charles Dickens drew attention to some of the appalling problems and conditions to be found in them.

**Reformatory schools**
Were for children actually convicted of a criminal act. The nearest modern equivalents are probably young offenders institutions, but these are not intended for young children, who in the past could be sent to reformatory schools.

**Sunday schools**
Provided mainly religious and moral training, with reading taught through the scriptures. Robert Raikes, in the 1780s, gave great impetus to the movement, which catered especially for children (and later some adults) who worked during the week.

**Truant Schools**
Some Industrial Schools took in truants, and became known as Truant Industrial Schools, or merely Truant Schools. There were 15 Truant Schools in England and Wales in 1893 with an average pupil cohort in each of 1,220 boys. All were residential, and had a very tough regime, with a heavy focus on military drill and physical exercise. In addition to traditional school lessons, there were daily classes in the school workshops, where pupils learnt technical and trade skills.