



THE ST MARYLEBONE SCHOOL

A HISTORY

JAQUELINE MITCHELL & DR GRAHAM GARDNER

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SHIRE PUBLICATIONS



CONTENTS

FOREWORD	4
CHRONOLOGY	6
BEGINNING	8
STRUGGLING	16
EMERGING	26
ASPIRING	34
LEADING	48
LOOKING FORWARD	56
INDEX	64



FOREWORD

FIRST-TIME VISITORS OFTEN STRUGGLE to find it; others frequently walk straight on past, barely aware of its existence, tucked between St Marylebone Parish Church and the boutique shops and other attractions of Marylebone High Street. Yet, The St Marylebone School is one of the most enduring features of this part of London, having remained here for more than 220 years, building a reputation for excellence that extends far beyond its small patch of ground.

This book charts the growth of The St Marylebone School, from its beginnings in 1791 as a single-room schoolhouse, to its struggles in the twentieth century, through to its position today as the top non-selective school in London, one of the top five non-selective girls' schools in the country and the top of the Department for Education league table comparing all schools nationally with a similar intake. It also marks the retirement of the school's most visionary and inspirational head teacher, Mrs Elizabeth Phillips, OBE, who is stepping down after twenty years. Last but not least, it is a testament to the significance of Church education in central London. Whether you are a student, parent, former pupil, educationalist, historian or any other reader, I hope you gain an insight into not only the history of the school, but its importance in helping to nurture the spirit and talents that benefit individuals, their families and their communities, throughout their lives.

Margaret Mountford
Chairman of Governors
October 2013

Opposite: A service at St Marylebone Parish Church on 3 November 2011 celebrating 200 years of the Church of England's National Society, the school's 220th anniversary and its new status as a Teaching School. Attendees included the Duchess of Gloucester, the Bishop of London and the Lord Mayor. On adjacent sites for over 150 years, church and school remain closely entwined.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1791** Opening of St Marylebone Day School of Industry in Paradise Street, now Moxon Street, on 9 May
- 1808** School moves to Paddington Street to amalgamate with the Poor School
- 1825** Amalgamated school is named ‘St Marylebone Central National School’, under the auspices of the Church of England’s United National Schools
- 1828** Opening of infants’ school
- 1837** Duke of Portland, already patron, purchases 999-year lease on land adjacent to parish church; covenant designates the land for use as a charitable school for girls
- 1858** School re-founded, with new Trust Deed; construction of House Block, for girls and infants, on new site
- 1863** North side of Old Building built to accommodate a new boys’ school; closure of Paddington Street site
- 1889** South side of Old Building built to accommodate primary age pupils and technical school
- 1890** South side of Old Building opened; school renamed ‘St Marylebone Central Higher Grade Technical School’
- c. 1930** Takes in additional students after closure of St Marylebone Charitable School; now known as ‘St Marylebone Central School’; old church graveyard becomes playground
- 1939** First evacuation of students at outbreak of war
- 1940** Second evacuation of students; school re-opens as an emergency school; building damaged by bombing
- 1941** School begins to take in refugees
- 1944** School becomes voluntary aided secondary
- 1966** New Block built; school ceases to take boys
- 1973** Threat of closure; arrival of new head teacher, Betty Smith
- 1974** Introduction of Sixth Form; arrival of first computer
- 1981** Threat of closure; arrival of new head teacher, John Stevenson
- 1982** Opening of new wing for Sixth Form

- 1985 Beginning of £500,000 refurbishment programme, including new classrooms in roof of Old Building
- 1987 Conclusion of refurbishment programme
- 1991 Bicentennial anniversary celebrations, launch of fundraising for new art and science block
- 1993 Opening of new art and science extension; arrival of new head teacher, Elizabeth Phillips
- 1994 Sixth Form becomes co-educational
- 1998 Award for Most Improved State School; awarded specialist status in the performing arts
- 2004 Work begins on excavation of graveyard and construction of underground gymnasium
- 2005 School secures short-term lease on Blandford Street and opens it as Sixth Form Centre in September; school gains specialism in maths and computing
- 2007 Opening of new performing arts building; school deemed 'outstanding in every respect' by Ofsted
- 2008 Beginning of work to demolish and rebuild Blandford Street site
- 2009 New Sixth Form building on Blandford Street opens; school gains specialism in special educational needs
- 2010 Completion of refurbishment at main site, including new library
- 2011 Conversion to Academy status; becomes a Woodard Affiliated School; gains National Teaching School status
- 2012 Awarded Artsmark Gold for third time
- 2013 Opening of St Marylebone Bridge School; Elizabeth Phillips retires in December, is succeeded by Kat Pugh