

Farnworth Grammar

School

1715 – 1988

Farnworth Grammar School was founded in 1715 as far as I can tell.

The school was closed about 1983 and it was demolished in 1988.

It was a small grammar school in the north-west of England in a small town called Farnworth, which is part of the Bolton District.

The school appears to have had a strict uniform requirement from what I can tell looking at picture I have found, however, post World War II this strictness appears to have relaxed somewhat as the 1965 school picture illustrates a few different uniforms.

It was a small grammar school in the north-west of England.

It was a coed school, although I am unsure just when girls were first admitted.

The original school was the Dixon Green School.

The school was founded to educate the poor children of Farnworth. They were to be taught English, Latin and the Protestant faith.

The people in Farnworth in 1905 began to push for the foundation of a secondary school.

The County Education Committee decided to build the Farnworth and District Secondary School.

The school committee decided to build a facility that could serve as a secondary school during the day and a technical school during the evening.

Plans were later changed to extend the work of the Old Grammar School, but facilities could not accommodate the applicants.

Plans to build the school were delayed by World War I.

The New Jerusalem School was used for some time.

The new school building was opened in 1922.

The school was coeducational, but out of the original 191 students in 1922, there were only 37 girls.

It appears to have been a traditional grammar school that insisted on high standards. One former student writes on an internet site dedicated to the school,

"The town's Grammar School never subscribed to the trendy fashions in education which have demonstrably damaged at least two generations of British children.

Instead, its dedicated staff did their utmost to ensure that even the most unpromising among us emerged into the world with a decent grounding in the basics, and with the foundations of our future careers firmly in place."

The 1920's

The school in the 1930s seems to have had a strict dress code. A portrait of the Lower IV in 1933-34 shows almost all of the students smartly outfitted in the school uniform. The portrait shows the girls wearing colored dresses with larger white collars in various sizes and shapes. I'm not sure what color the dresses were. The color looks mostly uniform in the photograph here, but there are a lot of differences in the design. The school color appears to have been blue, thus a light-blue is a likely guess. Notice the one girl wearing a dark gym frock with a tie. This girls seem to have had a seasonal uniform, alternating between dresses and gym frocks. The school appears to have required long dark stockings for the girls. The boys wear dark blazers, some with piping. Most of the boys have white shirts with open collars. A few boys wear ties. The school prospectus in 1935 described provided the following instructions about the uniform, "Boys are required to wear a school cap and badge; gym vest, shorts and rubber-soled shoes for Physical Training, and leather-soled slippers during ordinary school. Girls are required to wear a school hat, hat band and badge; navy blue coat or school blazer; white blouse and navy blue tunic; gym shoes for Physical Training; leather-soled slippers for ordinary school." The requirements seem rather minimalistic. I think there was also a school blazer to match the cap, but apparently it was not required.

The 1940's

A portrait at the school during World war II shows the girls wearing similar dresses but with short white socks instead of dark long stockings. We also note girls wearing gym frocks which appears to have been a seasonal uniform. Some of the girls wear the school blazer with their dresses. The boys are wearing the same dark blazers. More boys are wearing ties, but it is still not a requirement. A photograph of a III Form class shows the boys wearing short trousers. I'm not sure if that was a school requirement. Some boys have shoulder straps. I think that might be their gas mask bags. Regulations required Britons to carry their gas masks, but once at school the children did not have to carry them on the school grounds. Apparently some of the boys were not taking any chances. When the new school building was first opened in 1922 there were only a small number of girls. Here there seem to be roughly comparable numbers of girls and boys. We also note boys wearing suits rather than the school blazer.

A portrait at the school during World War II shows the girls wearing similar dresses but with short white socks instead of dark long stockings (figure 1). Some of the girls wear the school blazer with their dresses. The boys are wearing the same dark blazers. More boys are wearing ties, but it is still not a requirement. A photograph of a III Form class shows the boys wearing short trousers. I'm not sure if that was a school requirement. Some boys have shoulder straps. I think that might be their gas mask bags. Regulations required Britons to carry their gas masks, but once at school the children did not have to carry them on the school grounds. Apparently some of the boys were not taking any chances. When the new school building was first opened in 1922 there were only a small number of girls. Here there seem to be roughly comparable numbers of girls and boys.

1948

A photograph from 1948 shows Form IIIb. The boys are wearing suits rather than blazers like the ones worn before and during the early years of World War II. They all look to be wearing short pants suits. Most boys wear ties. The girls are wearing gym frocks. In earlier portraits there are girls wearing both dresses and gym frocks. We are not sure, but this may have been a seasonal uniform.

The 1950's

Almost all of the junior boys in 1950 wear the school blazer, but only a few of the senior boys have them. The girls wear gym frocks which was a seasonal uniform, but may have been adopted year round. Unlike some schools, few girls seem to wear the blazer. By the mid 1950s most of the boys are wearing the blazer, but it does not appear to have been required for the senior boys. The younger boys seem to almost all wear short trousers with grey kneesocks. I'm not sure what the actual school uniform regulation was. The school color in the 1930s was blue, but we notice green uniform items in the

Most all of the junior boys in 1950 wear the school blazer, but only a few of the senior boys have them. I'm not sure why that was. We are not sure why that was. Perhaps the blazers were hard to obtain. Perhaps the boys didn't like them. Parents may have insisted that the younger boys wear them. It was considered an important accomplishment for a child to have done well and earned a place in a grammar school. As far as we can tell, the school did not require the blazer be worn, even for the junior boys. Most boys wear ties, but we note a few with open collared shirts. Many of the junior boys wear short trousers. It does not seem to be all the junior boys. This suggests that it may not have been a school rule. The boys in shorts wear grey kneesocks. Only a few seem to have the colored stripes. The girls wear gym frocks with ties which was a seasonal uniform, but may have been adopted year round. Unlike some schools, few girls seem to wear the blazer. The girls wear short white socks with a variety of shoes.

1957

We note that by 1957 many more boys are wearing the school blazer. It still does not, however, seem to have been required. In the 1950s most of the boys are wearing the blazer, but it does not appear to have been required for the senior boys. Many of the younger boys still wear short trousers with grey knee-socks. I'm not sure what the actual school uniform regulation was. Shorts do not look to have been required because even some of the younger boys wear long trousers. The younger girls wear gym frocks with ties. The older girls wear a different uniform, although I am not sure what it was. Perhaps it was a cardigan and blouse.

School Colors

The school color in the 1930s was blue, but we notice green uniform items in the 1950s.

School Uniform Trends

Notice that most of the boys at Farnworth in the 1950s are not wearing the school blazer. Clearly the school was not requiring them. We are not sure precisely why. One reader suggests that it was probably because of the post-World War II shortages that plagued Britain into the 1950s.

The 1960's

All the boys at the school in 1961 seem to be wearing the school blazer. We suspect that the school may have begun requiring it. Earlier portraits from the school during the 1950s suggest that the blazer was not required, probably due to shortages that persisted for years after World War II. We note that by the late 50s that blazers were again widely worn. All the junior boys were wearing short trousers in 1961. This also suggests that the regulations were changed requiring the first or even second year boys wear them. The girls look to be wearing the same uniform worn in the 1950s. Blazers continued to be worn throughout the 1960s, but by 1965 fewer boys were wearing shorts trousers. We suspect that regulations about caps also changed, but am unsure when this took place.

1961

All the boys at the school in 1961 seem to be wearing the school blazer. We suspect that the school may have begun requiring it. Earlier portraits from the school during the 1950s suggest that the blazer was not required, although by the late 50s was widely worn. All the junior boys were wearing short trousers in 1961. This also suggests that the regulations were changed requiring the first or even second year boys wear them. Earlier many junior boys wore short trousers, but not all of them. This suggests that the boys wearing shorts earlier did so because their parents decided on them rather than the school insisting. I am not sure if caps were still required. Caps by this time had become unpopular with the boys at most secondary schools. The girls look to be wearing the same uniform worn in the 1950s.

1965

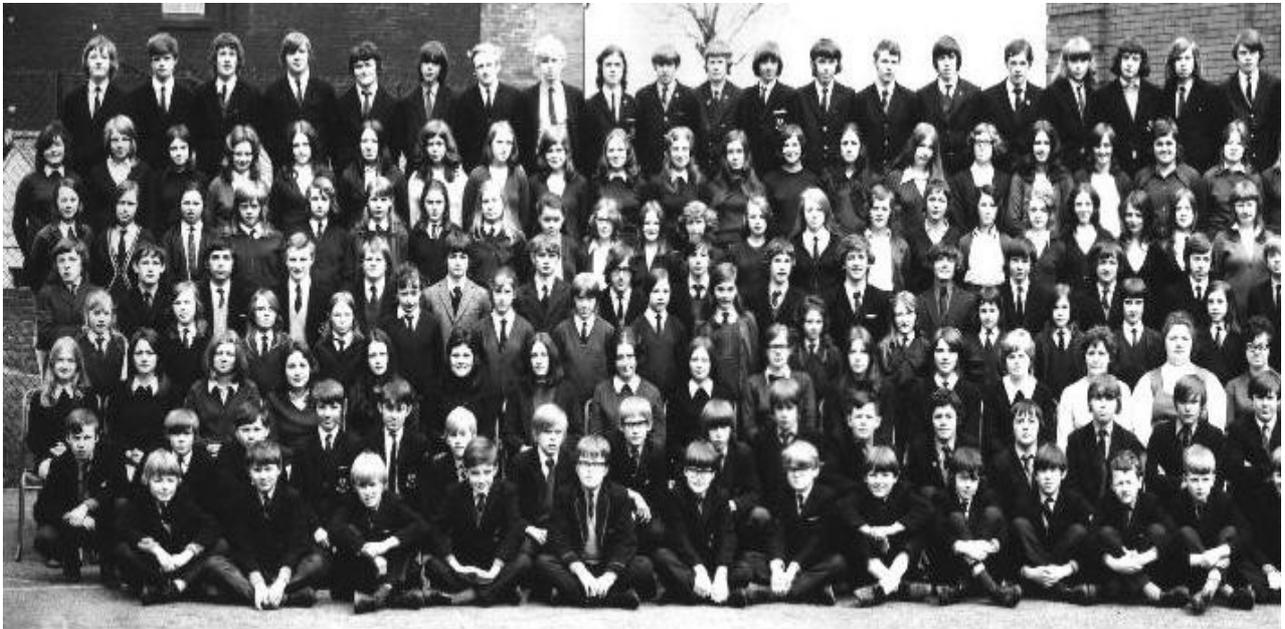
Some changes in the uniform had occurred by 1965. Blazers continued to be

worn throughout the 1960s, but by 1965 fewer boys were wearing short trousers and kneesocks. Several boys still wore shorts, but they look to be a minority even among the junior boys. We do not know what the school regulation was or if there was still any regulation. We suspect that regulations about caps had also changed, but am unsure when this took place.

The 1970's

Very little about the uniform appears to have changed in the 1970s from the 1960s. A school photograph from the 1970s shows the boys all wearing the school blazer with long trousers. Even the junior boys now all wear long trousers. The most noticeable change is in the hair styles. Boys wear all kinds of long hair styles. We also notice many girls wearing sweaters and ties which we had not noted earlier.

School of 1972:





The 1980's

The schools last generation and it only made it part way into the 80s....

Closing its doors for good sometime in 1983, it stood abandoned until 1988 when it was demolished..

Now the grounds have been built upon and it has been this way for the entirety of my life as far as I can ever recall.

Jesse Seddon 1883 to 1981:



Mayor of Farnworth: 1944-45 (Conservative)
Born: Kearsley 28 January 1893
Died: January 1981
Educated: Farnworth Grammar School

Son of Ernest Seddon who ran a Grocery business at 88 Ringley Road, Kearsley.

He joined the Lancashire Fusiliers during First World War and as a 2nd Lieutenant in the Machine Gun Corps was awarded the Military Cross for conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty 26 July 1918.

As a token of the town's appreciation for his War service he was presented with a gold watch and an illuminated address at a meeting of Kearsley Urban District Council in September 1918 by the then Chairman, James Howard.

In 1919 he went into partnership in the corn business with his father, becoming Director of two corn-milling companies.

Councillor on Farnworth UDC and Farnworth Municipal Borough Council from 1932. Alderman 1940.

Magistrate for 26 years from 1940.

He was in charge of the Auxiliary Fire Service in Farnworth at the outbreak of the Second World War - giving up his business directorships to do so - and continued to hold various positions with the National Fire Service until 1943.

Honorary Welfare Officer and Chairman of Farnworth Civil Defence Welfare Organization.

Chairman of the Governors of Farnworth Grammar School.

Vice-president of Farnworth Cricket Club, Farnworth Sunday School Football League and Darley Rowing Club.

Freemason.

Founder member and President of the Rotary Club of Farnworth & District 1947-48.

When he began his Mayoral year, his son, Flight Sergeant John Tyler Seddon, was a prisoner of War in Germany.

His wife, Edith, was Mayoress.

1965 School Photo: Can anyone identify any of these people?







Floor Layouts 1954 (Revised)

This is an attempt to show the layout of the School in my last year, 1954. The attempt is based on forty-nine-year-old memories and lots of guesswork. I have no known dimensions with which to work and the sizes of rooms, etc. are based on what I see in my mind's eye. This has resulted in inaccurate sizes, relative sizing and positioning. Vertical registration of features floor-to-floor is decidedly "out" in parts. I started by trying to get proportions as near to actuality as possible but with limited success. In the end I gave up and decided to make the arrangement indicative rather than positive. I should point out that I have no knowledge of architectural drawing, just in case that isn't obvious! Constructive comments will be welcomed. Perhaps some professional who has expertise with computer drawing software would like to make this the basis for a professional-looking job, even if nothing can be done about dimensions?

In the original drawings I made two major errors which have just been brought to my attention. Due to a misunderstanding of something which I read, I discounted my memory (mistake!) and introduced two phantom form rooms; one in the Library corridor, which should have only two form rooms, and one in the Geography Room corridor, which should have only one form room. I wonder why nobody spotted that before now? I had also incorrectly sized the rooms at the front end of those corridors. Having corrected those points I now have the correct number of rooms and the main steps are now correctly positioned.

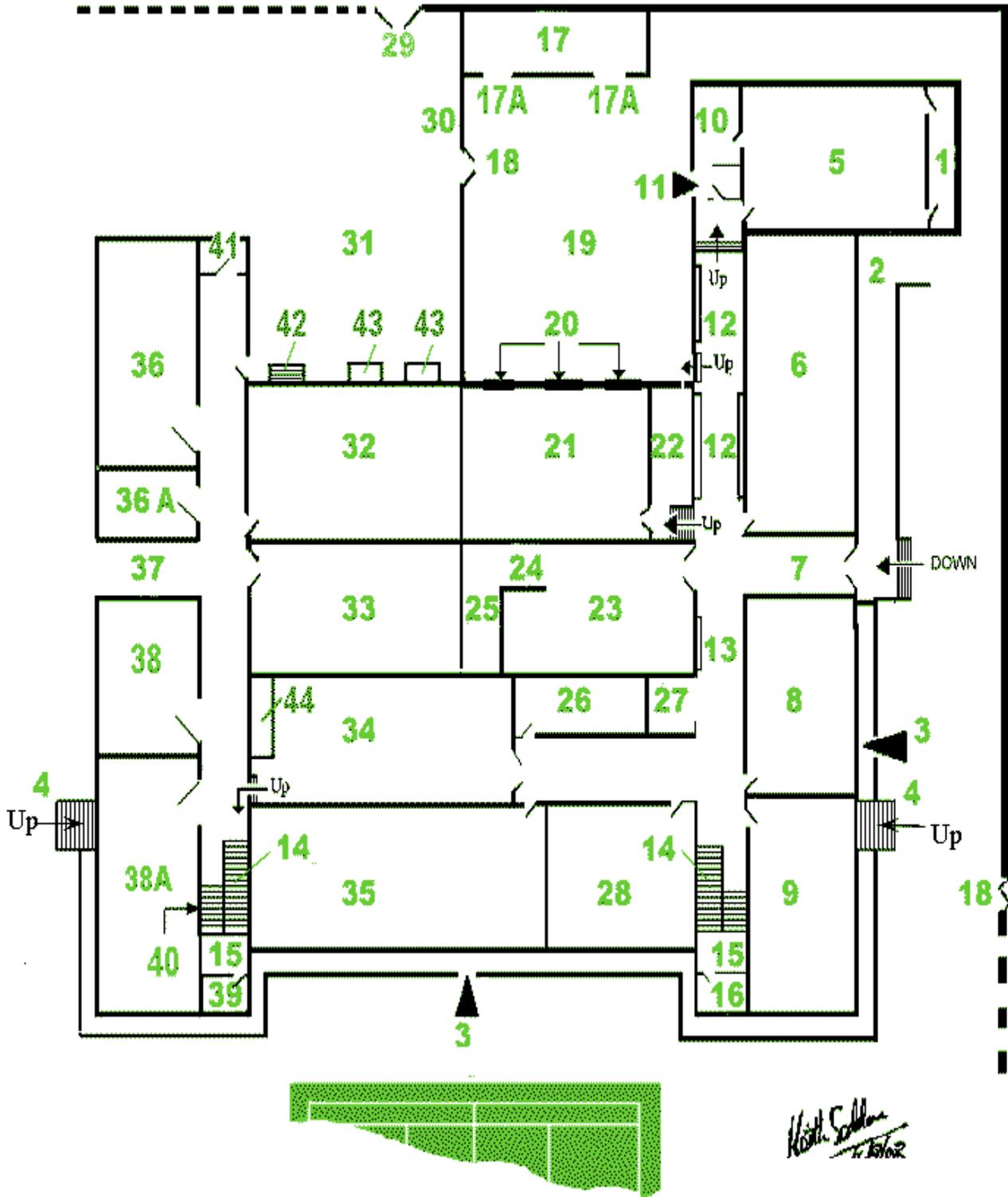
Further information has been received and has filled some of the blank spaces and added detail to others. I have deleted references to forms, as this seemed to be causing some confusion.

The boys' cloakroom had the wartime blast walls outside the windows. (The cloakroom was strengthened and used as a temporary air-raid shelter.) I don't remember any such walls on the girls' side. Did they exist? Perhaps the walls on the boys' side were left in place because they were also good anti-football walls.

I think that I might have omitted a storeroom in the area of the stairs in the boys' basement. Have I? Have I remembered correctly the odd double-double-door arrangement of the junior chemistry lab./prep. room?

If you wish to comment or to provide corrections or additions, please remember that this is the 1954 arrangement. I have no doubt that significant changes were made in subsequent years. We can add notes about such changes if they are appropriate.

Ground Floor/Basement



LEGEND

- 01. Greenhouse
- 02. Cycle ramp, down
- 03. The Monkey Run*
- 04. Main steps to first floor

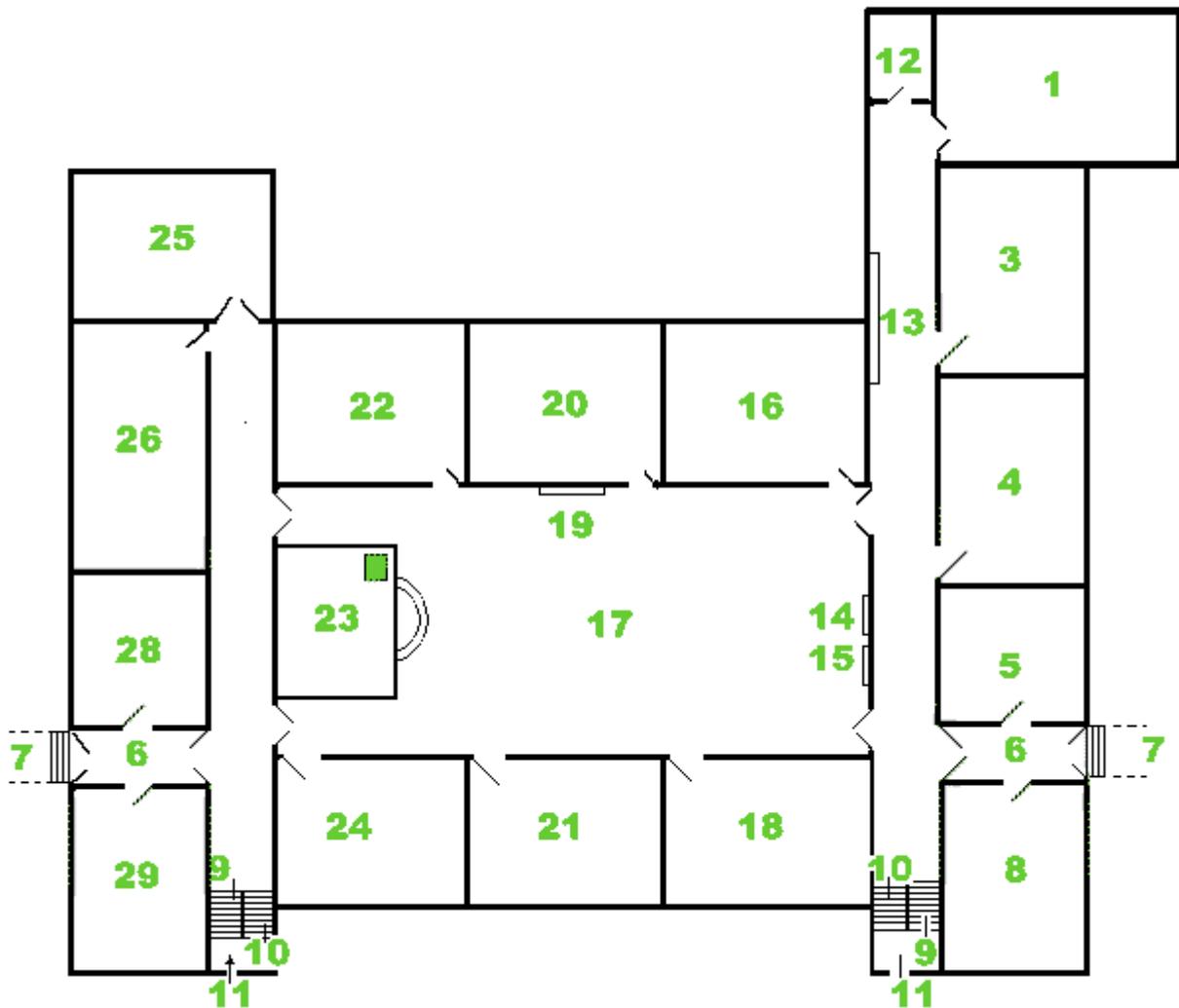
05. Biology lab. Also used as form room
06. Junior physics lab
07. Boys' entrance and notice board
08. Form room
09. Senior physics lab
10. Biology prep room
11. Originally a store; converted to a darkroom by Mr. Wotton
12. Boys' lockers
13. VI form boys' lockers
14. Stairs up to first floor.

Cloakroom under 14/15/16 (for "Thirds")

15. Landing
16. Headmaster's WC and washroom
17. Boys' al fresco "lavvies". Yuk!
- 17A: Entrances used as football goals; extreme care needed when exiting!
18. Gate
19. Boys' yard
20. Wartime anti-blast walls (peacetime anti-football walls) outside cloakroom windows
21. Boys' cloakroom and lockers
22. Boys' washroom
23. Boys' cycle shed
24. Ramp up to 25
25. Raised platform (for what purpose?)
26. Wood store
27. VI form boys' cloakroom (known as the drying room)
28. Form room
29. Vehicle gate
30. Dividing wall
31. Girls' yard
32. Form room
33. Girls' cycle shed (raised platform as in boys' shed?)
34. Basement storage area
35. Woodwork room
36. Girls' WCs.
- 36A: Female prefects' room? Later known to be a small form room
37. Girls' entrance and notice board
38. Girls' washroom.
- 38A: Girls' cloakroom
39. Senior mistress's WC and washroom.
40. Lockers under stairs
41. Caretaker's room
42. Steps down to cellars and boiler room
43. Fuel chutes
44. Stationery store

* Not long after 1954, the 'monkey run' was fenced off by means of a set of railings. This was presumably a pre-emptive strike against potentially litigious parents by a health-and-safety-conscious LEA.

First Floor



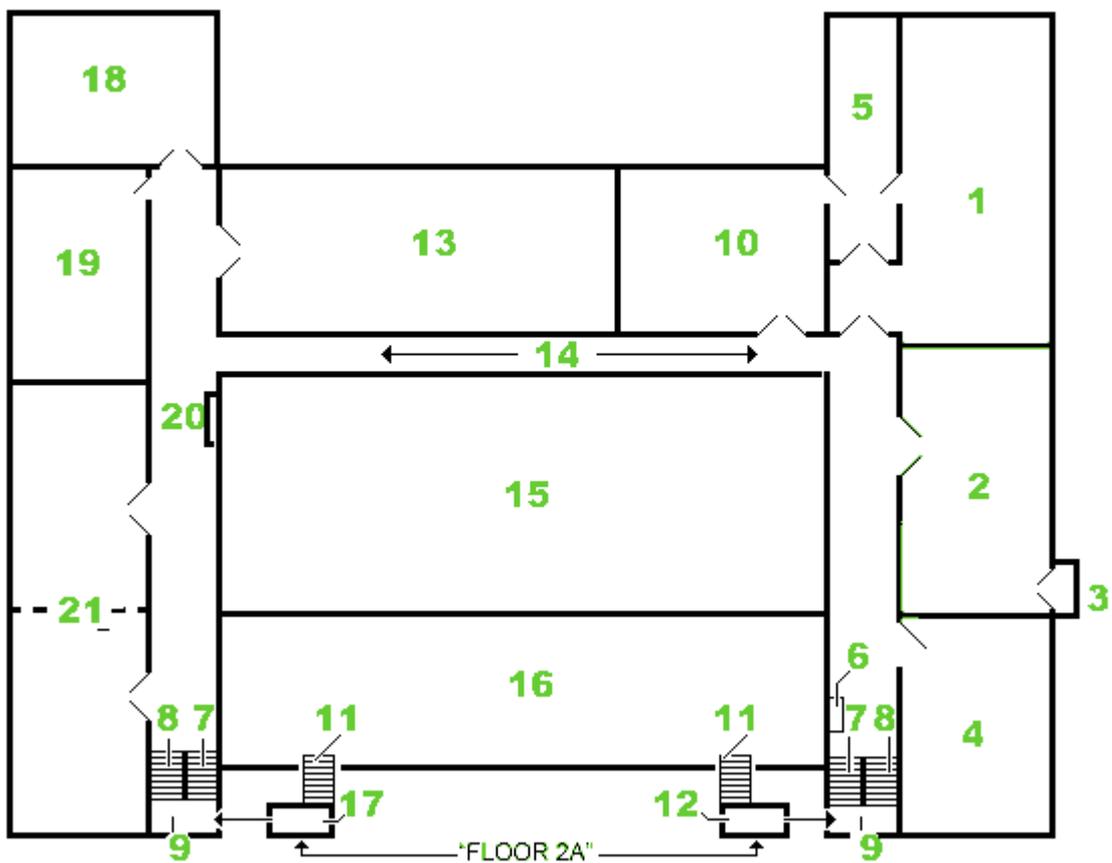
SCALE: Arbitrary, variable and speculative

LEGEND

01. Library. Also form room
02. Number not used.
03. Form room
04. Form room
05. Secretary's office
06. Vestibule
07. Main steps up from playground
08. Headmaster's study
09. Stairs down to ground floor/basement
10. Stairs up to second floor
11. Landing
12. Cleaners' room (?)
13. Chair storage in corridor
14. Memorial, World War II
15. Trophy cabinet
16. Form room

- 17. Hall
- 18. Form room
- 19. Memorial, World War I, with the Book of Remembrance for both wars.
- 20. Form room
- 21. Form room
- 22. Form room
- 23. Stage. Steps placed centrally as the organ was not in place until 1956. The lectern was a WW1 Memorial item.
- 24. Form room
- 25. Geography room. Also form room; also reported as music room at some time
- 26. Form room
- 27. Number not used
- 28. Senior Mistress's study
- 29. Female staff common room

Second Floor



SCALE: Arbitrary, variable and speculative

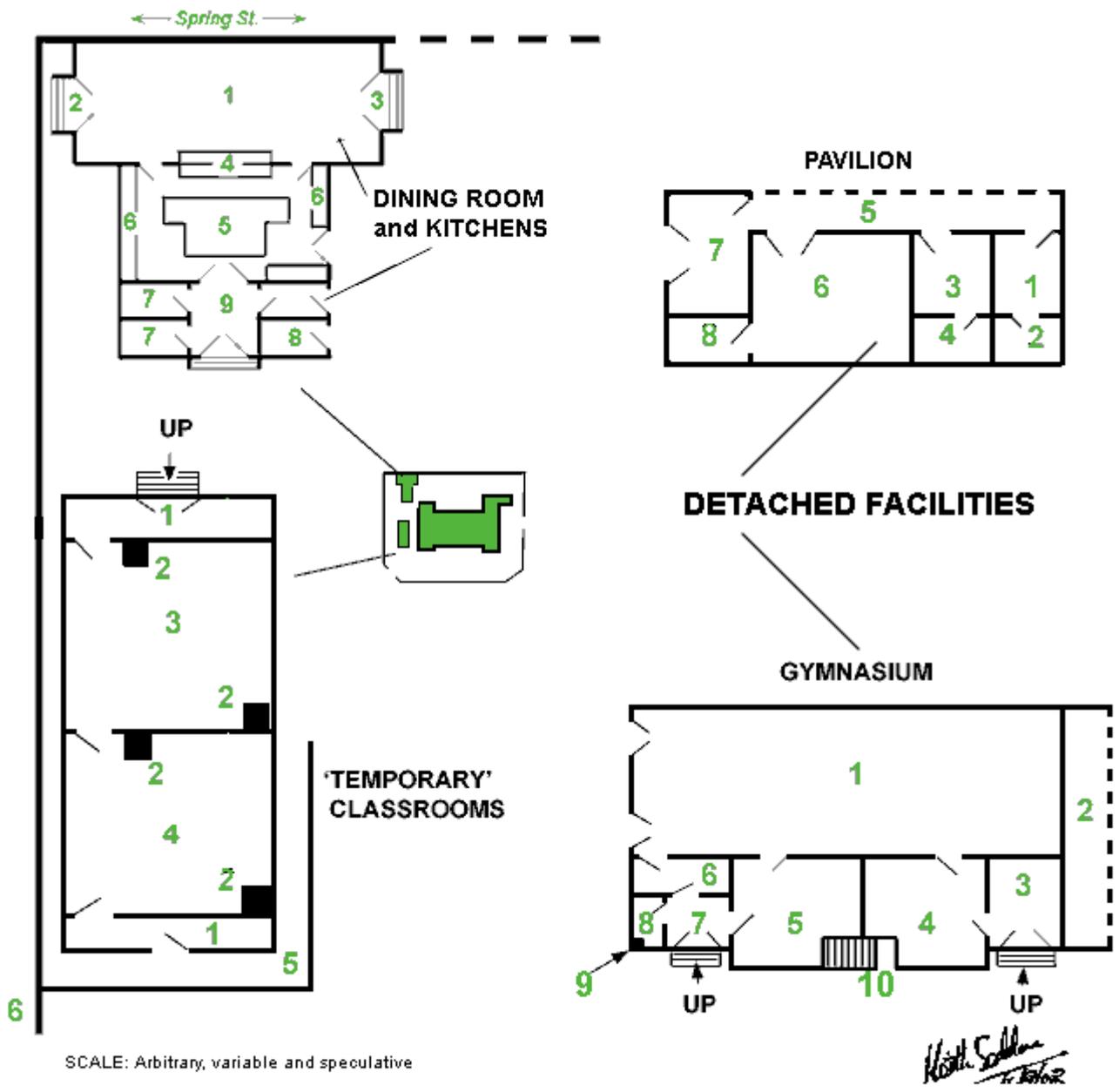
Keith Sallone
1. 1962

LEGEND

- 01. Junior chemistry laboratory
- 02. Senior chemistry laboratory. Also form room
- 03. Balcony over main steps
- 04. Male staff common room
- 05. Chemistry prep. room
- 06. Mr. ("Joss") Friday's store cupboard
- 07. Stairs down to 1st floor (Item 9 on 1st floor drawing)

- 08. Stairs down to 1st floor
- 09. Landing
- 10. Chemistry lecture room. Also form room
- 11. Stairs up to "Floor 2a". (Over item 7)
- 12. Male staff WC and wash room
- 13. Domestic science room.
- 14. Section of balcony cantilevered over the hall
- 15. Hall void
- 16. External flat roof over form rooms 18, 21 & 24 on 1st floor
- 17. Female staff WC and wash room
- 18. Form room (This was the original dining room and was also used as the music room)
- 19. Form room (Also book store?) .
- 20. Stage switchboard
- 21. Art room. Combined rooms with a moveable partition.

Ancillary Buildings



SCALE: Arbitrary, variable and speculative

DINING ROOM & KITCHENS

01. Main dining area
02. Girls' entrance
03. Boys' entrance
04. Serving counter (with wooden shutters)
05. Ovens, hotplates & hobs
06. Preparation areas & sinks
07. Store rooms
08. Boiler room
09. Entrance with water-storage tank above

PAVILION

01. Girls' cloakroom
02. Coke-burning stove (Honestly!)
03. Form room
04. Form room
05. Sunken walkway
06. Boundary wall

GYMNASIUM

01. Boys' changing room (School matches away team)
02. WC, shower, foot bath
03. Boys' changing room (School matches home team)
04. WC, shower, foot bath
05. Open verandah
06. Refreshment room. Also girls' changing room. (No showers but there must have been a WC, somewhere!)
07. Groundsman's room, equipment store, boiler
08. Kitchen

'TEMPORARY' CLASSROOMS (Prefabs)

01. Gymnasium (were the double doors ever opened?)
02. Fives courts (subsequently vandalised, I believe)
03. Girls' entrance area. (Details?)
04. Girls' changing room & showers
05. Boys' changing room & showers
06. Staff changing room. (Two doors?)
07. Boys' entrance area
08. Boys' WC
09. Boiler Room chimney
10. Steps down to boiler room

One very sad sorry scene I think sometime in 1988 during FSG's final days:



















