

FUTURE TRAINING OF KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS

PAPER II 1976

As I have had only one person from the Executive who has made any comment on my first paper and as the matter is most urgent, I feel I must make some definite recommendations for the consideration of the Executive.

I have just learned that the Department of Education wishes to discuss with the Union, the future training, including P.A. Year.

I therefore recommend that the third year of training be mainly practical, with "students" appointed to Kindergartens by the Teachers' Colleges, after consultation with Associations, mainly through the Senior Head Teachers or the Supervising Head Teachers.

Reasons: This should be a year of training on the job. Some special studies will be set by the College e.g. Functions of Head Teacher; Contact and Education of Parents; Work of Committees and Associations; Equipment; etc.

Students would be recognised and function as teachers when in the kindergarten, carrying out similar work to the other teacher and, of course, being under the direction of the Head Teacher.

There Are Two Options: (a) Appoint to each Kindergarten for one term.
(b) Appointed for the year.

I favour appointment to a different Kindergarten each term, so that they can have a variety of experiences.

- (1) Small town Kindergarten
- (2) City Kindergarten
- (3) Kindergarten with special needs e.g. deaf group; multi-racial group; crippled childrens group etc.

This would assist them to know the type of Kindergarten work they would favour,

Time In College: I would advise that these "students" be in the College at least one week in the first term, one week in the second term, and two weeks in the third term to discuss problems and to hand in and be given work for investigation. These people will be replaced by second year students on section, who, if necessary could exchange boarding arrangements. This time in College would have to be planned in the College programme. Note The first two years in College along the lines of the programmes planned at present.

Certification: As Primary Teachers spend three years in College plus the equivalent of a P.A. year as a First Year Teacher, the Kindergarten people would not be entitled to a Trained Teachers Certificate, so I would recommend that, at the end of two years in College they receive, as at present, a Teachers' College Certificate and at the end of the P.A. year (but called "First Year" year) they receive a Kindergarten Certificate on the recommendation of the College staff after consultation with the Senior Head Teacher or Supervising Head Teacher (note this answers my Problem No 1.).

Staffing: This would mean an additional member to the staff of all Grade 1 Kindergartens. Should Grade II Kindergartens have two of these First Year Teachers? Should a Grade 0 have any?

We can not expect the Department of Education to agree to this additional staffing (for these First Year students will be the same as many assistant teachers and perhaps be more effective as their work will decide whether they will have a Diploma or not. They also should be on the First Year salary scale.) without some additional children being catered for.

I would recommend that these additional teachers be appointed only to Kindergartens that make arrangements for additional children.

- (a) By increasing morning and afternoon rolls to 45.
- (b) By trying the introduction of another group of 40 children
 - e.g. First Group - 2 mornings a week
 - Second Group - 3 afternoons a week
 - Third Group - 3 mornings a week

Note. A study of average attendances shows that not more than 75% of the children attend each session. Why? A scheme such as the above would reduce the strain on your children. It would also help our waiting lists and cater for more children in our expensive buildings. (Note this covers Problem 2).

First Two Years In College: It has been found, I believe, that if students are to have only two years academic study in College then a special course for both years must be planned. This, I believe essential as it does not create any more problems than the Primary Graduate Groups. I do not like the Hill Report's recommendation that the first year Primary and Pre-School take a common course and at the end select either primary or pre-school. The Pre-School movement would lose by such a scheme due mainly to salary and placement of Primary teachers.

Three Years in College: This is essential if Pre-School teachers are to have the same qualifications as Primary teachers plus a first year as proposed above.

However, there are two ways by which such a course of studies may be organised.

- (a) By planning a continuous three years of study similar to the Primary Course but with special reference to the 3 to 8 year group of children. Some people (including the Hill Report) do not favour this but at present the Primary course is divided into three different groups with special reference by students to one particular group. Students would have to select this type of course prior to entry.
- (b) By Two-Plus-One alternative. I personally favour this as outlined in my previous paper for the following reasons.
 - (i) A third year in College would be taken only by those who, after the two year course, would know that they really wanted it.
 - (ii) Such a system would enable the present holders of a Kindergarten Diploma to improve their certificate by taking a further year.
 - (iii) A special course would be planned to meet the needs of this group.

Certification: Only those who complete a satisfactory three year course at a Teachers' College plus a successful year as a First Year Teacher should receive a Trained Teachers' Certificate.

The Kindergarten Diploma will be continued as long as only two years are spent in a Teachers' College. We are justified in adding a First Year (P.A. Year) as a qualification in the future. We must fight for the retention of the Kindergarten Diploma for the two year courses.

The Recruitment: Until ex-students have a greater guarantee of security of positions at the completion of their training we shall not fill our quotas with the best people. The first year proposals above, partly meet this need but what happens next? This is a matter that requires solving if we are to obtain the best people for Kindergarten work.