

# Library of Birmingham Archives & Collections

## Childhood and Education Source List

**This guide is intended as an introduction to some of the main archive sources for research in childhood and education. It is a starting point rather than an exhaustive list of collections and further sources will be found by checking the online catalogues, the Wolfson Centre paper catalogues and card indexes. Printed sources (e.g. annual reports of institutions and charities) will also be found in the local studies catalogue.**

From the early 18<sup>th</sup> century Birmingham saw the development of charitable institutions and organisations aimed at children, usually because they were a problem in some way – poor, destitute, badly behaved or had a disability. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century the growth of state education made a huge impact on children's lives. All of these developments resulted in the creation of records which document elements of children's lives and experiences.

As many of the records are institutional or official in nature, and the institutions were there to deal with 'problem' children, they can give a stereotypical or negative view of the lives of working class or poorer children – see section on Oral History below.

For records relating to children in earlier periods before the development of these institutions, and for particular faith groups, see also the guide to *Faith and Religious Records*.

### Points to remember:

- ▶ Records which include personal details of named individual children have a closure period (see below); this may extend to administrative records such as minutes, reports etc. depending on their content, date, and if individual children are named. Permission can be requested to see closed material or receive information from closed records – consult the Duty Archivist for details.
- ▶ Many of these collections are incomplete and the survival of records for particular periods or particular institutions can be patchy – check the catalogues to individual collections for details.

To access the Archives & Heritage online catalogue and information about our services go to <http://www.libraryofbirmingham.com> or access the printed paper catalogues in the Wolfson Research Centre. The printed catalogues are easier to use as you can see the overview and structure of the whole collection.

The Children's Lives website includes documents and resources from the Library of Birmingham's collections that featured in our Children's Lives exhibition in 2012 – go to <http://www.connectinghistories.org.uk/childrenslives>

The research guide to *Urban Childhoods* written by Professor Ian Grosvenor also includes useful context and information about our collections - see [http://www.connectinghistories.org.uk/birminghamstories/research\\_guides.asp](http://www.connectinghistories.org.uk/birminghamstories/research_guides.asp)

### Children's Homes, Reformatories and Industrial Schools

Poor children whose families could not maintain them or who were orphans were often placed in institutions. Other smaller collections are listed in '*Children's Homes and Children in Care*' – see *Further Information* below.

- Middlemore Emigration Homes, 1872-2005 MS 517/A

Between 1874 and 1949 Middlemore Homes sent over 6,000 poor children to Canada (from 1874) and Australia (from 1926).

★ **Tip:** When searching for a particular child in Middlemore follow this route after checking the catalogue for individual item numbers and dates: admission registers (MS 517/A/8/2) → application & history books (MS 517/A/8/1 & 4) → settlement papers (MS 517/A/8/5).

- Crowley Orphanage for Poor Girls, 1868-1954 MS 517/B
- Princess Alice Orphanage, 1879-1980 MS 1249
- Sir Josiah Mason's Orphanage, 1856-1990 MS 1609
- Marston Green Cottage Homes, 1880-1933 BCC 10/BCH/1

Cottage Homes were developed by the Boards of Poor Law Guardians to take poor children out of the workhouse.

- Shenley Fields Cottage Homes, 1887-1952 BCC 10/BCH/2
- Erdington Cottage Homes, 1899-1973 BCC 10/BCH/3
- Summer Hill Receiving Homes, 1921-1937 BCC 10/BCH/4
- Boards of Guardians, 18<sup>th</sup> century-1930 GP AS, B, KN

Guardians were responsible for the care of destitute children until 1930 when their responsibilities were transferred to the City Council. Minutes of various Guardians' committees can give information on individual children. There were separate Boards of Guardians for Aston (GP/AS), Birmingham (GP/B) and Kings Norton (GP/KN) until Aston and King Norton were absorbed into Birmingham in 1912.

- Birmingham City Council, 1930- BCC

Minutes of committees dealing with the welfare, fostering and care of children. Responsibility for children frequently moved between committees and departments at different times in the 20<sup>th</sup> century – check the catalogues and items listed in *Further Information* below.

Institutions for young offenders developed from the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The institutions' names and responsibilities change several times.

- Norton School (formerly Saltley), 1848-1982 MS 244
- Tennial School (formerly Gem Street), 1847-1984 MS 553, MS 994
- Shawbury School (formerly Shustoke), 1868-1980 BCC 10/BCH/11
- Athelstan House, 1909-2000 BCC 10/BCH/12  
(formerly Moseley Road Remand Home)

▶ **Closure periods:** records relating to named children - Middlemore Homes **75 years**; other children's homes and institutions **100 years**.  
▶ Enquiries from closed children's homes records are undertaken by a social worker from the BCC Post Adoption Support Team – consult Duty Archivist.

### Further information:

'Children's Homes and Children in Care: A guide to sources held at Birmingham Archives & Heritage' – available in Wolfson Centre, and online at [www.connectinghistories.org.uk/children'shomes.asp](http://www.connectinghistories.org.uk/children'shomes.asp) where you will also find contextual information, examples of documents and a directory of children's homes in Birmingham.

### Schools

Charity schools developed from the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Until the Education Act of 1870 many children received very little schooling and most schools in Birmingham developed after that date.

- Birmingham Blue Coat School, 1722-1989 MS 1622

Only children who followed the teaching of the Anglican Church could attend the Blue Coat School. Non-conformists (Dissenters) and other faiths had different schools.

- Protestant Dissenting Charity School, 1761-1922 MS 3629
- The Hebrew School (later King David School), 1860-1991 JA 1/C
- Edgbaston Church of England College for Girls, 1820-1959 MS 2278
- Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind, c.1860-1988 MS 1700
- Birmingham Royal School for Deaf Children, 1828-1984 MS 1060
- Managers' correspondence, notes of meetings, reports on the St Mark's Church of England School, St Mark's Street, 1928-1940. EP 33/14/1/3
- Records of Bartley Green Church of England Primary School 1872-early 20th century. EP 80/14
- Records for over 300 local schools, 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> centuries S 1-300

All these collections have the prefix 'S' and catalogues for the individual schools can be found online and in the Wolfson Centre. They are mostly junior and infant schools. The main classes of records that survive are log books, admission registers, and more rarely punishment books.

Log books are a day-today account of the administration of the school which do not routinely include details of individual children.

► **Closure periods:** School records which contain pupil information **100 years.**

### Further information:

'The City a Light and a Beacon: A guide to Birmingham Education Archives' – available in Wolfson Centre

## Education Committees

From 1870 onwards schools were overseen by the Birmingham School Board. The city council's Education Committee took over from the school board in 1903.

- Records of Birmingham School Board (1870 – 1903) SB B
- Minutes of the Education Committee  
And it's related sub-committees (1903 – 1979) BCC/1/BH

## Manuscript Collections Related to Schools

- MS 466/121 School timetable relating to schooling of Elizabeth Cadbury, 1867-1869
- MS 466/122-131 Material relating to schooling of Elizabeth Taylor (Cadbury) in Germany.
- MS 466/128/1-3 French, German and English exercise books of Elizabeth Taylor (Cadbury) whilst at school in Germany, 1874.
- MS 466/129/1-8 School reports of Elizabeth Taylor (Cadbury), 1872-1876.
- MS 542/6 Account book for alterations and repairs containing handwriting practice of Laura Mary James, 1866.
- MS 588/1-7 School notebooks of J.E. Southall, artist, 1876-1878.
- MS 1031 Child's School Book, 1879-80.
- MS 1378 Practical Teaching Work Book, demonstrating work carried out in the Bordesley Green Practising School, Sladefield Road School and Leigh Road School, 1914-1916.
- MS 1410/2-4 Honour Certificate; Half Yearly Pupils Report; Leaving Certificate, 1906-1910.
- MS 1427 Autobiographical notes of G.W. Leonard, including notes on schooling, 1830-1900.
- EDUCATION
- MS 1509/5/7-8 Bi-annual school reports, 1806-1811; Notebook containing details of lectures for 'assisting the memory', c1809.
- MS 1509/5/18 Bi-annual school reports, 1865-1867
- MS 1515/6 Educational certificates and testimonials of Cybil B. Launder, 1920-1936
- MS 1519 Teachers' Practice Notebook
- MS 1536 Box 11 Bournville Schools Presscuttings, 1904-1914
- MS 1533 Box 26 Bournville Junior School Pamphlets
- MS 1631/5 General Programme of Children's Jubilee Sports organised as part of the Children's Diamond Jubilee Treat for all Erdington Schools, 22 June 1817
- MS 1654/1-5 Project workbooks-'The Nursery', 'Shops', 'The Young Citizens Newspaper', 'Industry in the World', 'The Young Citizens at Work Abroad', 1947-1950. Demonstrate project-based approach to teaching.
- MS 1702 Typescript, 'A Wartime Childhood'-memoirs of Irene Mary Ogle [nee Evans] as an evacuee during the Second World War, 1992
- MS 1832/1/1 Letters from Florence Bourne at school in Sparkhill to her parents concerning her progress and holidays, 1873-1876
- MS 1866/8-16 Papers of Miss C. Rowland, Birmingham teacher, 20th century

- MS 2021 Educational, training and teaching papers of Catherine Mary Shaw, Birmingham school teacher, 1926-c 1996 [some of these records remain closed, please ask a member of staff for advice]
- MS 2058 School Song, Aston Commercial School, no date
- MS 2277 School exercise books of Bessie Harris, 1932-c1937
- MS 3147/3/61/1-49 Letter from James Watt Jr referring to the need to make a list of the candidates for the new school.
- MS 3147/3/12 Letter from J. Southern referring to a request by William Welly of the Foundry for a ticket of admission for his son John to the new school.

## Health

Two specialised health institutions relating to children developed during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. For other hospitals and health records see separate guide.

- Birmingham Royal Orthopaedic Hospital, 1817- 1999 HC RO

The Royal Orthopaedic Hospital (Woodlands) includes the records of the Birmingham and District Crippled Children's Union.

- Birmingham Children's Hospital, 1861-1996 HC BCH

► **Closure periods:** Records containing information relating to named patients **100 years.**

## Family papers

Family collections often include children's photographs, correspondence, and records relating to education. Remember that family collections on the whole tend to be preserved by middle class families and therefore relate to relatively privileged children.

## Oral Histories

Oral histories can offer a corrective to the often stereo-typical or negative view of working class and poorer children in found in archives. Remember that oral histories are not usually recordings of children however, but of the adult looking back and remembering the child they once were. Hindsight and adult perspectives therefore inevitably come into play.

- Millennibrum Oral Histories (150 recordings), 2000 MS 2255
- Digbeth and Deritend Local History Project oral histories, 1986 MS 1497

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery also hold a large collection of oral histories relating to Birmingham and many of these include information about childhood.

## Photographic Material

- MS 1536/1440 Bournville Schools and Carillion
- MS 1645/16 Bordesley green Infant School, Miss Warner in Class, 1931

A selection of photographs relating to education in the City is available on Floor 6:

- Warwickshire Photographic Survey WK/B11
- Miscellaneous photographs-Secondary Schools
- Junior and Infants
- Crafts and Activities
- Physical Education

## **Secondary Material**

- Birmingham Association for Education Secondary Schools in Birmingham Location: Floor 6 W48.34
- Birmingham Chinese School, (1992) Birmingham Chinese School Location: Floor 6 B.COL 371.97
- C. Boundy, Evacuation in Birmingham during the Second World War Location: Floor 6 Q940.531610941BOU
- C. Chinn, (1996) Brum Undaunted-Birmingham during the Blitz Location: Floor 6 B.COL Q940.54212496
- EDUCATION
- P. H. Gosden, (1976) Education in the Second World War, Location: Floor 4 370.942GOS
- B. T. Hinchley, City of Birmingham Government Evacuation Scheme Location: Floor 6 Q940.53161HIN
- H. Hlden, (1942) Art Craft Education in the City of Birmingham Location: Floor 6 AQ094/BIR
- P. Horn, (1989) The Victorian and Edwardian School Child Location: Floor 4 370.941
- MacFarlane, (1986) Bournville Junior School-The First Eighty Years, 1906-1986 Location: Floor 6 48.32
- J. Morris & P. Morton, (1998) Through the Classroom Window Location: Floor 6 B.COL 370.922MOR
- National Commission on Education, (1996) Success against the Odds Location: Floor 4 B.COL 370.19341
- W. K. Richmond, (1945) Education in England Location: Floor 7 370.942
- M. R. Shepherd, (1988) Colmore Road Infant School location: Floor 6 Q372.942496
- W. D. Smith, (1974) Stretching their Bodies-The History of Physical Education Location: Floor 4 371.73SMI
- Statistical Society, (1840) Report on the State of Education in Birmingham Location: Floor 6 B.COL 370.942496