

= Direct grant grammar school =

A direct grant grammar school was a type of selective secondary school in England and Wales that existed between 1945 and 1976 . One quarter of the places in these schools were directly funded by central government , while the remainder attracted fees , some paid by the Local Education Authority and some by private pupils . On average , the schools received just over half of their income from the state .

The status was introduced by the Education Act 1944 as a modification of an existing direct grant scheme to privately endowed schools . There were 179 direct grant grammar schools , which , together with over 1 @, @ 200 grammar schools maintained by local authorities , formed the most academic tier of the Tripartite System . They varied greatly in size and composition , but , on average , achieved higher academic results than either maintained grammar schools or independent schools .

State secondary education was reorganised on comprehensive lines in the late 1960s and early 1970s . The direct grant was phased out from 1975 and the schools were required to choose between becoming maintained comprehensive schools or fully independent schools . Forty @-@ five schools , almost all Roman Catholic , joined the state system , while a few closed . The rest (including all the secular schools) became independent and mostly remain as highly selective independent schools .

= = Origins = =

In the 19th century , few boys and very few girls in England and Wales received secondary education , which was available only at private schools . During this time , secondary provision expanded and adjusted to growing demand . At the start of that century , some boarding schools like Eton College and Winchester College thrived educating the sons of the aristocracy , but most endowed grammar schools were in decline , their classical curricula seen as irrelevant to the industrial age . These schools were reformed under the Endowed Schools Act 1869 , which also led to many endowments being diverted to the creation of girls ' schools . In the meantime a range of other schools had appeared . After the Roman Catholic Relief Act 1829 and mid @-@ century Irish immigration , Catholic teaching orders from Ireland and mainland Europe began to establish their own grammar schools . New proprietary schools were established , initially as joint @-@ stock companies , converting to charities if they were successful . One of the largest such companies was the Girls ' Public Day School Company (later Trust) , set up to provide an affordable academic education for girls , which had established 32 schools by 1894 .

In the latter part of the century , many of the less wealthy schools received annual grants from the Department of Science and Art and from their county councils . The grant system was restructured when the Board of Education was created in 1901 to fund early secondary schools , and the Education Act 1902 gave counties and county boroughs responsibility for schools , designating them as local education authorities (LEAs) . Secondary schools controlled by voluntary bodies could receive a grant from either the Board of Education or their local authority , or both . In return they were required to meet the Board 's regulations , and were subject to the same system of inspections as state @-@ funded schools . Under the Education (Administrative Provisions) Act 1907 , secondary schools in receipt of grant were required to admit a specified proportion of their intake , usually 25 % , free of charge from state elementary schools . Suitable pupils were selected using a scholarship examination .

Circular 1381 , a directive issued by the Board of Education in 1926 , required that schools choose a single source of grant : they could receive a " direct grant " from central government , or be " grant @-@ aided " by their local authority . By 1932 there were 240 secondary schools receiving a direct grant , compared with 1138 aided by local authorities . Although this division was intended purely as an administrative convenience , local authorities gradually gained more influence over the schools they aided , in part because of the schools ' weak financial position during the Great Depression .

The Depression and the falling birth rate in the pre @-@ war years had also weakened

independent schools and schools receiving the direct grant . At the same time , the state @-@ funded sector had grown to the point where universal secondary education seemed achievable , and changes in society had made the idea more popular . Proposals were made for a reorganisation of the maintained sector , including a new accommodation with the voluntary schools . In response , the Headmasters ' Conference persuaded the President of the Board of Education , R.A. Butler , to establish a commission under Lord Fleming in July 1942 " to consider means whereby the association between the Public Schools ... and the general education system of the country could be developed and extended " .

= = Direct grant scheme = =

The Education Act 1944 aimed to introduce a universal system of secondary education for England and Wales . Under the Tripartite System , there were to be three types of schools , with pupils sitting an eleven plus exam to determine which type of school they would be sent to . The most academic tier would be the grammar school , and the Act revised the terms of the direct grant to operate alongside LEA @-@ maintained grammar schools , many of which were former LEA @-@ aided schools . The latter schools , unable to cope with the costs of the reorganisation required by the 1944 Act , had been offered the status of voluntary controlled or voluntary aided schools , under which the state would pay all their running costs and all or most of their capital costs . They were thus fully integrated into the state system .

The new direct grant scheme was a modification of proposals in the Fleming Report of 1944 . A direct grant grammar school would provide 25 % of its places free of charge to children who had spent at least 2 years in maintained primary schools , and would reserve at least a further 25 % of places to be paid for by the LEA if required . The remaining (" residuary ") places would attract fees , but no child would be admitted unless they had achieved the required standard in the eleven plus . The schools would be inspected by Her Majesty 's Inspectors of Schools , would have one third of their governing bodies appointed by the LEA , and would require the approval of the Secretary of State to raise fees or carry out building work .

The scheme was attractive to most of the direct grant schools . Of the 231 secondary schools receiving direct grant in 1945 , 196 applied to join the new scheme , with the rest becoming independent schools . In addition 31 grant @-@ aided schools applied to join the scheme . Of these , 164 schools (including four formerly grant @-@ aided schools) were accepted as direct grant grammar schools . The list was re @-@ opened between 1957 and 1961 , when 44 applications were received , of which 15 were accepted . There were therefore 179 direct grant grammar schools , alongside over 1200 maintained grammar schools .

Beside the Direct Grant Scheme , the Act also made provision for LEAs to fund places at independent schools in areas where there was a shortage of appropriate places in maintained schools . For example , there might be a lack of selective places , or of selective places in Roman Catholic schools . In the late 1960s , 56 independent schools had over 25 % of their places funded by LEAs in this way , with seven of them over 75 % LEA @-@ funded .

= = Characteristics of the schools = =

In 1966 , when direct grant schools were at their height , they educated 3 @. @ 1 % of secondary pupils across England and Wales , while independent schools accounted for 7 @. @ 1 % . For A @-@ level students , these proportions rose to 6 @. @ 2 % and 14 @. @ 7 % respectively . Before Culford School became coeducational in 1972 , all but 2 of the schools were single sex , with a slight majority of girls ' schools . There were 56 Roman Catholic schools , 14 Church of England and 6 Methodist . Many of the schools were in the north of England , with 46 in the historic county of Lancashire (including Manchester) and 18 in the West Riding of Yorkshire , while there were only 7 in inner London and 4 in Wales . In 1961 , an average of 59 % of pupils at direct grant grammar schools were state @-@ funded , but the proportion also varied greatly between schools .

Direct grant schools had similar teacher / pupil ratios to the maintained grammar schools , as their

fees were regulated to match costs at the latter schools . The proportion of teachers with first and second class degrees was slightly lower than in their maintained counterparts . The principal difference from the maintained schools was greater freedom from LEA influence .

Although there was much variation , these schools as a group were middle @-@ class institutions , with many tending to move closer to the independent schools in social composition . On average , three @-@ quarters of pupils came from white @-@ collar homes , including 60 % with fathers in management or the professions , while only 7 % were children of semi @-@ skilled or unskilled workers . On average , the intake of the schools was also more academically selective than either maintained grammar schools or independent schools . Their results were correspondingly high , with 60 % of their pupils staying on to age 18 and 38 % going on to university , significantly greater proportions than either of the other groups of schools .

= = Types of schools = =

There was a great deal of variation between direct grant grammar schools . According to the Donnison Report (discussed in the next section) , the schools were of four types , though the boundaries between them were not always clear @-@ cut .

Donnison called the first group " regional schools " : large , highly academically selective day schools with large sixth forms , located near large cities , and mostly boys ' schools belonging to the Headmaster 's Conference . The archetype of the direct grant grammar school , was the largest , Manchester Grammar School , whose High Master from 1945 to 1962 , Eric James (elevated to the peerage in 1959) , was an outspoken advocate of the " meritocracy " . In 1968 the school sent 77 % of its boys on to university , a rate surpassed only by the independent Winchester College . Close behind were such schools as Bradford Grammar School , Leeds Grammar School , Haberdashers ' Aske 's School and Latymer Upper School . A large girls ' school of similar academic attainment was North London Collegiate School , which had been founded in 1850 by Frances Buss . These schools achieved university admission rates that rivalled the older public schools , which in turn moved to raise their academic standards for admission , and to increase their focus of academic achievement . With their high profile , such schools formed the popular image of a direct grant grammar school , but they accounted for only about a quarter of them .

The second group consisted of 30 schools (23 for boys and 7 for girls) with a significant proportion (over 25 %) of boarders . Boarders made up the majority of pupils at 15 schools (all but one for boys) , including five of the six Methodist schools . Boarding schools tended to be smaller and less academically selective than other direct grant schools , and to take a larger proportion of fee @-@ paying pupils . They also tended to be more socially selective , with nearly three quarters of their pupils having fathers in management or the professions .

The third group , Roman Catholic schools , made up nearly a third of the direct grant schools (19 for boys and 37 for girls) . They were predominantly day schools , though 10 of them took a small proportion of boarders . Their fees were about 15 % lower than other direct grant grammars , and they tended to take a much higher proportion of LEA @-@ funded pupils . In 1968 , 40 of these schools took over 80 % of their pupils from their LEAs ; the average proportion was 86 % . They also tended to be more socially mixed , with 37 % of their pupils from managerial and professional homes and 16 % children of semi @-@ skilled or unskilled workers . These schools were thus similar to the LEA @-@ maintained Roman Catholic grammar schools , whom they outnumbered . Lacking endowments and having lower fee income , they were less financially secure than other direct grant grammars .

The fourth group were non @-@ denominational local grammar schools , often with an intake more able on average than in maintained grammar schools , but covering a broader range . These included the 23 schools of the Girls ' Public Day School Trust (now the Girls ' Day School Trust) .

= = Comprehensive reorganisation = =

During the post @-@ War period , many parts of the world moved from selective education to

comprehensive schools catering for children of all abilities . Dissatisfaction with the Tripartite System grew during the 1950s , with concern over the harsh division of the school population at the age of 11 , and the loss to the economy of the " submerged three @-@ quarters " in secondary modern schools . Experiments with comprehensive schools spread from Anglesey to the Midlands and Yorkshire .

In 1964 , a Labour government was elected promising " to reorganise the State secondary schools on comprehensive lines " . In the following year , the Department of Education and Science distributed Circular 10 / 65 , requesting that Local Education Authorities prepare plans for such a reorganisation of their schools . The Circular also requested consultation between LEAs and direct grant schools on their participation in a comprehensive system . For this reason , direct grant schools were excluded from consideration by the Public Schools Commission set up in 1965 , even though 152 of them would otherwise have fallen within its remit .

There was little progress in the local negotiations proposed in the Circular . Two Catholic girls ' schools , St Anne 's Convent School , Southampton and St Anthony 's School , Sunderland , converted to a fully comprehensive intake , expanding to over 1000 pupils each . A few others proposed minor adjustments , but the vast majority were unchanged . In view of this lack of progress , the Public Schools Commission was asked on October 1967 to add direct grant schools to its investigation . The Commission , now chaired by David Donnison , issued its second report in 1970 , concluding that " Grammar schools of the traditional kind cannot be combined with a comprehensive system of education : we must choose what we want . Fee @-@ paying is not compatible with comprehensive education . " They recommended that the schools choose between becoming voluntary aided comprehensives and full independence , but the Conservatives came to power before any action had been taken .

Meanwhile , a trickle of schools had begun to leave the scheme , starting with Trinity School of John Whitgift , which became independent in 1968 , but still had half its places funded by the LEA . It was followed in 1970 by Oakham School , which became co @-@ educational in the following year , and Queen Victoria High School , which merged with The Cleveland School to form Teesside High School . A respite was provided in the early 1970s , when Margaret Thatcher , the Conservative Education Secretary , raised the level of grant , which had been lowered by the Labour government .

= = Abolition and legacy = =

Labour returned to power in 1974 and enacted the Direct Grant Grammar Schools (Cessation of Grant) Regulations 1975 , which required schools to choose whether to become LEA @-@ maintained comprehensive schools or independent schools without grant .

Of the 174 remaining direct grant grammar schools , 51 (two Church of England and the rest Catholic) applied to join the state sector , of which 46 were accepted . These schools had become dependent on state funding , and the move to comprehensive education was also supported by the Roman Catholic hierarchy , often over the objections of those connected with the schools . One school , St. Joseph 's College , Stoke @-@ on @-@ Trent , was approved to join the state system , but became independent instead following a campaign by parents . Elsewhere the plans proceeded over local objections , with schools closing or becoming comprehensive schools or sixth form colleges , often by merging with other schools . Dr Williams ' School , a small school for girls in Dolgellau , northwest Wales , also closed at this time .

The remaining schools , including all of the large secular ones , became independent when their grant was phased out as the remaining state @-@ funded pupils left . This coincided with the mid @-@ 1970s recession , a difficult time for independent schools but doubly so for the former direct grant schools , which had just lost 25 ? 50 % of their intake . Many local boys ' schools became coeducational to replace the lost places . An echo of the direct grant , the Assisted Places scheme was introduced by the Conservative government of Margaret Thatcher in 1981 , lasting until 1997 . Approximately two @-@ thirds of these places were held at former direct grant grammar schools . The independent sector soon recovered , and prospered without competition from state grammar

schools .

From 1993 a small number of Roman Catholic former direct grant schools entered the state sector as grant @-@ maintained schools . A few secular schools have subsequently become academies . Those that remain independent are typically highly selective , and have strong academic reputations . In 2001 , they included 61 of the 100 highest performing independent day schools . No longer a bridge between state and private sectors , these schools have become part of a flourishing independent sector now sharply distinguished from the state system , a situation decried by the Sutton Trust as " educational apartheid " .