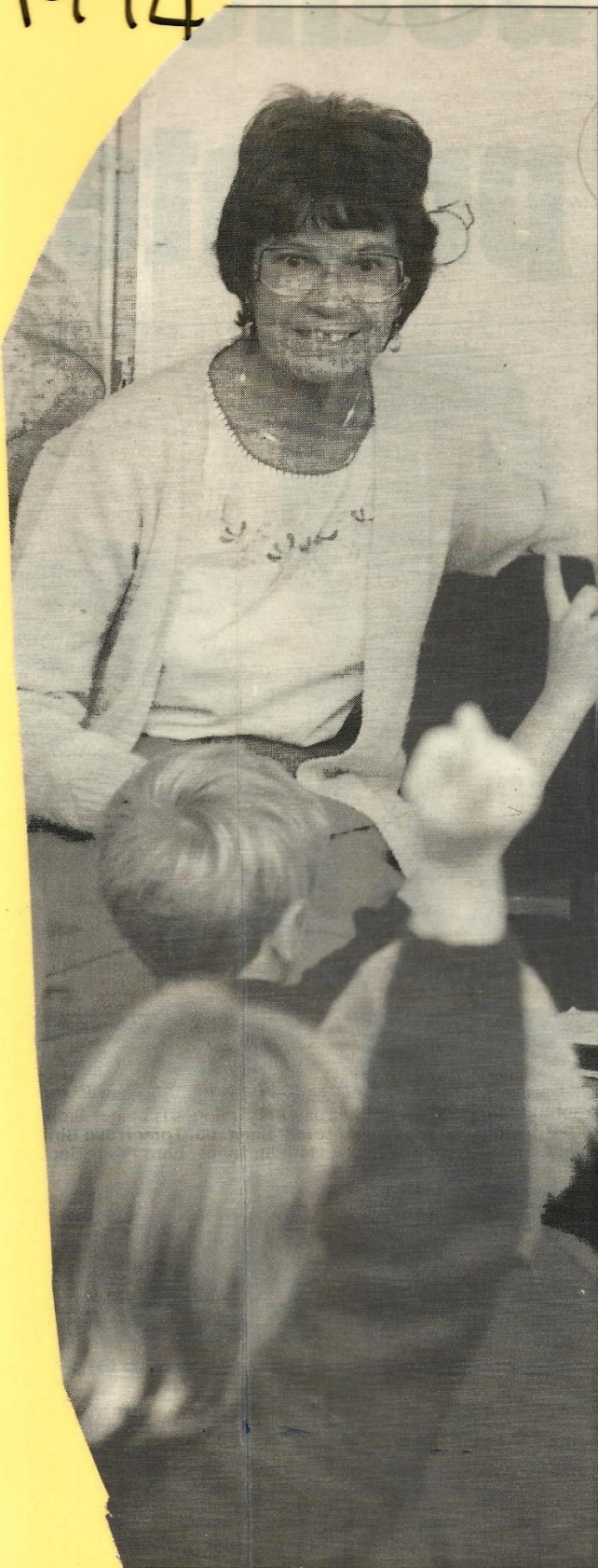


1994



teacher Gill Llewellyn at South Marston Primary School

careers AZ to AZ

Do you fancy
teaching or travel
agency?
PAUL WATSON
looks at both
for the letter T in
our careers guide

Teaching can be a tough job

IT'S easy to see teaching as an easy option with the profession's long holidays and afternoon finish time.

But Gill Llewellyn will tell you it is hard work.

There is a lot that goes on when the children have gone home.

Gill has just started a new job as deputy headteacher at South Marston Primary School, near Swindon. Before that, she was a teacher at St Bartholomew's School, Wootton Bassett – with a seven year break to bring up her family.

Although it is hard work, she says teaching is a very rewarding job.

"It is something I always wanted to do. I enjoy being at the school with the children and the time goes very quickly."

Not so good is the increase in form-filling teachers have had to face in recent years.

"There has been a lot of extra paperwork which is not so enjoyable as it means I don't get so much time with the children and preparing lessons."

She is responsible for the infants at the school which range from the four-year-olds new to school to seven-year-olds.

She has to devise lessons that will keep them all interested and will not be too difficult for the youngest children but not too easy for the older ones.

She gets to school just after 8am and the children arrive around 8.45am ready for registration then assembly.

"Then we settle them down for work with reading, numberwork and science.

The infant class is a very busy place. There is a break mid-morning and lunch from noon to 1pm."

While the midday supervisors take over, Gill clears up the morning work and gets lessons ready for the afternoon. "I tend to do less academic work in the afternoon as the little ones are more tired so I tell them stories or we sing songs."

School finishes at 3.15pm. "After school we sometimes have staff meetings to co-ordinate activities, have presentations from visiting advisors or go on courses to keep our techniques updated.

"There is also paperwork to do, making displays or putting up the children's work. There is also time spent in the school holidays preparing work.

"It's a very varied job and you can't get bored. The children come to you with their problems.

"But it is a very rewarding job when you see the results of what you have done. It's certainly not a nine-to-3.30 job."

People wanting to become a teacher can choose one of two routes. One is to do a three year degree course followed by a year long PGCE teacher training course.

The other way is to do a four year Bachelor of Education course. The newly qualified teacher has a mentor who makes sure they are happy and coping.

Salaries start around £11,000 for graduate teachers and can rise up to £35,000 for head teachers at large comprehensive schools.

DAVID PEARCE delves into the colourful history

125 YEARS

Victorian festival will greet landmark

TODAY is a very special day for South Marston School. It is celebrating its 125th anniversary.

To mark the occasion the school, and village, are holding a Victorian extravaganza.

Excitement has been mounting for weeks in anticipation of the celebrations.

But the champagne corks won't be popping just yet. Ofsted inspectors left the school only yesterday and, to ensure preparations are complete, the extravaganza will take place between July 17 and 20.

The occasion will tie the school's celebrations in with the annual village fete and will include musical events, a fancy dress parade, a visit by Queen Victoria and a disco.

A car boot sale, cricket competition and concert by school pupils will also be taking place.

Headmaster Ray Norman said: "Everyone is looking forward to the weekend of celebrations. The whole village is talking about it."

"The children are also looking forward to it and can't wait to start preparing."

To tie in with the celebrations the children will be taking a look at what it was like at the school for their predecessors.

Chairman of governors Richard Snow said: "The older children are doing a Victorian project and will also be spending a day at a Victorian school to see what it was like."



■ The class of '98 . . . present pupils line up outside the South Marston School

Picture: DAVE EVANS



■ The way we were . . . a photograph of the school and church taken around 1910

South Marston School has grown over the years and now there are usually between 90 and 100 pupils on the register.

All pupils are aged between four and 11 and, on leaving, usually go to ei-

ther Warneford School in Highworth or Kingsdown School.

Changes have taken place over the years. Most recently a semi-permanent block has been added to replace old huts, while a pro-

gramme of general repairs and redecoration should be completed by the end of the year.

Growing numbers have presented a problem of their own though - insufficient space.

"It's giving us an accommodation problem and a challenge to make sure we overcome it," said Mr Snow.

Discussions are under way to see if an extra classroom can be added by means of private funding.

"We are very proud of the school," said Mr Snow. "We have excellent staff and both the village and parents are very supportive."

Despite the passing years the aim of the school today is the same as it has always been - the provision of an excellent education.

With its first Ofsted inspection now complete, governors, parents, staff and governors are anxiously waiting for the results.

"A lot of energy has gone into the Ofsted inspection," said Mr Snow.

"But now it is over we can concentrate on preparing for the celebrations."

As it celebrates, South Marston School has received a glowing report



■ Pleased as punch . . . pupils and staff of South Marston School. Right: headteacher Ray Norman with, from left: Emily Goodenough, Emma Cahill, Melanie Webb, Gemma Hayes and Richard Scarratt
Picture: SUSAN MORGAN-JONES

125 years of excellence!



A SCHOOL which commemorated its 125th anniversary this year has another reason to celebrate – an excellent Ofsted report.

Staff and governors are praised in the report which concludes the school is “very good value for money”.

The document says: “South Marston is a thriving and happy school which offers high quality education to the pupils in its care.

“Its success can be attributed to the excellent leadership of the headteacher and effective governing body, dedicated teachers and staff, and to supportive parents.”

By DAVID PEARCE

Among the report's other findings are:

- Consistently high standards of teaching
- Above average standards of speaking, listening and number work
- Management and efficiency of a “very high order”
- An excellent school ethos.

Headteacher Ray Norman said: “We are extremely pleased with the Ofsted report. We are a hard working school and do our best. We are proud that this has been recognised. The report is a tribute to everyone.”

The school itself had identified minor weaknesses before the inspection and has plans in place to address them. The main area to be addressed is to improve the curriculum offered to under fives.

“The Ofsted report has given us a glowing sense of confidence but we do not want to become complacent,” said Mr Norman. “We know there are areas where improvements can be made.”

The school's first Ofsted inspection finished on June 24 – just one day before the 125th birthday.

Celebrations which were delayed as staff prepared for the inspection, eventually took place over four days in July.

Little Ben is fifth in line to get headstart

GOING to the village school has been part of life for the Sansum family of South Marston for decades.

Five generations have all passed through the gates for lessons.

The latest member of the family keeping up the tradition is five-year-old Benjamin. He started at the school last September and says he enjoys it.

"I like going to school and have lots of friends there," he said.

"We keep diaries on Monday of what we did at the weekend and on Thursdays we go swimming at Dorcan."

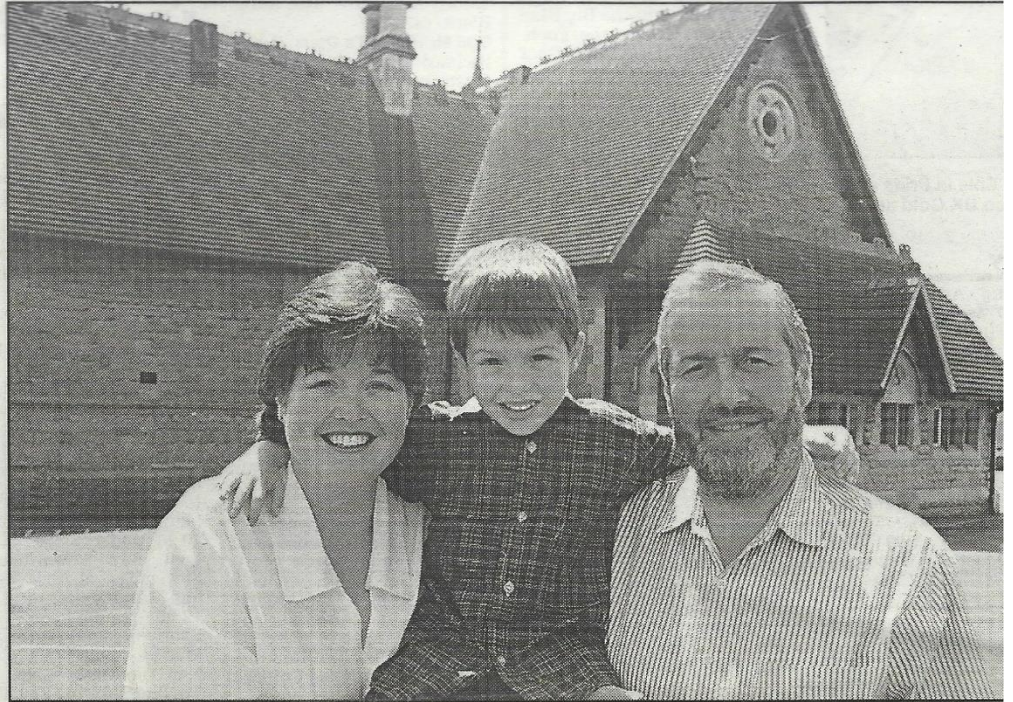
Hayley, 31, née Sansum but now married and named Phillips, attended the school herself between 1972 and 1978.

Her father Geoffrey studied there between 1946 and 1953 – and his father, Dudley, started in 1915.

Dudley's father Fred is also believed to have attended the school, starting about 1880.

Hayley, who was four when she began at the school, still lives in the village.

"It was a bit smaller then than it is now," she said. "There were about 60 pupils in those days.



■ Three generations . . . Geoff Sansum, right, with daughter Hayley Phillips and her son Benjamin, five

"It was a very good school and I always enjoyed going. It was very friendly.

"Everyone knew each other because it was a village school. There was never any real trouble.

"It is still very much a community school and the standard of teaching is very good."

Hayley remembers there were

regular swimming trips and after-school hobbies like football and netball. Concerts also played a big part in school life.

Geoffrey, 56, who also still lives in South Marston, said: "There were about 30 children at the school when I was there."

He remembers one of the teachers, Miss Fox, had the longest hair

he had ever seen, stretching all to her knees.

"The teaching concentrate the three Rs," he said. "It was strict and we were not allowed to play around."

"The school has always been though, there's no doubt about I would never dream of running down."



1928

1998



1889



■ Challenge . . . year 6 pupils from South Marston Primary School at the Great Western Designer Village

Pupils say Outlet village guide book is top class

THERE'S a brand new guide for youngsters to help them around the Great Western Designer Outlet Village.

And as it's been designed for children by children – and judged by children – it has to be good.

It's part of the Education Community project which has been running for the past three years.

It's sponsored by Outlet Village owners McArthur Glen, and this year the challenge was based on a literacy project.

"Seven schools were involved and they had to produce a large book for infant children, which would help them find their way around the Village," said

Martin Turnbull, who organised the project.

And to make sure it was realistic they were judged by pupils from Even Swindon Infant School.

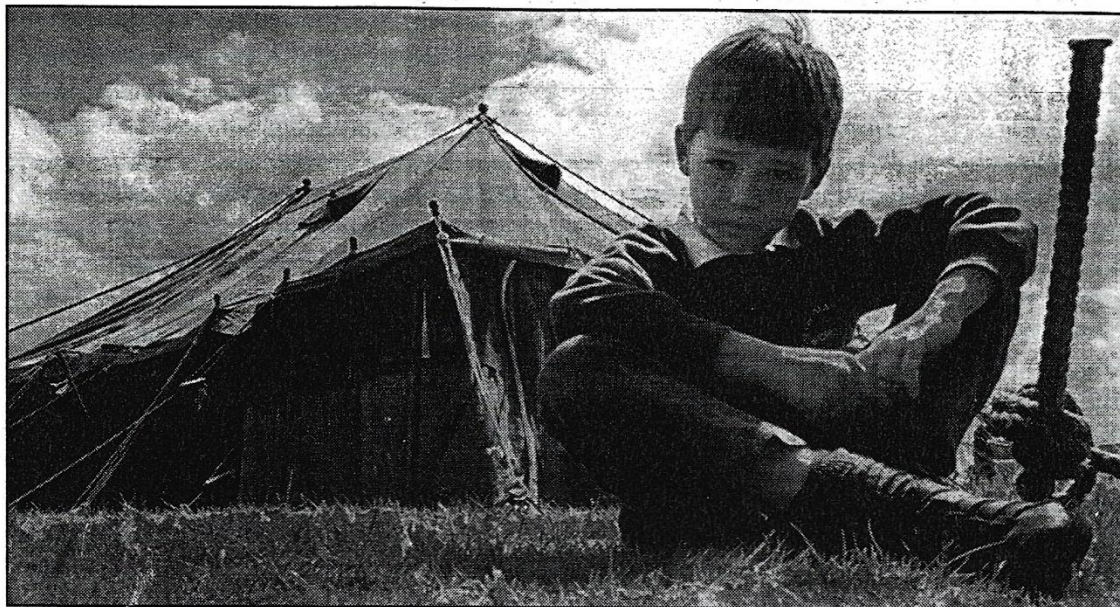
"They thoroughly enjoyed it," said head Helen Roberts.

They liked its pictures, photos, the competition to find the hooter, a time line.

"It had lots of things in it we didn't know about," said seven-year-old Thomas Fletcher.

And the pupils from South Marston C of E Primary School, which took the £300 first prize, were equally enthusiastic. Second were Ferndale and third Liden who won respectively £200 and £100.

Visit our website at www.thisiswiltshire.co.uk



■ A place to play . . . William Holmes, six, sits outside South Marston school's marquee

Picture: ALISON WYND

Classes held in a marquee

By RICHARD CHURM

IF YOUR school is getting a bit overcrowded, and you don't have any money for an extra classroom what do you do? Simple - hire a marquee.

That's the short term solution adopted by Ray Norman, head of South Marston Church of England Primary School.

Ideally he would like an extra classroom, but Swindon Borough Council's two bids for Government cash to provide one have been unsuccessful.

There are 92 children in three classes at the school and the original building dates back to 1973.

Mr Norman said: "The marquee is just a temporary thing for the summer. We had a good Ofsted report, but we were told we needed to introduce more structured play for the under fives.

"With the space we have that's not possible in the classroom, so I hit on the idea of a marquee as a short term

School finds novel answer to its overcrowding problems

solution. It's owned by the local Recreation Association and costs us £10 a week to rent.

"It has the advantage of keeping the young children out of the sun, which is becoming increasingly important, and is good for wet play and the sand pit.

"But it's not ideal - and it cost us £60 to insure."

The school has won extra funding next year to pay for a fourth teacher under the Government's initiative to reduce class sizes, so the school hall will have to double up as a classroom.

Mr Norman feels that with new housing going up in the area, together with young families moving into existing homes for sale, numbers are bound to continue rising at the school.

"I am not blaming the local council," he said. "Mike Lusty, the chief education officer came to see us and he was sympathetic, but could do nothing.

"The problem is that the formula used to calculate available space is too rigid. We have a small room which we use as a library and resources area but which, according to the formula, is big enough for a class.

"Personally I don't think we could get more than a dozen children in there comfortably, so we shall have to use the school hall as a classroom, which will make life very difficult.

"Apart from the disruption - we shall still have to use the hall for assembly and school lunches - it will be extremely difficult to teach PE."

1999



AN OVERCROWDED village primary school is so desperate for space it using a tent as a classroom.

South Marston primary school, in Wiltshire, which was founded in

1873, has three tiny classrooms for 96 pupils. Two pleas in the last two years for funds to build classes have been rejected by the Department for Education and Employment, so

governors borrowed the parish council's marquee.

Dozens of children, aged between four and seven, are using in the 26ft tent for art and science lessons. But

the parish council needs it for the annual village fete.

Gill Llewellyn, the deputy head teacher, said yesterday: "Somewhere between Tony Blair and

South Marston primary school the flow of funds has broken down."

The department said £200 million had been allocated to ensure class sizes meet the regulations by 2001.

The school where the children pitch up for lessons in a tent

BY ALUN REES

A CROWDED school has been forced to put up a tent as an extra classroom. It borrowed the marquee from its parish council after two bids for extra buildings were rejected by the education authority.

But the canvas solution will be short-lived because the tent is needed back for the annual village fete.

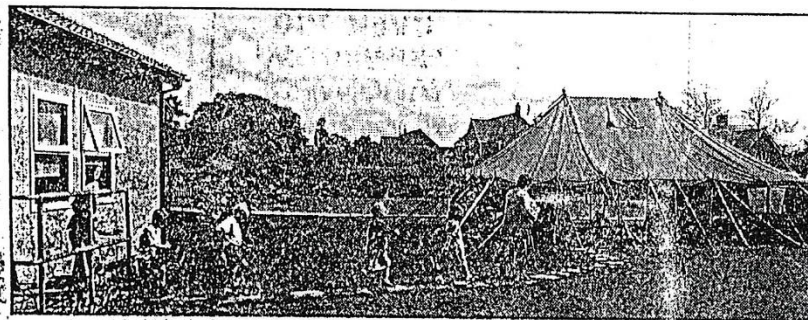
Cash-strapped South Marston primary has been cramming its 96 pupils into three small classrooms which are 125 years old. Now youngsters, aged between four and seven, troop into the eight metre-long tent to take art and science lessons.

Yesterday deputy head Gill Llewellyn said: "It seems that somewhere between Tony Blair and South Marston primary school the flow of funds has broken down.

"It is a very frustrating problem which takes up a lot of our time. We know that with a little more space we could raise our standards even further.

"There may be more money going into the education system, but it is not always going to the right places and we haven't seen any of it."

The school recently received a glowing Ofsted report. The only fault inspectors could find was the lack of space. The orig-



UNDER CANVAS: A lesson for pupils in the tent which has been set up on their playing field

inal building of the primary in the village of South Marston near Swindon, Wiltshire, dates back to 1873.

It was a single hall until an overflow room was added in the Fifties and an office and toilet block were built in 1968. Mobile classrooms were put in the grounds in 1971 and 1987 and replaced by three semi-permanent rooms six years ago.

"It causes all sorts of practical problems with the classes," said Mrs Llewellyn. "It is very cramped when you are trying to do art or science lessons with more than 30 kids in one room."

"We have older pupils trying to read quietly while in the corner of the class are four-year-olds doing practical water experiments."

"The younger children need space to play and the older ones need to be quiet and concen-

trate. But without money for extra accommodation there was little else we could do about it. In the circumstances we think it's quite an innovative way around the problem.

"The children love the tent and it is a good short-term solution, but we cannot use a tent in the winter months or when it rains."

In the last two years the Department for Education and Employment has rejected two bids for funds for extra class space. The desperate school governors asked to use the parish council's ex-Army marquee for six weeks until the end of term.

The school paid a peppercorn fee of 5p, so it owned the tent and could therefore insure it. The tent was set up in the playing field. Straw matting covers the ground but cannot stop grass or dandelions poking

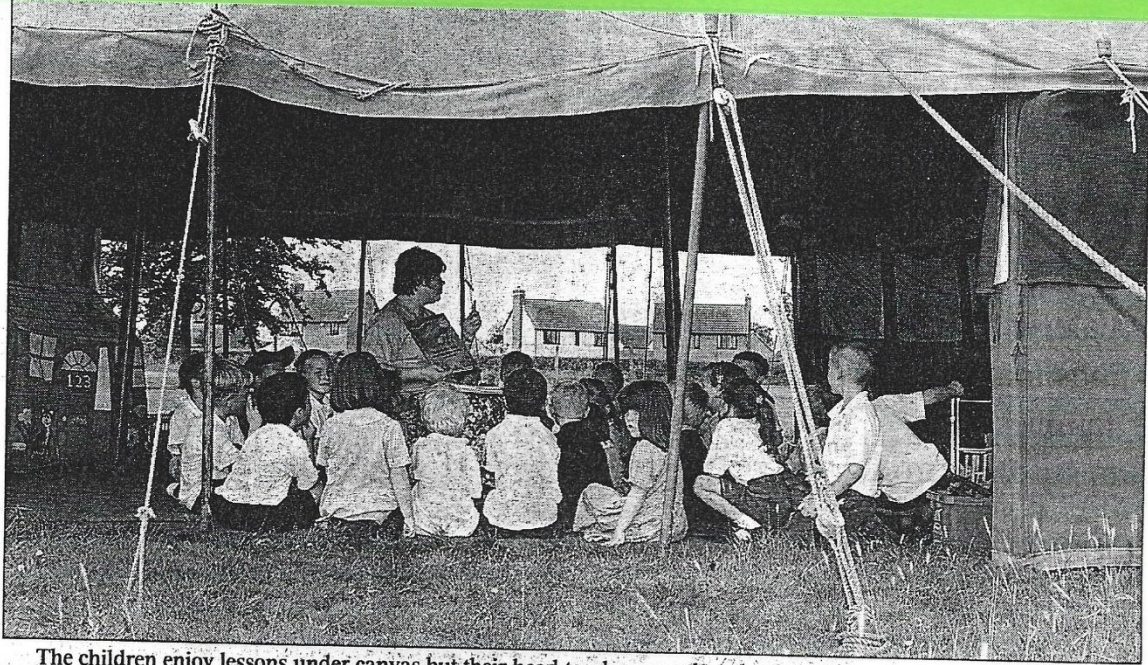
through. About 12 pupils huddle in the tent at any one time for practical activities and art work.

But just before the summer holidays the council will buy back the tent for 5p for use in the village fete.

Another teacher starts in September but there is no space for an extra class. It means the main assembly and games hall will again have to be used as a classroom.

A spokesman for the Department for Education said £200million had been allocated to tackle the nation's class sizes. "That may not be possible for all schools at the moment but by 2001 the situation should have been resolved," he said.

Shadow Education Secretary Theresa May said: "This shows the reality of Government policy and the real impact on our children's schools."



The children enjoy lessons under canvas but their head teacher says the school needs money for more classrooms

Classless pupils learn within tent

By SIMON DE BRUXELLES

PUPILS at a primary school are being taught in a tent while teachers campaign for a proper classroom.

The 96 children at South Marston primary near Swindon, one of Britain's fastest growing towns, had to share three classrooms until governors asked the parish council for the use of the village marquee. Two applications for extra buildings have failed and the pupils' education was suffering with three year groups sharing each room.

The former army tent, about eight yards by five, is popular with the children but will soon be needed for

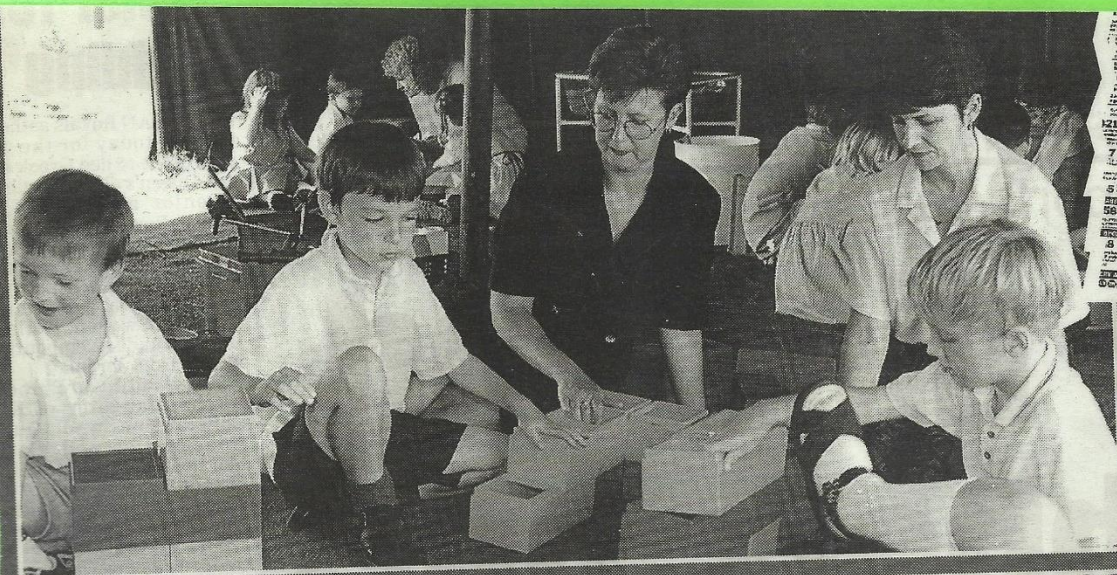
the annual village fête. Gill Llewellyn, the deputy head, said that the number of pupils at the 125-year-old school had increased steadily over the past five years but facilities had not kept pace.

"It seems that somewhere between Tony Blair and South Marston primary school the flow of funds has broken down. There may be more money going into the education system, but it is not always going to the right places," she said.

The school was a single hall until an "overflow" room was added in the 1950s and an office and lavatory block were built in 1968. Mobile classrooms were put in the grounds in 1971 and

1987 then replaced by three semi-permanent rooms six years ago, when there were fewer than 70 pupils. There are now three classrooms, a library and a hall.

Government guidelines say that all classes for five, six and seven-year-olds must be below 30 pupils by September 2001. The school is now trying to raise money through private sponsorship and charity fundraising to find a long-term solution by next term. The Department for Education and Employment said that sufficient funds of £200 million had been allocated "to ensure class sizes comply with the regulations by 2001".



Classes held in a marquee

School finds novel answer to its overcrowding problems

By the way of the battle for a history display unit

How the Adver broke the story, correctly

Left: Jo Garton, left, and governors chairwoman Helen Pepler with year one pupils inside their marquee

Pictures
SUSAN MORGAN-JONES

Tent tale hits the headlines



■ Educational support assistant Janet Cave-Ayland and deputy head Gill Llewellyn in the background take children from the school building into the tent

By RICHARD CHURM

"THE school with the canvas classroom" screamed the headlines this week as tiny South Marston Church of England Primary made national news.

There were questions in the House of Commons and ministers alerted. The only problem was that most of the papers - and their colleagues in radio and television - got it wrong.

Yesterday, a full week after the Evening Advertiser first broke the news, media coverage reached such a pitch that Swindon education committee chairwoman Jo Garton called a press conference at the school to put the record straight.

"Some of the reporting was outrageous," she said. "In the end we faxed copies of the Evening Advertiser story to one media outlet so they could get the story right."

"And as I understand it one of the tabloids gave up on the story when it could not get one of the governors to say what it wanted him to."

The national media said the crowded school had been forced to put up the tent while teachers campaigned for an extra classroom.

In fact head teacher Ray Norman decided to hire the marquee as a temporary thing for the summer.



■ In hospital . . . head teacher Ray Norman missed the fireworks

The idea was to use it as for play - a wet play area and a sandpit were installed - because there was not enough space in the classroom for the under-fives to have structured play time.

But Mr Norman then went into hospital for a minor operation and deputy head teacher Gill Llewellyn was left to deal with the national press, TV and radio.

"She has never dealt with anything like this before and is a bit shocked by it all," said Coun Garton.

"She feels some things have been

taken out of context."

Today Mrs Llewellyn said: "It has got a bit much. We are here to educate children not to spend four days with the media." She then referred all other questions to the borough council's press office.

The matter was also mentioned in the House of Commons by opposition education spokesman Teresa May in a debate about class sizes.

As a result the Department for Education and Science phoned the borough's education department to check the minister's facts were correct and was told they were.

So far two requests for an extra classroom, which were supported by Swindon Council, have been turned down.

But Coun Garton pointed out that a small group of children could be taught in a classroom off the hall, and as numbers are predicted to be 90 or less from September next year - a figure which the head feels is optimistic - there is no justification for creating another classroom.

Mr Norman points out that the local pre-nursery group, which currently uses the village hall, is looking for a fixed home and the governors will be pushing for a unit to be built which could house the group as well as the school's first years.

1999

School marquee destroyed by fire

THE school marquee which was at the centre of the media spotlight earlier this month met a dismal end last night.

The marquee, erected at South Marston Church of England Primary School as a temporary playroom for the summer, was destroyed by fire just after 9pm.

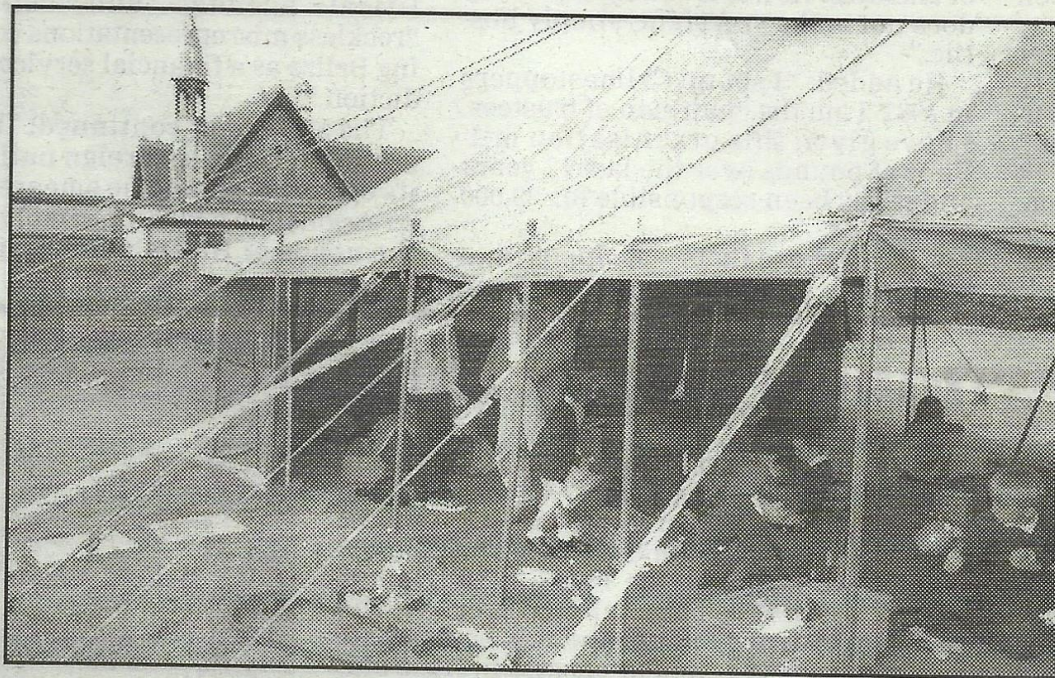
The alarm was raised at 9.11pm but the blaze had taken hold by the time fire crews arrived.

Within minutes all that was left were some steel poles and a couple of pieces of charred rope.

Two appliances from Stratton attended with 10 firefighters, but the effort was abandoned at 9.23pm.

The marquee hit the headlines earlier this month when the Evening Advertiser reported that the school was using it as a place for structured play, but within a week the national press was claiming that the school had been forced to use a tent as a classroom.

The issue was even raised in the House of Commons before the record was set straight and it was made clear



■ Destroyed . . . the marquee which hit the national headlines

the marquee was simply a place for children to play out of the sun.

The marquee was moved to a field so it could be used for this weekend's South Marston village fete.

Unfortunately organisers will now have to find something else to use during the fair and the school will need to find another shady spot for the pupils to play.

1990

2000

Teachers praised as schools earn marks for quality

THE Government has praised teaching methods employed by two Swindon schools.

Both South Marston and Lainesmead Primary Schools were awarded prestigious Quality Marks from the Basic Skills Agency yesterday.

The Quality Mark demonstrates that a school is committed to reaching basic learning targets in numeracy and literacy.

The awards were presented by director of the basic Skills Agency Alan Wells.

He said: "I would like to congratulate all those involved in this achievement."

"A firm grounding in the primary school means that pupils can extend the use of these essential skills when they move to secondary schools and even after they leave school."

It is hoped that if problems with basic skills such as reading or spelling are ironed out in the early years pupils will eventually achieve higher standards of education.

To claim the award both schools had to collect evidence of improvement in pupils' basic skills, clear action plans and ensuring a high standard of teaching.

Acting head of South Marston primary Gill Llewellyn said: "The award represents a great team effort by teaching and support staff and the pupils."



Well done . . . Basic Skills Agency director Alan Wells at South Marston School with pupils and acting head Gill Llewellyn and former head teacher Ray Norman.
Picture: MATTHEW SWINGLER Ref: 6156-2

School scoops prestigious Investors in People Award

A SCHOOL is celebrating winning one of the most prestigious accolades any British organisation can receive.

South Marston Church of England Primary School can now officially call itself an Investor in People. The Government-backed award recognises employers which care for staff welfare and encourage employees to give the best possible service.

The school also has a 100 percent success rate in the Government's Key Stage Two tests in numeracy and literacy.

Head teacher Gill Llewellyn accepted the Investors in People Award from the scheme's Swindon representative, Laura Fowler.

Mrs Llewellyn, acting head teacher since September, said: "When pupils leave this school, we want them to have achieved the very best they possibly can, and in a safe and supportive environment.

The school caters for 104 pupils. It also has four other teaching staff, four teaching assistants, three midday supervisors and a cleaner.



■ Congratulations . . . acting head of South Marston School, Gill Llewellyn, receives the Investors in People award from IIP manager for Wiltshire and Swindon, Laura Fowler, watched by the school's staff
Picture: MATTHEW SWINGLER Ref: 7926-10

2000

2000

TOP OF THE CLASS

Village
school
chalks
up full
marks



■ Didn't we do well . . . pupils of South Marston School which was in top spot

Picture: STUART HARRISON Ref: 7339-13A

SOUTH Marston Primary School has not only come top of the league tables – it is also the first Swindon school ever to gain maximum marks.

And acting head teacher Gill Llewellyn has no doubt about the reason for the school's success.

"We have a very strong team here of governors, parents, children and staff – in fact the whole school community always pulls together," she said.

"We are of course very pleased and

By MARTIN VINCENT

delighted with our results, but we have to keep it in proportion. We have small numbers and we had no special needs children. Having said that they did very well indeed."

And that is something of an understatement because the 18 pupils who took the Key Stage 2 tests achieved 100 per cent passes in all three subjects – English, mathematics and science.

But Mrs Llewellyn is quick to point out that other local schools had also done well in the tests.

And she said: "This year we have had groups of children on both Year 2 and Year 6 with no special educational needs.

"It must be remembered that children with special needs who do not reach the Government's required levels of attainment may also have reached excellent standards in relation to their

own individual education plans.

"Their success goes unrecognised by official statistics and league tables and they often feel that they have failed."

Mrs Llewellyn was deputy head at the school for six years before taking over as acting head teacher, and is full of praise for the support that parents give the school and their children.

She is also confident that the next generation of pupils to sit the tests next year will also do well.

SWINDON TOP TEN MATHS

	School	Type of school	Pupils eligible for Key Stage 2 assessment		Total special needs pupils		English		Maths		Science		Percentage passing 2000 test		Percentage passing last year		Percentage passing in 1998		Percentage passing test in 1997	
			% achieving level 4 or above as assessed by teacher	% achieving level 4 or above	% achieving level 4 or above as assessed by teacher	% achieving level 4 or above	% achieving level 4 or above as assessed by teacher	% achieving level 4 or above	% achieving level 4 or above as assessed by teacher	% achieving level 4 or above	% achieving level 4 or above as assessed by teacher	% achieving level 4 or above	% achieving level 4 or above as assessed by teacher	% achieving level 4 or above	% achieving level 4 or above as assessed by teacher	% achieving level 4 or above	% achieving level 4 or above as assessed by teacher	% achieving level 4 or above	% achieving level 4 or above as assessed by teacher	% achieving level 4 or above
1	South Marston C of E Primary	VC	18	7	100	94	100	100	100	100	100	64	79	100						
E2	Chiseldon Primary	CY	30	35	97	97	97	93	100	100	75	91	88	98						
E2	Wanborough Primary	CY	31	24	94	84	97	87	100	100	85	88	83	97						
4	Tregoze Primary	CY	38	49	92	87	95	95	100	95	68	88	78	96						
5	Northview Primary	CY	31	49	94	94	94	91	100	100	86	75	91	96						
6	Haydon Wick Primary	CY	45	36	98	91	93	96	98	98	75	71	95	96						
7	Windmill Hill Primary	CY	35	51	77	77	91	91	100	100	85	82	84	90						
E8	Lethbridge Junior	CY	58	51	93	88	90	97	97	97	76	77	82	93						
E8	Brook Field Primary	CY	59	74	86	88	90	95	92	92	84	80	80	89						
E8	Lawn Primary Primary	CY	70	70	81	79	90	93	93	84	80	73	83	88						

SWINDON TOP TEN SCIENCE

	School	Type of school	Pupils eligible for Key Stage 2 assessment		Total special needs pupils		English		Maths		Science		Percentage passing 2000 test		Percentage passing last year		Percentage passing in 1998		Percentage passing test in 1997	
			% achieving level 4 or above as assessed by teacher	% achieving level 4 or above	% achieving level 4 or above as assessed by teacher	% achieving level 4 or above	% achieving level 4 or above as assessed by teacher	% achieving level 4 or above	% achieving level 4 or above as assessed by teacher	% achieving level 4 or above	% achieving level 4 or above as assessed by teacher	% achieving level 4 or above	% achieving level 4 or above as assessed by teacher	% achieving level 4 or above	% achieving level 4 or above as assessed by teacher	% achieving level 4 or above	% achieving level 4 or above as assessed by teacher	% achieving level 4 or above	% achieving level 4 or above as assessed by teacher	% achieving level 4 or above
E1	Chiseldon Primary	CY	30	35	97	97	97	93	100	100	75	91	88	98						
E1	Northview Primary	CY	31	49	94	94	94	91	100	100	86	75	91	96						
E1	South Marston C of E Primary	VC	18	7	100	94	100	100	100	100	64	79	100							
E1	Tregoze Primary	CY	38	49	92	87	95	95	100	95	68	88	78	96						
E1	Wanborough Primary	CY	31	24	94	84	97	87	100	100	85	88	83	97						
E1	Windmill Hill Primary	CY	35	51	77	77	91	91	100	100	85	82	84	90						
7	Haydon Wick Primary	CY	45	36	98	91	93	96	98	98	75	71	95	96						
E8	Greenmeadow Primary	CY	37	44	89	81	84	81	97	97	57	76	70	90						
E8	Lethbridge Primary	CY	58	51	93	88	90	97	97	97	76	77	82	93						
E10	Grange Junior	CY	84	110	85	76	74	68	95	88	77	79	81	85						
E10	Holy Rood Catholic Junior	VA	64	43	88	70	83	81	95	87	77	78	84	89						

SWINDON TOP TEN OVERALL

	School	Type of school	Pupils eligible for Key Stage 2 assessment		Total special needs pupils		English		Maths		Science		Percentage passing 2000 test		Percentage passing last year		Percentage passing in 1998		Percentage passing test in 1997	
			% achieving level 4 or above as assessed by teacher	% achieving level 4 or above	% achieving level 4 or above as assessed by teacher	% achieving level 4 or above	% achieving level 4 or above as assessed by teacher	% achieving level 4 or above	% achieving level 4 or above as assessed by teacher	% achieving level 4 or above	% achieving level 4 or above as assessed by teacher	% achieving level 4 or above	% achieving level 4 or above as assessed by teacher	% achieving level 4 or above	% achieving level 4 or above as assessed by teacher	% achieving level 4 or above	% achieving level 4 or above as assessed by teacher	% achieving level 4 or above	% achieving level 4 or above as assessed by teacher	% achieving level 4 or above
1	South Marston C of E Primary	VC	18	7	100	94	100	100	100	100	64	79	100							
2	Chiseldon Primary	CY	30	35	97	97	97	93	100	100	75	91	88	98						
3	Wanborough Junior	CY	31	24	94	84	97	87	100	100	85	88	83	97						
E4	Haydon Wick Primary	CY	45	36	98	91	93	96	98	98	75	71	95	96						
E4	Northview Primary	CY	31	49	94	94	94	91	100	100	86	75	91	96						
E4	Tregoze Primary	CY	38	49	92	87	95	95	100	95	68	88	78	96						
7	Lethbridge Primary	CY	58	51	93	88	90	97	97	97	76	77	82	93						
8	Greenmeadow Primary	CY	37	44	89	81	84	81	97	97	57	76	70	90						
9	Windmill Hill Primary	CY	35	51	77	77	91	91	100	100	85	82	84	90						
10	Brook Field Primary	CY	59	74	86	88	90	95	92	92	84	80	80	89						

SWINDON TOP TEN ENGLISH

	School	Type of school	Pupils eligible for Key Stage 2 assessment		Total special needs pupils		English		Maths		Science		Percentage passing 2000 test		Percentage passing last year		Percentage passing in 1998		Percentage passing test in 1997	
			% achieving level 4 or above as assessed by teacher	% achieving level 4 or above	% achieving level 4 or above as assessed by teacher	% achieving level 4 or above	% achieving level 4 or above as assessed by teacher	% achieving level 4 or above	% achieving level 4 or above as assessed by teacher	% achieving level 4 or above	% achieving level 4 or above as assessed by teacher	% achieving level 4 or above	% achieving level 4 or above as assessed by teacher	% achieving level 4 or above	% achieving level 4 or above as assessed by teacher	% achieving level 4 or above	% achieving level 4 or above as assessed by teacher	% achieving level 4 or above	% achieving level 4 or above as assessed by teacher	% achieving level 4 or above
1	South Marston C of E Primary	VC	18	7	100	94	100	100	100	100	64	79	100							
2	Haydon Wick Primary	CY	45	36	98	91	93	96	98	98	75	71	95	96						
3	Chiseldon Primary	CY	30	35	97	97	97	93	100	100	75	91	88	98						
E4	Wanbrough Primary	CY	31	24	94	84	97	87	100	100	85	88	83	97						
E4	Northview Primary	CY	31	49	94	94	94	91	100	100	86	75	91	96						
6	Lethbridge Primary	CY	58	51	93	88	90	97	97	97	76	77	82	93						
7	Tregoze Primary	CY	38	49	92	87	95	95	100	95	68	88	78	96						
E8	Colebrook Junior	CY	28	33	89	79	68	68	89	93	78	63	69	82						
E8	Greenmeadow Primary	CY	37	44	89	81	84	81	97	97	57	76	70	90						
E10	Abbeymeads Primary	CY	8	1	88	75	88	88	88	75				88						

Threat to

By Barry Leighton

A RURAL school which last week became the first in Swindon ever to gain maximum exam marks was at the centre of a row last night over the proposed destruction of a "village mound".

Governors at South Marston school – which topped the borough's primary school league tables after all 18 pupils achieved 100 per cent passes in Key Stage 2 examinations – plan to build a new classroom block.

The timber-framed building will provide the school with IT and resource facilities and will also accommodate a growing number of pre-school children who are currently taught in the cramped main hall.

But the scheme has generated rival petitions among villagers because the structure is to be built on a grassy mound – an attractive village feature of mysterious and distant origins.

A petition with 51 signatures, along with six letters, have been sent to Swindon borough council objecting to the proposal on the grounds that it will involve the removal of the mound.

Objectors say the classroom should be re-sited so that the mound, which they say dates back hundreds of years and provides an attractive setting for the school, remains part of South Marston's landscape.

Origins

They say there is "widespread opposition throughout the village" and say that the origins of the mound – a popular play area for children down the years – should be investigated by archaeologists.

However, 150 people have signed a petition supporting the application while eight people have written letters in favour of it, saying the structure should be built on the site of the mound as there was no other viable alternative.

They describe the proposal as "brilliant", a real asset to the school and the village, and point out that £5,000 has been raised by the community in six months to equip the classroom.

One objector described the mound as a "waste of space" while another said there was no proof of any historic value.

The parish council also supports the application on the grounds that the site is the best available.

Swindon planning officers are awaiting a response from archaeologists to ascertain the mound's origins.

But they say: "It must be borne in mind that this mound is not a scheduled ancient monument and therefore is not subject to any statutory protection."

On Monday they will urge councillors to grant planning permission unless archaeological evidence shows that the mound has some historic interest or significance.

mound

2000

Search for head teachers grows

THE number of acting headteachers running schools in Wiltshire has nearly doubled in the last two years, it has been revealed.

The education authority is now to look at ways of attracting more applications for an ever increasing number of unfilled posts.

A report by Wiltshire County Council's education committee said the number increased from 12 in 1998 to 21 in the autumn term this year.

Chief education officer Bob Wolfson said the problem is causing concern among governors, council officers and advisors because the number of vacancies keeps growing.

The cost of re-advertising and hunting for suitable replacements has spiralled as applications fail to materialise.

Small rural primary schools have had particular problems where there is often no deputy headteacher to fill the gap.

In the last year, 44 headteacher posts have been advertised with 13 of them having to be re-advertised.

Chairwoman of Wiltshire Primary Heads Forum Anne Orme said the problem was a national one that affected all teachers, not just heads. She said: "On a personal level, you have to decide whether you want to be a headteacher, or whether you want to have a life."

Village's ancient mound is saved

By **JAMIE HILL**

A MYSTERY mound has been saved from destruction after a protest from residents in South Marston.

The local primary school had planned to build a new classroom block, including computer and library facilities, on the site of an ancient mound.

But at a planning meeting earlier this week borough councillors decided that the school should build the extension next to the mound instead of on top of it. They made their decision after going on a site visit.

Now South Marston Church of England Primary School has to wait until Christmas to find out if it can go ahead with the alternative site.

School told it cannot build on top of mysterious site

The planning committee has given officers delegated powers to make the decision depending on further objections from local residents.

The timber-framed building will provide the school with IT and resource facilities and will also be used by a pre-school children.

It was announced last week that the school topped the borough's primary school league tables after all 18 pupils achieved 100 per cent passes in their Key Stage 2 examinations.

Alison Castillo-Bernaus, the

chair of governors at the school, said: "We took on board all of the objections to the original site, and we are willing to follow whatever the council decides.

"The mound would have been the perfect area for an extension to the school as it is right next to the school.

"Now we have to wait for the decision from the officers as to whether we can go ahead with the plan.

"The new facilities will be something that will benefit the whole

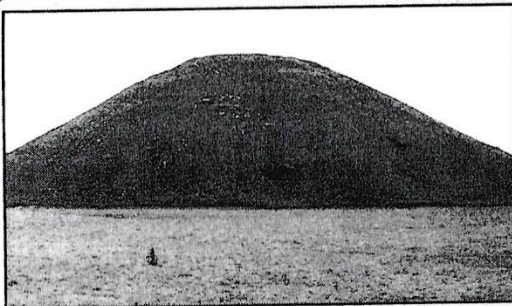
community, and it will also be used by adults in the evenings."

In the village itself there were two rival petitions about building on the mound.

A petition with 51 signatures, along with six letters, was sent to the council objecting to the plans on the grounds that the school development would have involved the removal of the mound.

Even though there have been archaeological digs on the site nothing was ever found and the mound still remains a mystery, like Silbury Hill near Avebury.

Another petition signed by 150 people, along with eight letters, was in support of the mound being knocked down saying it was an eyesore and a "waste of space".



South Marston is not alone...

THE South Marston mound is one of several mystery hills in the west country.

The biggest in the area is Silbury Hill, near Avebury stone circle. The hill's existence remains a mystery to archaeologists and there are many theories as to its original purpose.

In June, a massive hole suddenly appeared in the middle of the hill, which was revealed as the shaft made by an 18th Century archaeological excavation.

One of the theories is that the giant steep mound, which can be seen from the A4, is an old burial ground.

Another theory suggests it was used as a beacon for approaching spacecraft.

There are burial mounds throughout Wiltshire, all thought to date back to the times of Avebury and Stonehenge.

Silbury Hill is one of the best places in Wiltshire to get a good view of crop circles, which have now become an annual event.

2000

2001

Government dishes out money for achievement

School staff to get 'hard work' bonus

STAFF at 19 schools in the Swindon area will see a little extra money in their pay packets after the schools were selected for special achievement awards by the Government.

Worth around £5,000 for a typical primary school and £25,000 for a typical secondary, the awards are intended to reward staff for helping towards pupil achievements.

The cash will be given to school governors to divide between the staff as one-off bonuses. The amount each school receives will depend on pupil numbers.

The awards fell into two categories - excellence, where pupil performance in 2000 was better than most schools in similar circumstances, and improvement, where pupil performance in 2000 was substantially better than 1997 or where schools have come out of special measures in that time.

Only one Swindon Council funded school, South Marston C of E Primary, received an excellence award. It is worth just £2,280, as the school has only 104 pupils. Last year, the school achieved the best Standard Assessment Test (SAT) results the borough has ever had.

Headteacher Gill Llewellyn said: "Everyone here is very pleased. It is a reward for the hard work all the staff have put in and is recognition of the high standards we have achieved.

"It is a team effort by all the teachers, classroom assistants, dinner ladies and administration workers to get the school doing so well."

Lydiard Millicent C of E Primary School, which is funded by Wiltshire County Council, also received an excellence award, while 17 schools in the area received improvement awards.

Among the many success stories behind the awards was that of Even Swindon Infant School,

which was judged to have serious weaknesses when it failed an Ofsted inspection at the end of 1999. It appointed a new headteacher, Michael Keeling, soon after and has made huge strides forward since.

"We welcome the recognition that we've all worked hard here," said Mr Keeling. "Two years on from a poor Ofsted report, it shows we are now making excellent progress.

"We are still technically viewed as having serious weaknesses, but if we had an Ofsted inspection tomorrow, we would have no problems."

Mr Keeling admitted dividing the £4,600 it is set to receive will be a difficult task for governors.

"You can't really divide the importance of people's roles in a school, so it will be difficult to share it out equally and that may become an issue. But it is not about the money, so much as the recognition."

Also on the list of improving schools was King William Street C of E Primary, which was the first Swindon school to fail an Ofsted inspection in May 1998.

Coun Chris Eley, Swindon Council's lead member for lifelong learning, said: "This is wonderful news that so many of our schools have showed such improvement, and reflects the good work and dedication of the staff at all those schools."



Getting their due . . . Mayor Arthur Archer (last row, second from left) along with representatives of schools that have won awards for improving teaching standards, and right, how we reported the story yesterday
Picture: JUSTIN McMANUS Ref: 9270-53



■ The then head of South Marston Primary, Ray Norman, and children in front of the marquee which the school used in the summer of 1999. It was later burned down by vandals

An awful lot better than an old marquee

A SCHOOL that once had to use a tent as a playroom is celebrating the completion of a new building.

The latest addition to South Marston Primary School, which has 105 children, contains a classroom, a pre-school room and an information technology unit.

It was officially opened by South Swindon MP Julia Drown.

A marquee was used as a temporary playroom in the summer of 1999 because there was no space available inside the school buildings.

It was destroyed by fire after being moved to a field for the South Marston Village Fete.

Opening the new building, Ms Drown said: "This is the result of hard work by the staff, governors and parents, backed by government money, and it is going to lead to better education for the children of this village."

"I'm very pleased to be here today to celebrate this huge progress."

Some of the £100,000 cost of the project was provided by the government through grants, but the rest was provided by the local community.

Alison Castillo-Bernaus, whose year as chairwoman of the school governors ended at the beginning

By **BARRIE HUDSON**
bhudson@newsulwits.co.uk

of the month, said there were a variety of fundraising events and donations.

She added: "We are delighted. Our children have been able to come out of the school hall that we have been using as a temporary classroom."

"Now the hall can be used for things like PE and dance, and we don't have to be movers of furniture!"

New chairwoman Liz Holmes said: "This is the culmination of that effort and commitment to the futures of the children in the village."

Headteacher Gill Llewellyn said that the new rooms meant the school now had four buildings, spanning more than a century.

The first was finished in 1873, the second in 1962 and the third in 1993.

She added: "In the past few years, we have been very overcrowded."

"The new building creates a fantastic learning environment for the young people of the village, and provides continuity of education through to the age of 11."



■ Julia Drown MP, with the chairwoman of governors Liz Holmes, left, and head Gill Llewellyn, cuts the ribbon watched by Eleanor Milard from the pre-school and pupil Jenny Pepler
Picture: MATTHEW SWINGLER Ref: 12367-56

2002



School wins computers

SOUTH Marston Primary School has won more than \$4,000 worth of computer equipment in the Brunel Centre's Support a School competition.

The school scooped the prize after being nominated by a record number of shoppers.

Shoppers at the Brunel Centre were given tokens which they could then donate to a school of their choice.

In a close-fought battle, South Marston won first place and \$4,200 worth of IT equipment, including three PCs, three scanners and three printers.

Headmistress Gill Llewellyn said: "We are delighted to have won, and this will build up our IT facilities nicely."

"We came second in the competition last year and got some lovely computer equipment and it's very nice to win this year."

Nythe Primary School, which was second this year, won £1,000 worth of computer equipment and Colebrook Infant School came third, receiving £350 worth of IT literature.

A presentation ceremony will take place next Thursday when the

South Marston notches up 130 years



■ Happy birthday to us . . . year six pupils Adam Oxby, Lucy Avery and Jenny Pepler cut the cake marking 130 years of South Marston Primary School

Picture: MATTHEW SWINGLER Ref: 25680-06



ONE OF the oldest schools in Swindon is celebrating its 130th birthday.

Teachers, parents and children at South Marston Primary School took advantage of the sunshine to hold a day of fun and games to mark the date.

The school was opened in 1873, and is still going strong with 106 pupils on its roll.

In the morning the children went to the open air pool at Highworth

recreation ground for a swimming gala, with parents joining the trip to watch the fun.

Then in the afternoon an outdoor picnic was held at the school, with everyone singing Happy Birthday to the building.

The school had a specially decorated cake made, which featured the school's crest.

Headteacher Gill Llewellyn said: "We must be one of the oldest schools in Swindon but I am not sure if we are the

oldest. The children had a great time, although it was very warm for them.

"We used the event to help raise money for the ongoing work being done in the school's grounds, we might get a living willow fence or sculpture with the money."

In the last two years the school has seen some interesting additions to its grounds, including a wooden trim trail for exercise and a musical washing line.

2003



2004

Progress report brings joy to school

STAFF and pupils at South Marston Primary School have chalked up a success in their recent Ofsted report.

The report praises the successful progress of the school since its last inspection in June 1998.

It particularly applauds pupils' achievements in English, maths and science, and their positive attitude to learning.

Headteacher Gill Llewellyn said: "Our success is all down to teamwork. The fact that we have a fantastic team of teachers, parents, governors and children working together means we can go from strength to strength.

"We want to build on the successes of this report and become even better. You can never be complacent. There is always something else to do or work on.

"The school changes all the time because the children going through the school are constantly changing. We have to be flexible and versatile in our approach."

The school, in Old Vicarage Lane, has 104 pupils aged between four and 11 years on roll.

There are four teaching staff plus headteacher Gill and six teaching assistants.

The school was informed that the most important areas for it to improve were the presentation and marking of pupils' work.

Inspectors also added that subject coordinators should have more opportunity to monitor directly teaching and learning.

Mrs Llewellyn said: "These aspects are already covered in the current school development plan and the report will give them a sharper focus."



● Working as a team . . . South Marston Primary School head Gill Llewellyn with some of the pupils.
Picture: MATTHEW SWINGLER Ref: 29789-72

2004

PRIMARY SCHOOL LEAGUE TABLES



S. MARSTON

SOUTH Marston headteacher Gill Llewellyn was in the mood to celebrate after hearing how the school fared in the league tables.

Not only has the school come out as top of all schools in Swindon but it was also listed as one of the most improved primaries in the country for English, maths and science results.

The headteacher put down the success to teamwork.

"I think the reason why we've done so well is good teamwork," she said.

"We have a great team here and everyone really pulls together to take this school from strength to strength.

"We are a very small but also very popular school.

"I'm sure we'll be celebrating this news in some way," added Mrs Llewellyn.

In April the school's Ofsted report highlighted pupils' achievements in English, maths and science.

It also mentioned the positive attitude to learning.

All of the school's year six pupils achieved the target level four in English and science.

Ninety per cent of pupils reached level four in maths.

TOP CLASS Youngsters of South Marston Primary School celebrate their league table results with head Gill Llewellyn

Picture: MATTHEW SWINGLER Ref:73802-11

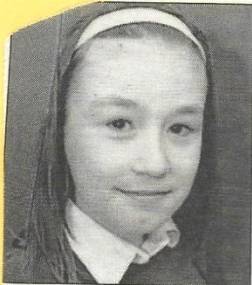
PRIMARY SCHOOL LEAGUE TABLES

KEY
 VC – Voluntary controlled
 CY – Community
 VA – Voluntary aided
 FD – Foundation

SWINDON

School Name	Type of school	Number of pupils on roll eligible for assessment in NC tests	English		Maths		Science		Ranking within LEA according to aggregation of %s achieving level 4	Percentage of half days missed	Ranking within LEA based on truancy
			% achieving level 4 or above	% pupils absent or unable to take level 4 test	% achieving level 4 or above	% pupils absent or unable to take level 4 test	% achieving level 4 or above	% pupils absent or unable to take level 4 test			
Abbey Meads Primary	CY	29	76	0	66	0	86	0	37	0.2	28
Bishopstone C of E	VC	6	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.0	5
Bridlewood Primary	CY	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.0	4
Brook Field	CY	72	94	1	94	1	97	3	2	-	7
Catherine Wayte Primary	CY	24	83	0	67	0	79	0	35	0.2	29
Chiseldon	CY	33	85	3	79	0	91	3	27	-	15
Colebrook Junior	CY	41	88	0	80	0	100	0	16	0.6	47
Covingham Park Junior	CY	59	90	0	76	0	93	0	20	-	16
Drove Primary	CY	46	72	0	72	0	96	0	31	0.2	26
Eldene Junior	CY	53	85	2	83	2	92	0	19	-	9
Even Swindon Junior	CY	46	70	2	78	4	78	2	39	0.2	35
Ferdale Junior	CY	56	95	0	82	0	95	0	11	0.1	24
Freshbrook Primary	CY	49	76	2	67	2	84	2	38	0.7	50
Goddard Park Primary	CY	54	70	0	67	0	78	0	44	0.4	41
Gorse Hill Junior	CY	47	77	0	77	2	87	0	30	0.2	33
Grange Junior	CY	111	86	1	87	1	96	1	13	-	8
Greenmeadow Primary	CY	38	74	3	92	3	89	0	26	0.3	40
Haydon Wick Primary	CY	39	95	0	90	0	97	0	5	-	12
Haydonleigh Primary	CY	37	89	0	95	0	95	0	8	-	11
Holy Family Catholic Primary	VA	43	78	0	73	0	83	0	33	0.8	52
Holy Rood Catholic Junior	VA	71	89	3	94	1	99	1	4	0.3	39
King William Street C of E Primary	VC	26	73	0	73	0	88	0	34	0.4	42
Lainesmead Primary	CY	49	73	0	61	2	82	0	42	0.7	49
Lawn Junior	CY	57	84	0	84	0	91	0	21	0.1	23
Lethbridge Junior	CY	69	87	3	81	3	94	1	17	0.1	20
Liden Primary	CY	57	63	2	67	0	88	0	41	0.2	27
Moredon Junior	CY	73	86	0	88	0	100	0	10	0.5	44
Mountford Manor Primary	CY	42	64	0	55	5	76	0	45	0.3	38
Northview Primary	CY	29	79	3	90	0	90	0	22	-	18
Nythe County Primary	CY	29	86	0	90	0	100	0	9	0.4	43
Oak Tree Nursery and Primary	CY	38	37	3	45	0	68	0	49	0.7	48
Oliver Tomkins C of E Junior	VA	53	81	0	70	2	83	0	32	0.7	51
Peatmoor Community Primary	CY	27	96	0	89	0	96	0	6	0.2	34
Penhill Primary	CY	69	28	1	32	0	55	1	51	-	6
Pinehurst Junior	CY	69	62	0	51	0	62	0	48	0.6	45
Robert Le Kyng Primary	CY	50	82	0	92	0	94	0	14	0.3	37
Rodbourne Cheney Primary	CY	45	78	0	78	0	87	0	29	0.2	32
Ruskin Junior	CY	93	71	1	62	2	82	1	43	0.3	36
Salt Way Primary	CY	35	60	3	57	3	77	3	46	0.2	30
Seven Fields Junior and Infant	CY	31	39	0	45	0	42	0	50	1.4	53
Shaw Ridge Primary	CY	37	89	0	84	0	97	0	12	-	14
South Marston C of E Primary	VC	20	100	0	90	0	100	0	1	-	19
Southfield Junior	CY	65	85	8	80	2	88	3	28	0.1	22
St Andrew's C of E	FD	24	92	0	92	0	100	0	3	-	17
St Catherine's Catholic Primary	VA	33	73	0	73	0	82	0	36	0.1	25
St Francis C of E	VA	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
St Mary's Catholic Primary	VA	47	83	0	85	0	89	0	25	0.2	31
Toothill Primary	CY	24	58	0	63	0	71	4	47	0.6	46
Tregoze Primary	CY	43	91	0	84	0	93	0	15	-	13
Wanborough Primary	CY	36	94	0	89	0	97	0	7	0.0	1
Westlea Primary	CY	48	85	0	81	0	96	0	18	-	10
Westrop Primary	CY	29	66	0	79	0	79	0	40	0.0	3
Windmill Hill Primary	CY	34	76	0	85	3	97	0	24	0.0	2
Wroughton Junior	CY	101	78	0	82	1	98	0	23	0.1	21

2005



WHAT THE PUPILS THINK:

LAUREN GILLET, 10 (pictured right)
"I like the school and the teachers are friendly. There's lots of work to do and we get homework, but it's a nice place to be."

HOLLY DOBLE, 10 (top)
"I have been here since I started school. It is nice and small, but it's going to be a big change when I go to comprehensive school as they are much bigger."

KANE HEARD, 9 (above)
"I like the school, especially the football matches we have, but we get lots of homework too which keeps me very busy."

JAMIE HOWITT, 11 (pictured right)
"I really like the school, particularly the art lessons, because I like being creative."



● A place to be proud of . . . Gill Llewellyn with some of the Year Five and Six children, William Millard, Jamie Howitt-Bowdidge, Kieran Marsden, Michael Lorusso, Ross Paginton and Lauren Gillett Ref: 73802-

school
FOCUS

HEADTEACHER Gill Llewellyn is hugely proud of the primary school she has run for the past five years.

She joined South Marston Primary school 10 years ago as its deputy head, and has seen and brought about many changes.

"It's a great school, in a lovely location, with extremely supportive staff. I like to think the children love it here too," she said.

A school has stood on the site in Old Vicarage Road since 1873. Even now, the classic Victorian schoolhouse

stands as a tribute to the architecture of its day. But inside, it's far from old-fashioned. Mrs Llewellyn said: "We now have four buildings. In the 1960s the school toilets stood outside, but some building work brought them inside to the relief of everyone."

"For a few years, we had a 'broom cupboard' as my office. It acted as the staff room too."

Further building projects saw semi-permanent structures added which are now used as classrooms. A further two classrooms were built at the back

of the school, one featuring computers connected to the Internet.

"We feel IT and computers are very important in the curriculum. All the children are taught using electronic whiteboards in the classrooms, and whenever I have a problem with the computer I can usually ask one of the six-year-olds to fix it for me!" she said.

At the moment the school is home to 98 children, making it the second smallest in the borough. Mrs Llewellyn said: "Having such a small school is wonderful, but preparing the

curriculum can be difficult because some of the classes feature different year groups. One class might have children from Years Four, Five and Six, so we have several teaching assistants to give some of the children that extra support."

The school council gives youngsters a bit of say in the school. Last week, the council urged youngsters to bring in coins for the tsunami appeal.

The coins stretched across the school when laid out, amounting to £300.

SMALL AND FRIENDLY



South Marston

SCHOOL NATIVITIES 2007

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Mrs Llewellyn retired in December 2007.

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