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Approved Schools for Girls in England, 1933–1973

‘Girls will be Girls’

Jessamy Carlson



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For Emily Rose

PREFACE

This study of the Approved Schools, which operated in England, Wales, and Scotland between the Children & Young Persons' Acts, 1933 and 1969, concluding when the final school transitioned into a Community Home for Education in 1973. It draws on original archival research to explore the experiences of the girls committed to these schools, often for years at a time, either because they had been convicted of a crime, usually larceny, or because they were deemed by a Juvenile Court to be “in need of care or protection” or “beyond control.” Carlson interrogates the legislative framework of the Approved Schools, under the jurisdiction of the Home Office and considers the overarching policies and practices in these institutions across the mid-twentieth century. She reveals how the Home Office dealt with children committed to these schools in the public domain, and how they were represented in the public domain through Parliamentary discourse, policy papers, and press coverage in the mid-twentieth century. In discussing the outcomes for and expectations of these children, she identifies trends in responses to challenging behaviour, and considers how this maps into broader practice in dealing with vulnerable young women in the twentieth century.

This volume comprises a detailed study of approved schools for girls, which operated in England and Wales between 1933 and 1973. Through original archival research, it examines the transition of provision for girls and young women “in trouble” from the large-scale post-Victorian reformatories to the therapeutic Community Homes for Education and shows the emergence of a “diagnostic shift” in the provision of state care for children in the secure estate. Around half a million children passed through

the approved schools over forty years. Alongside evidence drawn from extant school records, it examines contemporary professional publications, Historic Hansard and papers in the Home Office archives to evidence the influence of professionals on the policy and practice of the approved schools. The combination of these strands of work allows a detailed study of an institution largely absent from the broader historical, sociological, and criminological discourses on mid-to-late twentieth-century youth custody and state welfare.

It reveals a more nuanced understanding of the role approved schools played in the state care of children and young people in need of care, protection, or control during this period. It evidences gendered use of care or protection orders throughout, weighted towards young women, since between sixty and seventy-five percent of girls within the schools overall were the subject of such orders in comparison to less than five percent of boys. It shows that younger girls were routinely committed to the schools for offences under the Education Act (1918), suggesting this legislation was used to police child and family behaviours. It also demonstrates that larceny was the dominant crime for which the remaining girls were committed to the schools. Finally, it demonstrates a marked change from the 1930s approaches to reform as rescue through to the framing of behaviour as a variety of mental health disorders by the 1970s, echoing Victorian positioning of women's deviance as insanity.

London, UK

Jessamy Carlson

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This volume draws extensively on my doctoral research, and on other research set to one side during the course of that period of study. In the first instance, I must therefore thank Prof. Pam Cox (now the Rt. Hon. Pam Cox, MP), who has gone above and beyond the call of a doctoral supervisor. It has been a real privilege to study with her. She has been generous with her time, her counsel and wisdom, as well as being thoughtful, inspiring, and kind throughout. For the gift of card indexes, the loan of books, the return of other books, innumerable cups of tea, for taking a punt on this slightly neurotic archivist, for her genuine enthusiasm for my research and numerous other contributions and opportunities, I am forever in her debt.

My thanks too are due to Prof. Mike Roper, who has provided thoughtful and constructive advice and discussion throughout the course of my doctorate. My sincere thanks are also due to Dr. Deborah Thom, who encouraged, nay insisted, that I take up my doctorate and get on with it. Without her prodding, I am not wholly convinced I would have begun.

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I must also credit the numerous archivists and librarians without whose work and diligence I would have been unable to complete this doctorate. A global pandemic notwithstanding, I would not have been able to undertake my research without their support, guidance, and advice! These include (in no particular order): Sandy MacMillen, Heather Vincent, and the wider team at the Albert Sloman Library, University of Essex; Geoff Pick, Charlie Turpie, and the staff at the London Metropolitan Archives; Bev Baker at the National Museum of Justice, Lizzy Baker, Carolyn Ball and the staff of Tyne & Wear Archives, Mike Page, Julian Pooley and the staff at Surrey History Centre, Devon Record Office, Liverpool Record Office, Somerset Heritage Centre, Warwickshire Record Office, Oxfordshire Archives, Knowsley Archives, and Lancashire Record Office. I am particularly grateful to Catherine Taylor for her advice and counsel through all of this. I would also like to record my particular thanks to Prof. Loraine Gelsthorpe and Faith Payne at the Institute of Criminology at the University of Cambridge for facilitating access for me to the papers of Julius Carlebach, and to Dr. Ben Jarman for making the introduction. I must also record my thanks to Michele Hall in the Sociology Department at the University of Essex, who has been a pillar of support to me, and all the other students in our department.

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of troubled teenagers in the 1950s and 1960s, and to Clare McGann, who has always championed me and my research without fail. A final thank you to Kate Bevan, whose counsel on all things editorial has been gratefully received.

Finally, I could not have undertaken this doctorate without the support of my long-suffering husband and our daughter, who have supported my studies without question, despite the impact extensive research, writing, and reading has had on our lives and home over the last few years. Thank you for everything.

Praise for *Approved Schools for Girls in England, 1933–1973*

“This study fills a significant gap in the history of youth delinquency. Whilst historians of juvenile crime have paid attention to the nineteenth century, and the development of the early Industrial and Reformatory Schools, the same can’t be said of the journey of these institutions into the twentieth century. From 1933, following the Children and Young Persons Act, the two Victorian institutions became the Approved Schools. Carlson’s monograph will be the first modern study to focus in detail on this institution, and it will be very welcome to historians of youth justice, and of crime more generally, along with scholars working in criminology and the social sciences.”

—Prof. Heather Shore, Director of the *Manchester Centre for Public History and Heritage (MCPHH)*, *Manchester Metropolitan University, UK*

“This book draws on a wide range of historical sources to offer vital insights into girls’ experiences of twentieth century approved schools. Through careful research, it traces shifting perceptions of, and policy responses to, girls’ delinquency and vulnerability during a period of remarkable social change.”

—Prof. Pamela Cox, *Department of Sociology, University of Essex, UK*

“Carlson’s book takes the reader to the heart of the gendered dynamics of juvenile justice affecting children and young people. From incredibly intimate experiences of committal and life inside through institutional, governmental logics and ideologies of care and control, *Approved schools for girls* is essential reading to grasp the relationship between families, children and the welfare state in modern England.”

—Dr. Michael Lambert, Research Fellow, *University of Lancaster, UK*

“This fascinating interdisciplinary research draws on a substantial range of sources to explore the approved school system for girls. It illuminates the policies towards, and the practice of social work and welfare with this group. It uncovers the attitudes towards girls’ behaviour and toward their families, as well as the state responses to it offering a unique and significant insight into this institution and to a period that is underexplored in criminal justice history.”

—Prof. Helen Johnston, *School of Criminology, Sociology & Policing, University of Hull, UK*

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1 INTRODUCTORY NOTES

This book examines approved schools for girls in England for the duration of the period that they operated, between the Children & Young Persons Acts of 1933 and 1969, and for the following four years up until 1973 during which time any remaining approved schools were transitioned into community homes for education. Approved schools were so-called because they were approved by the Home Office to have children and young people committed into their care on a full-time, residential basis after at least one, and sometimes many, appearances before the juvenile court, regardless of the rationale for that child or young person's committal. This chapter comprises a contextual administrative history of the approved schools, and a discussion of the legislative framework in which they operated. It introduces the schools at the heart of this research, the records from which sample data was taken, and an explanation for the selection of three particular schools. Finally, it discusses some of the challenges of accessing and presenting details from closed records in historical study, considering the implications of the contemporary recordkeeping practice for the study of these institutions, positioned against a backdrop of privileged access and missing material.

Note (i)

The names of all the children discussed in this work have been changed to protect their identity. Potentially identifying details of their lives and experience have been amended in order to preserve their anonymity, and names assigned through the use of a random name generator. No individual should be able to recognise themselves in this work, and any such identification will be purely coincidental.

Note (ii)

In recent years it has become clear that women are not only understudied but often conspicuously absent from scientific studies and from research data. Criado Perez observed that “seeing men as the human default is fundamental to the structure of human society. It’s an old habit and it runs deep ... In the fourth century BC Aristotle was already baldly articulating male default as unarguable fact.”¹ This is also reflective of the contemporary and indeed, the current, legal framework. In legal language, the default is always male. And in a legally directed framework of operations, in which the majority population is male, both in terms of perpetrator and recipient, it is perhaps little surprise that the presence much less the voice of women and girls is all but forgotten. As Criado Perez noted, “in short, because men go without saying, it matters when women literally can’t get said at all.”² The language we use matters.

In a similar vein, a sentence in *The Brooke Serious Case Review into Child Sexual Exploitation [Bristol Safeguarding Children Board]* (2015) stood out as pertinent in approaching terminology on this topic:

Throughout the report the term child is used rather than young person. Whilst we acknowledge that many teenagers prefer not to be described as children, we have accepted the view of Louise Casey, expressed following the Rotherham inquiry into CSE: “It is therefore important that professionals working in [this] field ... refer to anyone under 18 as a child so their status is never overlooked.”³

For the purposes of this volume, I will use the following terms:

¹ 2019, p. 1.

² 2019, p. 5.

³ BSCB, 2015, p. 2.

- Children, meaning boys and girls under the age of fourteen years, as set out in the Children & Young Persons Act, 1933. When I say children, I will be referring to both boys and girls. I will broadly refer to those committed to the approved schools as children, and when discussing children in the approved schools, it should be assumed that I mean girls as well as boys.
- Young people, meaning boys and girls between fourteen and eighteen years of age, as set out in the Children & Young Persons Act, 1933.

1.2 RESEARCHING IN THE POST-ROTHERHAM LANDSCAPE

In the summer of 2005, I was working in the modern records unit of an English county council, undertaking some pre-course experience before I undertook my postgraduate qualification in archive administration, when I first came across records from a girls' approved school. I had been asked to weed—or thin out—some files, and inevitably, ended up reading them as I went along. These files dated from the mid-twentieth century and I was genuinely shocked by the contents and moved by some of the letters back to the staff from former students. Years later, as the child sexual exploitation scandals from Rotherham and Rochdale, Oxford and Derby, Telford and others began to seep into the public domain, the language used to describe these children sounded very familiar. Eventually, I felt that I had to study this, to look more closely at these schools and determine what, if anything, might be drawn from their records.

In order to understand how we have come to the present set up of institutional care for teenagers, it is important to consider what the previous provision was, and what can be observed and learnt from its successes and failures. Without a basic awareness of how children were dealt with in the past, it is not possible to understand how and why the system that currently exists does so. In 2018, forty-five years after the last Approved School for girls closed its doors, the Children's Commissioner published a report *Voices from the Insight*, which set out to give voice to some of the “girls, under the age of 18 who are held in secure residential units, serving time for criminal acts they have committed.” At the time of the publication, thirty girls under the age of eighteen were in custody, and it is impossible to overlook the overlap between girls in Approved Schools and in Secure Training Centres. Since the 1970s, secure homes, secure training centres and young offenders' institutions have made up the secure estate

for children and young people. As the most recent review of state care for children, in the shape of the final report of the Independent Review of Children's Social Care (2022) has been published, and as the Ministry of Justice plan to open a new secure school as part of the youth justice estate, it has never been more prescient to be examining these largely overlooked institutions. Secure schools are back on the policy table in a new way after an arguable fifty-year absence from the landscape of state care for children, presented as a new and innovative approach to youth custody, an initiative which entirely overlooks a significant history of just such an approach to the most vulnerable children in our society.

This research commenced in the autumn of 2017, eighteen months after the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse was established as a statutory inquiry in England and Wales, in the aftermath of numerous social care scandals, including the Serious Case Reviews and related criminal proceedings which took place in Rotherham, Rochdale, Derby, Aylesbury, Oxford, Bristol and other locations. This offers a sobering context for this historical investigation of juvenile institutions, and this research has been undertaken during a period in which there has been a new interest in the history of children's institutions. Public interest in these events has grown, alongside an awareness of an individual's right to their own records of their time in the care of the state. Many people have exercised their right to access their own records, and then used the evidence within them to support their allegations of abuse while in the care of the state. However, the abuse of girls and young women, both in care, and in society more generally is complicated by the fact that girls were often seen as complicit in their experiences, and not victims.

The Independent Inquiry was convened to consider the growing evidence of institutional failures to protect children from child sexual abuse and exploitation, and to make recommendations to ensure the best possible protection for children in future. The overarching inquiry, at the time of writing, has published eight reports and there are currently ten investigations in progress. Five investigations have now been completed. The most relevant of these to this work are *Children in Custodial Institutions*, currently on hold pending criminal proceedings, and *Child Sexual Abuse in Residential Schools* which, at the time of writing, is currently underway. This volume does not consider sexual abuse within institutions as a prominent theme, as little surviving evidence was found in the records consulted to make such a theme possible. However, the inquiry's

findings indicate that it was likely that abuse was present in (some) approved schools and allied institutions. In comparison to other childcare institutions, very few allegations of historic sexual abuse have been made against the staff of approved schools, and with one exception, only in boys' schools. A number of girls committed to Duncroft Approved School, a classifying school in Staines are now known to have been sexually and/or indecently assaulted by Sir Jimmy Savile during the 1970s.⁴ Allegations of cruelty and neglect have been made concerning at least one of the schools used as an example, which cannot be ignored. It is, of course, possible that other allegations concerning physical and/or sexual abuse may have been made concerning these schools, which are not at present in the public domain.

It is possible that committing a girl to an approved school during this period resulted in that child being exposed to or experiencing abuse and/or exploitation in and outside of an institution which was intended to keep her safe. It is also possible that a girl might display sexual behaviour learnt or knowledge acquired in the approved school from other girls, a concern which was certainly expressed in contemporary professional discourse and in Parliament. In 1963, the MP for South Shields, James Ede remarked:

*I do not want to see girls—especially those who have committed no offences and have had no findings of guilt recorded against them—drifting in some way into approved schools and becoming associated with girls who are there because they have been before the courts and have had findings of guilt recorded against them and have been sent to the approved schools for that reason.*⁵

Thirty years after the approved school system was introduced, this statement appears to echo the concerns raised at their inception about the mixing of the “depraved and the deprived.” It may also mark the shifting contemporary attitudes towards the approved schools which emerged in the early 1960s, and which instigated the shift away from the approved school model and towards the community home model of care.⁶

Since the Rotherham scandal hit the headlines in 2011, a number of comparable cases have been revealed across the country. The Serious Case

⁴ Halliday, 2015.

⁵ HC Deb 27 February 1963 vol. 672 c1294.

⁶ Bailey, 1987; Bradley, 2009; Cox 2013.

Review into the safeguarding of children in the care of Oxfordshire County Council between 2004 and 2012 raises a number of points which have a resonance with some of the experiences of some of the girls in the Approved Schools considered in this book:

*The girls ... were seen as very difficult girls making bad choices. This, and that most of their families were seen as also having many problems, deflected attention from who was drawing them away from their homes – their own or in Care. The language used by professionals was one which saw the girls as the source not the victims of their extreme behaviour, and they received much less sympathy as a result. They were often in Care for their own protection, and frequent episodes of going missing were again put in the context of them being extremely difficult children.*⁷

This rhetoric of difficult girls making bad choices reverberates through history, and within this research, it is clear that this rhetoric colours out understanding of the approved schools. The Oxfordshire review goes on to specify that “*the law around consent was not properly understood... A professional tolerance to knowing young teenagers were having sex with adults seems to have developed.*”⁸

It is important to note that some considerable time has elapsed between the period covered in this research and the period covered by that review, and that the concept of safeguarding is a very modern one. Safeguards for children and other vulnerable people have been discussed in government papers since *Caring for People*⁹ but safeguarding, used as a verb, first appears in *Modernising Social Services—promoting independence, improving protection, raising standards*.¹⁰ However, some of the issues identified in these recent reports have clear resonance in terms of the approaches to, and attitudes towards, children in care for their own protection, despite the passage of time. This is the commonality between these identified reports and this work. The assigning of agency to children incapable in the eyes of the law, then and now, of giving consent to such activity occurs across the period that this work covers and comes up in more recent examples. In 2013, Robert Colover, a barrister, was investigated by the Director of Public Prosecutions after a case in which he described a

⁷ OSCB: SCR, 2015, p. 6.

⁸ OSCB: SCR, 2015, p. 6.

⁹ CMD 849 (1989).

¹⁰ 1998, CMD 6149 (1998), p. 52.

thirteen-year-old victim of sexual abuse as “predatory.”¹¹ The judge in the case, Nigel Peters QC, went on to take the barrister’s description of the victim as “sexually experienced” into account in his sentencing remarks, which, once reported, led to a further investigation by the Office for Judicial Complaints.

Similar experiences are surfaced in this research. In a case exposed at Gisburne House discussed in later chapters, for example, it is clear that not only did the staff accept that the children in their care were having sex with adults, despite clearly being under the age of consent, but the children in question were blamed and punished for this. Such a response is reflective of this period in history: documenting the longevity of such views in institutional childcare evidences conclusions drawn in this work. The more recent scandals in failure to care and protect children are appalling and abhorrent but their roots are entrenched in a system of institutional care which has viewed girls as partly responsible for their own fate since at least the 1930s, and arguably, before that. This is not a new phenomenon, but—as this work suggests—it is worth analysing it further in the context of the approved schools in order to better understand how their place in society shaped and directed contemporary attitudes to children in the twentieth century.

This book examines the approved schools for girls in England between the Children & Young Persons Acts in 1933 and 1969, up to their eventual closure or transition into community homes for education in 1973. In reconstructing and reshaping the understanding of girls in approved schools, it explores the nuances of juvenile delinquency and female deviance against a backdrop of the burgeoning welfare state, and its associated bureaucracy, contributing to interdisciplinary understandings of girls’ delinquency and welfare in Britain between 1933 and 1973, considering the complex and contested role of juvenile institutions within children’s and family social welfare systems. It will also highlight the complexities and contradictions extant within the production, archiving and accessing of social care records, both institutional and individual. It will divide key questions into those addressed from an institutional perspective, and—where possible—from the perspective of an individual child within the approved schools. At its core, it explores how approved schools fit within existing historical, sociological, and criminological understandings of responses to juvenile delinquency in the mid-twentieth century, and what

¹¹ Baksi, 2013.

can be learnt from an in-depth study of these schools about how discourses of juvenile delinquency changed across this period. It examines how girls who were sent to approved schools were represented in policy and other debates in their contemporary society, and analyse the extent to which approved schools encouraged, discouraged, and shaped discourses of girls' delinquency, and the forms that this took. Finally, it considers how the records of approved schools have been positioned within the wider archival framework, and what are the implications and realities of this in practice for researchers.

Through offering an administrative history of approved schools for girls, distinct from the provision for boys, this book examines how these institutions fitted into the broader frameworks of social care and welfare in mid-twentieth-century England and Wales. It will also consider which organisations managed and funded approved schools, and to whom such organisations were accountable. It will determine how approved schools developed from their predecessor bodies, the reformatory and industrial schools, considering how this might have shaped the experience of children in the care of these organisations. It examines the extent to which approved schools positioned themselves as providers of care, control, and education, how this was weighted in day-to-day life in the approved schools and explore how this is reflected in contemporary understanding of the role of these institutions, particularly with regard to their own recordkeeping practices. Through the analysis of language used, and practices undertaken, it seeks to draw out and identify markers of progressive social reform within the schools and the staff who worked in them.

It considers—where sources allow—the trajectory of a child committed to the approved schools, and what factors might lead to the admittance of a child to an approved school, considering the gendered experience of mid-twentieth-century English juvenile justice. It also considers how contemporary constructions of morality were applied to girls through the courts, and how this notion of “moral welfare” permeated and informed the policing of girls' behaviour in this period. In order to fully understand what being committed to an approved school might mean for a child, this work will examine what day to day life in an approved school was like, and determine what regimes, activities, training, and support was available in an approved school during this period. It outlines the anticipated outcomes for girls were at the end of their time in an approved school, and how the licensing system was used to monitor girls once their time at the school was concluded.

It examines how professionals interacting with girls in approved schools thought about and discussed their charges in professional literature, and how this discourse influences public perceptions of girls in approved schools. More broadly, it positions how approved schools featured in public and political discourse and contemporary policy on juvenile justice and child protection. It will set out how, by whom and to what effect girls who attended approved schools are represented as victims and/or offenders, and how this might be connected with criminological theories of incarceration and care of the period studied. The book will explore the extent to which approved schools encouraged or discouraged new discourses of juvenile victimisation, and what forms these discourses took, considering how far girls were blamed for their situations, and how far these discourses rested upon ideas of victim proneness or victim culpability. In order to do this, it will examine how historians might recover these experiences, when confronted with increasingly risk averse recordkeeping practices which fundamentally restrict legitimate research into the history of social care provision in the twentieth century. In articulating factors which shaped and defined the journeys of girls into and out of approved schools, it also considers the extent to which the voice of the child is present within the documentation of their time in an approved school, and the politics of considering this personal and individual history.

Using contemporary judicial statistics and other relevant data, it examines how the courts dealt with young people using care or protection orders (care or control orders after 1963), and furthermore, it will consider how this protectionist approach was used to police the behaviour of girls and young women during this period through the means of welfare, rather than through criminal justice. This research will position the care or protection order within the wider long term sexualisation of girls' delinquency and examine what the experience of girls in approved schools during this period can contribute to our understanding of the gendered structure of the juvenile courts. It will examine how this sexualisation simultaneously reveals and refutes the victimisation of girls and young women and their experiences of both sex and child sexual exploitation. It will examine how the experiences of girls in approved schools might be framed within a broader experience of contemporary social care and welfare institutions and services, both before and after their time at an approved school. It will seek to uncover, as far as possible, their documented personal experiences of this journey within approved schools and allied institutions and services. It will examine how girls represent and

narrate their own agency, choices, behaviours, and victimhood in the context of admission to approved schools and consider to extent to which adverse childhood experiences may have been identified, measured, and uncovered during this period.

1.3 APPROVED SCHOOLS IN ENGLAND, 1933–73

Approved schools for girls (and boys) operated throughout England, and also Wales and Scotland, between 1933 and 1973. Schools operating in Wales and Scotland do not form any part of the archival sources for this work, although it may be assumed that observations made here about the English schools very likely have much in common with their Scottish and Welsh counterparts. In this period, the secure estate for children in Ireland was administered entirely independently of the operations in place in Great Britain. Approved schools were

residential establishments approved by the Secretary of State under section 79 of the Children & Young Persons Act, 1933, for children and young persons whom the courts [considered] to need not only removal from home, but also a fairly long period of residential training.¹²

Across their forty-year existence, some seventy-two approved schools for girls were in operation, although only ten operated for the duration of the period. There is no central list of schools which operated across this period, and the details of these schools have been drawn together from various archival sources which can be found at the end of this book.¹³ At least a third of the schools had previously operated as either an industrial or a reformatory school in the years preceding the Children & Young Person's Act, 1933, carrying over buildings, staff and in some cases, children, from their predecessor bodies. Industrial schools became junior approved schools, and reformatory schools became senior approved schools, reflecting the contemporary expectations of the children the schools anticipated they would deal with, and how to best utilise the skills and experience of the staff within them. Industrial and reformatory schools had developed over the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and became more common after the introduction of the Poor Law Act in

¹² Mumford, 1961, p. 67; *Handbook*, 1962, s. 1; CMND 2051, 1963, p. iii.

¹³ See Appendix A.

1834. When the 1908 Children's Act came into force, children could then be committed to these schools following an appearance in the juvenile court, whether for their own care or protection, or because they had been convicted of a crime.¹⁴ The approved schools continued in operation until 1973, when the community homes created by the Children's Act 1969 came into formal existence. (s. 36 and s. 39). Approved schools were officially "discontinued" in Section 46.1 of the same act. As in the aftermath of the 1933 Act, a number of the approved schools did transition into community homes including the Princess Mary Villages Homes, but by no means all.

Between 400,000 and 600,000 children passed through the approved schools during their period of operation, and of these children, around ninety percent were boys. As a result, the experiences of boys dominated the policy discourses surrounding the approved schools, in the same way that they continue to dominate any discussion of the juvenile secure estate in the early twenty-first century. By 1961, there were 117 approved schools operating in England and Wales, 82 for boys, and 35 for girls. A third of the schools were for girls despite them only making up between ten and fifteen percent of the children in approved schools. The schools were arranged as follows (Table 1.1).¹⁵

Religious organisations ran or co-ran over half of the approved schools for girls in England and Wales. A quarter of approved schools for girls in England and Wales were run by or affiliated to the Roman Catholic Church. Indeed, the Home Office continued to divide their statistics into Catholic and non-Catholic children until well into the 1960s, though the logic for continuing this division is not entirely clear.¹⁶ Local authorities ran almost a third of the approved schools for girls, although a proportion of these were co-run with other organisations, usually of a religious nature, but also with other charitable organisations such as the Barnardo's Homes.

A number of English local authorities ran their own schools from the outset. London County Council is a prime example of this, managing a number of schools inside and outside the capital during this period as part of its broader and extensive network of social welfare institutions. Other authorities did not have a council-run approved school within their area but might have a privately run institution (albeit one that received a

¹⁴ See Gelsthorpe & Worrall, 2009 and Cox, 2013.

¹⁵ *Handbook*, 1961, s. 5.

¹⁶ BN 29/1855, 1961.

Table 1.1 Types of approved schools

	<i>Number of schools</i>	<i>Type of school</i>	<i>Age on admission</i>
Boys	4	Classifying (after 1948)	Up to 17th birthday
	24	Senior	Between 15th and 17th birthday
	27	Intermediate	Between 13th and 15th birthday
	14	Junior (Secondary)	From 10 1/2 years, up to 13th birthday
	9	Junior (combined Primary & Secondary)	Up to 13th birthday
	4	Junior (Primary)	Up to 10 1/2 years
Girls	1	Classifying (after 1948)	Between 14th and 17th birthday
	22	Senior	Between 15th and 17th birthday
	5	Intermediate	Between 14th and 16th birthday
	1	Intermediate/Junior	Up to 16th birthday
	6	Junior	Up to 15th birthday

considerable public contribution). Any local authority in England or Wales which saw a child from their area committed to an approved school contributed to their upkeep while resident there, and all juvenile courts were empowered to send children to such schools.¹⁷

Approved schools for girls were initially divided into junior schools, for girls between the ages of ten and thirteen and senior schools, for girls between the ages of fourteen and eighteen. Under the terms of the 1933 Act, industrial schools became junior approved schools and reformatory schools became senior approved schools for girls. After the Criminal Justice Act, 1948 the arrangement schools for girls were overhauled to align more closely to the provision for boys, where the schools were arranged in a tripartite structure. This also allowed the division by age to map across to the mandatory school ages which had come into place after the Education Act, 1944. Thereafter, junior schools took girls between the ages of ten and thirteen, intermediate schools took girls between the age of thirteen and sixteen, and senior schools took girls between the ages of fifteen and eighteen. Some approved hostels for girls also existed, although these only took girls over the age of sixteen, as part of a longer period of committal, and these were generally used to house girls at the end of their period of training or during a period of licensed supervision. All approved schools were single-sex institutions, at least on paper. It has

¹⁷London Gazette, 6 October 1933, p. 6421.

Table 1.2 Approved schools for girls in England & Wales 1933–73

<i>Organisation which ran / administered the school</i>	<i>Number of approved schools</i>	<i>%</i>
Local authority	16	22%
Local authority co-run with a private organisation	5	7%
Private (unspecified)	12	17%
Church of England/Anglican	8	12%
Roman Catholic	18	25%
Salvation Army	4	6%
Other religious organisation	2	3%
Secular charitable organisation	2	3%
Unknown	5	7%
Total	72	100%

become clear however, that, sometimes, mixed sibling groups were committed to the same approved school in an attempt to keep the children together away from their home, where they were the subject of care or protection proceedings (Table 1.2).

All children sent to an approved school were committed through the juvenile courts. It was not possible to place any child in such a school without undertaking such a process, or through purely private arrangements. Most children committed to an approved school had appeared in the juvenile court on more than one occasion, and admissions registers suggest that most children committed to the schools had been under the supervision of their local juvenile court for some time prior to their admission to a school. An approved school order comprised two parts: the first determined residence in an approved school (or other equivalent establishment), and the second comprised a period of after-care, that is, supervision by either the school at which they had most recently been resident, or the probation service, or in some cases both. The licensing period which came into force when a child left the school, having either reached the age at which the approved school order ceased to apply or achieved certain conditions based on behaviour or treatment over a pre-determined period of time. Unlike the first part of the approved school order, which was flexible in terms of duration, licensing was a fixed period of three years, and in the event that a child was re-committed to an approved school, began again upon her release. In the event that a girl married during the period of her licensing or supervision, it became null and void, as she was now considered to be the concern of her husband.