

Maltman's Green: A History 1918-1988

Maltman's Green School was founded in 1918 by Miss Beatrice Chambers who believed in an individualised style of learning that would give girls independence, freedom and self-determination.



Her school started as a senior school with mainly boarders and included unconventional classes for girls such as carpentry, pottery and science. Girls' memories from this time are heart-warming and paint a happy picture of life at Maltman's Green.

Though it wasn't always plain sailing. In November 1940 a German parachute bomb landed on housing across the road from the school. Maltman's Green suffered damage to the building but luckily no fatalities. A group of evacuees from London living further round Maltmans Lane were not so lucky. Maltman's Green closed early for the holidays, the damage was repaired and the school compensated £612.11s.8d by the War Office - equivalent to approx £35,000 today.

After Miss Chambers retired due to ill-health, Miss Theodora Lowe was brought in to head up the school. While happy to adopt much of Miss Chambers' ethos and vision, she was quick to abolish some of the practices she deemed disagreeable, for instance the freedom for girls to pick and choose which lessons they attended. Under Miss Lowe, all lessons were compulsory.



Maltman's was one big family. Girls mixed well across year groups, kept pets, were assigned mentors and on Sunday evenings Miss Lowe would read to them in the drawing room while they did needlework or knitting. She was described as kind and interested in every girl. She retired in 1957 when she married a local, fellow churchgoer, Mr Derek Elliot.

Next came Miss Paula Burke, a woman with firm discipline but who was quick to offer a sympathetic ear and a cuddle in loco parentis. Shirley Massey, head of music at the time, described her as *"a handsome, dignified woman...[with] a way of persuading parents and staff to offer their services in whatever way she required."*



There were two defining events of Miss Burke's headship. The first was her decision to change Maltman's Green from a senior to a prep school, which she did in 1958, and the second was how she stoically saved Maltman's from demolition in 1963. At the time the school held the leasehold to the land, with the freehold in trust with the Royal Bank of Scotland. When the bank found a break clause in the lease they filed plans to level the site and build high density housing. With their daughters' futures at risk, the parents rallied round, raising opposition in the local community and the support of the council. When the bank's planning appeal was thrown out by the Ministry of Housing they gave up on their plans and renewed the lease. It wasn't until 1978 that the freehold to the estate was eventually secured. Miss Burke was headmistress for 21 years and is fondly remembered by many girls who describe her tenure as the golden years.

Mrs Barbara Asprey became the fourth headmistress in 1978 and quickly continued upgrading the school, as initiated by Miss Burke. Following her predecessor's outdoor pool and old junior gym, Mrs Asprey added the art block, music wing and Lapraik Hall. Old girls describe her as fair, kind and caring but it seems she also had a playful side. Out of the blue she would wake the girls in the middle of the night for impromptu sing-songs in the front hall; hosted movie nights in her drawing room while allowing sweeties - usually contraband; and let them have outdoor, midnight feasts at the end of term.



Maltman's Green: A History 1988-2020

In 1988 Mrs Madeleine Evans became headmistress and revived some of Miss Chambers' original philosophies for self-expression and independence. She had strength of character, determination and drive but was also exceptionally kind to the girls, was loving, caring and always put them first.

From the outset, Maltman's Green got under her skin, as it does so many people, *"Headmistresses come and headmistresses go, and we meet the challenges in our day in our individual ways. For a while something of us is reflected in the school. But Maltman's Green is a very special place and it has a life of its own, which is somehow constant in the face of change."*



Mrs Evans' time at Maltman's is marked by an extensive development project which saw the building of the technology block, reception block, purple block and the parents car park. She also designed the beautiful covered walkways which add a great deal of charm and character to the new buildings. Most girls remember her calling them 'sausage-pots' and waving them off at the end of the day. It was Mrs Evans who took the courageous decision to phase out boarding in 1994 and instead offered an extended day to parents who needed it.

Mrs Evans retired in 1998 and Miss Julia Reynolds was appointed the sixth headmistress. By far the most memorable feature of her tenure was the construction of the multi-million pound indoor pool which put swimming and sport, firmly on the agenda. With this year-round facility, Maltman's girls were soon winning national competitions time and again. Music, also, soared to new heights with Maltman's girls winning the BBC School Choir of the Year competition in 2003 (and then again in 2007).



Mrs Joanna Pardon became the seventh headmistress in 2005 and just as with her predecessors she has affected change and headed up new developments while always managing to keep the spirit of Maltman's Green alive.

In 2008 Maltman's became an Eco School, with an eco-council, Forest School, Gardening and Wildlife clubs to support our sustainability ethos. In 2014 the Lapraik Hall was extended to accommodate an extendable seating space and professional lighting booth. This space is regularly used for concerts and drama productions.

Mrs Pardon made a shift in the structure of the school in 2017, adding to the Nursery School started by Mrs Evans, and introducing Little Malties - our day care facility. Now parents can start their daughter on their Maltman's journey from age 2, knowing they will get the care, attention and opportunity to flourish.

Additionally, Mrs Pardon has significantly improved the out of hours care, offering an extended day of 7.30am to 5.45pm - an asset for the busy parent - and year round care for girls in Little Malties and Nursery. 11+ Transfer Test results have been consistently high and girls have been awarded an ever increasing number of scholarships to independent senior schools.

Mrs Pardon retired in July 2020 after 15 successful years in the post, and in September 2020 we welcomed our eighth headmistress, Mrs Jill Walker. Mrs Walker has plans to build on our strong STEAM foundations and we look forward to continuing a century long tradition for innovation, development and adaptation.



Maltman's Green: Timeline



1918

Miss Chambers opens her senior boarding school for girls



1945

Miss Lowe becomes the second headmistress

1958

Maltman's Green becomes a Junior Preparatory Day & Boarding School



1968

Prefab Junior Gym and classrooms opened (later demolished)



1978

Mrs Asprey becomes the fourth headmistress

1985

Lapraik Hall opened



1940

Maltman's Green is damaged by a German bomb



1957

Miss Burke becomes the third headmistress

1963-64

Future of the school under threat - staff and parents fight to save Maltman's Green and win!

1969

Outdoor pool opened



1976

Prefab Science labs opened (later demolished)

1979

FOMG founded

1983

New Art and Music blocks opened



1988

Mrs Evans becomes the fifth headmistress

2018



2008

Maltman's Green becomes an Eco School



2005

Mrs Pardon becomes the seventh headmistress



1998

Miss Reynolds becomes the sixth headmistress

1994

Boarding is phased out



1991

Reception Block opened



2020

Mrs Walker becomes the eighth headmistress

2017

Little Malties day care opens

2014

Lapraik Hall extended & Head's house re-built

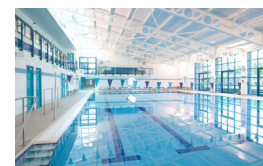


2003

Choir wins BBC Songs of Praise School Choir of the Year.

2002

Indoor pool opened



1996

Purple Block opened



1990

Technology Block opened

