

Why Queenswell?

All water in Whetstone had to be obtained from wells before 1970. It was in this year that piped water reached Whetstone. Most houses had a private well, but there were public wells, one being where the new flats are opposite the Three Horseshoes. One of the earliest settlements in the area was around St James Church (now the Greek church) in Friern Barnet Lane. A well was dug here and a drinking trough built to provide water for the people living there and their grazing animals. In about 1575 Queen Elizabeth travelled along Friern Barnet Lane and stopped for a drink from the well. It is said she found the water so unpleasant that she went on to the next public house for a drink. The well became known as the 'Queens well' hence the name locally today. A marker post now indicates the site of the well and the Whetstone pound, which was removed during road modernisation in 1926.

Queenswell Primary School opened on Tuesday September 4th 1951 on the site of former plant nurseries. .

It was decided to open a non-denominational mixed school, as the only schools available in the area were All Saints Girls' School & St James Boys' School. The school building was adapted from the 'huts' erected for offices/ a clearing house of Euston Station in the war and now disused. The infants continued to use these until their demolition in 2004.

There were excellent sports facilities: tennis courts, football field, bowling green and pavilion established for the railway staff. The land was glebe land and as such was rented from the rector of St. James. There was a hut at the lower end of the field which was rented by the Sea Scouts.

The school opened with two classes - one of 38 boys and the other of 33 infants. There were two teachers, but no Headteacher. The school was supervised by Miss Payne who was the headmistress of Oakleigh Infants School, and who used to cycle across.

A class of 45 boys and girls from Hornsey were housed for a short while in a classroom in the eastern end of the building. They were driven over from an overcrowded school each day.

The school gradually grew during the year and by the Autumn Term of 1952 had a headmistress - Mrs N Poupard - 3 infant classes and 2 lower junior classes.

The school continued to grow to become a 1 form entry school. The annual traditions of the Country Dance Festival and the Queenswell Summer Fair were established. The School Association (now called the Friends Of Queenswell) was founded.

The Headmistress Mrs Poupard left the school in July 1962 and Mr Sharpe, previously a teacher at the school, became Headmaster in Autumn. The school had 261 children - 126 boys & 135 girls.

Numbers continued to increase until in 1970, a 1 ½ form entry was established. To accommodate the extra classes the Sea Cadets' hut was taken over and converted to 4 classrooms with toilets, cloakrooms and a staffroom.

By 1972, the school had further increased to a 2 form entry and mobile classrooms were put up on the school playground. At this stage, plans were being drawn up for a new Junior School building on the field between the school and the Army Housing Estate, Sweets Way. The school was quickly built and the Juniors moved in 1974.

The mobile classrooms were removed, leaving the infants in the original building and the Juniors in the new one. Space was now available for a Nursery in the hut at the bottom of the field.

In 1977, against the wishes of the parents and teachers, the school was split into two. Separate Infant & Junior Schools were established with different Headteachers. Mrs. Redmond was the Head of the Infant School & the new nursery and Mr. Sharpe was the Head of the Junior School. These schools opened on the 25th April 1977.

In the summer of 1979, Mr. Sharpe retired both as Headmaster and teacher. Mr. Rees took over as head of the Junior School in the Autumn. Mr Rees left in September 1999.

Chris Ryan took over as Acting Headteacher - he was the Deputy Headteacher, until Katherine Marshall became Headteacher in September 2000.

After Mrs Redmond left in 1984, the Infant & Nursery School had a number of Headteachers and Acting Headteachers - Mrs Henson until 1987, Jean Prince until 2003, Maureen McGoldrych until 1995, Christine Rayner until 2006, Sarah Porter until 2010, Margaret Baker until 2012, Karen Smith until 2020, Leanne Oppenheimer and Amanda Van Der Merwe.

The infant & nursery school was completely rebuilt in 2004 and an extension to the Juniors was added. Miss Marshall left in August 2005 and Tracey Webster was the Acting Headteacher for a term until Spencer Clayton took over in January 2006.

The schools federated in September 2020 with Mr Spencer Clayton as the Executive Headteacher. Also in 2020, Acorn - a satellite of Oakleigh Special School was opened. The ARP (Additionally Resourced Provision) opened for 28 children with SEN in September 2023.

The Queenswell schools federated with Northside School as part of the Flourishing Schools Federation from September 2024. As a result, Spencer Clayton left and Liz Longworth became the Executive Headteacher.

Mrs. Beer is the longest serving member of staff, having been here since September 1991.