

## The First Stoke Prior School

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The first school in Stoke Prior founded in the late 1800s stood at the north end of Foley Gardens where now a row of bungalows have been built. The Rev Aldham's sister, who painted many of the old houses and buildings painted one called "the Dame School, Stoke Prior. At first the school was held in the home of the headmaster, which still stands and is now a private house. It was a church school and every morning the vicar walked from the vicarage, next to the church to the school to take morning prayers.

The school building was stone built, with high windows, too high to look out of. Two rooms divided by a wood and glass partition were heated by large round cast iron stoves stoked by the caretaker. There was an entrance to the large room with hooks for coats boots etc. and washbasins with taps (cold water only). The headmistress took the top class, seated on a high pedestal desk, which one had to climb two steps to reach, from which she could overlook the whole class.

1953 Coronation Celebrations



After World War One a large oblong brick building was built at the side of the playground with a cloakroom at one side for the infant class. At one time the playground was divided from top to bottom by a high wooden fence, girls on one side boys on the other. The only play equipment was a length of rounded metal bar to swing on.

The playground opened into a large field at the bottom of which were lovely large swings which we could use if it was dry. The whole school was fenced with a metal fence which was taken away for the war effort in the Second World War.

The school closed around 1963 and until the new school was built in Ryefields Road the children went to the school, built by John Corbett in Stoke Works.