

additional pegs were readily supplied, the greater issue was the small single-roomed school house.

Blanche Dickson wrote in April 1937 that there were "67 pupils accommodated in one room measuring 36ft 6in.x 21ft which is 7 more than the numbers for a room of the dimensions. With three teachers at work with eight classes...it is not possible to carry on the work of the school as satisfactorily as desired."³⁶ The addition of an extra room, or" by further extending the present room and dividing it with sliding doors to provide two rooms" was sought to help alleviate the problems created by an overcrowded room.

In response, the Education Department informed W.H. Everard, (who had again been approached by the school committee to assist them), that the accommodation provided allowed for 64 pupils at "12 sq. ft. per pupil. Mr Everard was also informed that the District Inspector Mr J. Loughrey had reported a month earlier that the accommodation provided was sufficient. However, the inspector was redeployed to furnish an updated report.³⁷ Inspector Loughrey did not recommend an increase in accommodation, despite further advice that by 5 October, enrolments had reached 74.³⁸

Further correspondence from the school continued to highlight the overcrowding that was occurring and the very poor, unhygienic sanitary conditions. By early November, Blanche Dickson reported that the infant class and teacher had to be transferred to the shelter shed to make room for the older pupils.³⁹

The medical officer for the Shire of Doncaster and Templestowe when reporting on a case of Infantile Paralysis at the school, noted that the building provided for a maximum of 63 students, although 76 students were enrolled; both boys and girls outhouses required attention.⁴⁰

Infantile Paralysis 'struck with fear in schools'. A Consultative Council to deal with the infection was established and recommended that schools were to be closed from 1 February to 15 February 1938 immediately following the summer vacation. "Teachers went to their school districts in order that those transferring from infected areas would have a fortnight isolated from the children. The children too were kept apart to help reduce infection". Children isolated at home were issued with assignment booklets.⁴¹

³⁶ School Building Files, (VPRS: 795, Box 2970), Dickson to the secretary, Education Department, 12 April 1937.

³⁷ School Building Files, (VPRS: 795, Box 2970), Departmental memos: 20 April 1937.

³⁸ School Building Files, (VPRS: 795, Box 2970), Dickson to the secretary, Education Department: 5 October 1937.

³⁹ School Building Files, (VPRS: 795, Box 2970), Dickson to the secretary, Education Department: November 1937

⁴⁰ School Building Files, (VPRS: 795, Box 2970) Medical Officer to the secretary, Education Department: 27 November 1937.

⁴¹ Vision and Realisation: vol 1, p.376.