

St. Elphin's School

LIBRARY

MAY 1989

The Library at St. Elphin's provides a comprehensive service to staff and pupils. Resources have been developed to support and supplement courses across the curriculum, and also offer a wide range of recreational material.

The *non-fiction* section, arranged around study tables and individual carrels, numbers some 8,000 volumes, mainly for higher school pupils; however, the middle school provision is increasing yearly, and is extensively used in Library training sessions. There is also a Reference Section containing Encyclopedia Britannica, and a range of specialist dictionaries.

The *fiction* library of 2,000 volumes is divided into Senior and Middle School sections, organized in an informal setting with easy chairs and floor cushions. Booklists of recommended reading, a file of pupils' book reviews and displays all help pupils to browse and choose.

The *magazine section* takes those related to academic subjects, such as "New Scientist" and "Geographical Review", as well as more general material. Back numbers are indexed simply and are available for reference.

Catalogues: There are the usual catalogues available; a Classification catalogue of all non-fiction; a Subject Index; an Author and Title catalogue for fiction. What is not so usual is that we have created these files from our own Library System on Micro-computer - an Apple II

with a PFS Data Management Programme. We have devised a series of files for cataloguing, accounting and loans. Details of the system are available in the library, where visitors can see it in operation.

All pupils receive library training through their English lessons, each form having at least one lesson a week in the library. Workcards and projects supply a graduated programme, and every effort is made to ensure girls are not only familiar with the organisation of materials but are capable of using the catalogues for independent research. Individual reading records are kept for fiction, and private reading is strongly encouraged.

The library is staffed by one part-time teacher/librarian and one assistant. However, the bulk of the day-to-day running is carried out by a team of pupil librarians. Drawn from all levels of the school, the girls are responsible for keeping stock in order, helping with the computer loans system, and devising displays. Individual librarians run the magazines, maintain the subject index, look after specific non-fiction sections, and carry out termly stock taking. Without their assistance the library could not function; they are aware that they are gaining important work experience and responsibility within the school.

The aim is to provide an environment which is conducive to private study, but which is also pleasant and welcoming. The library is open from 9.00 a.m. until 9.00 p.m. on week-days, and most weekends.