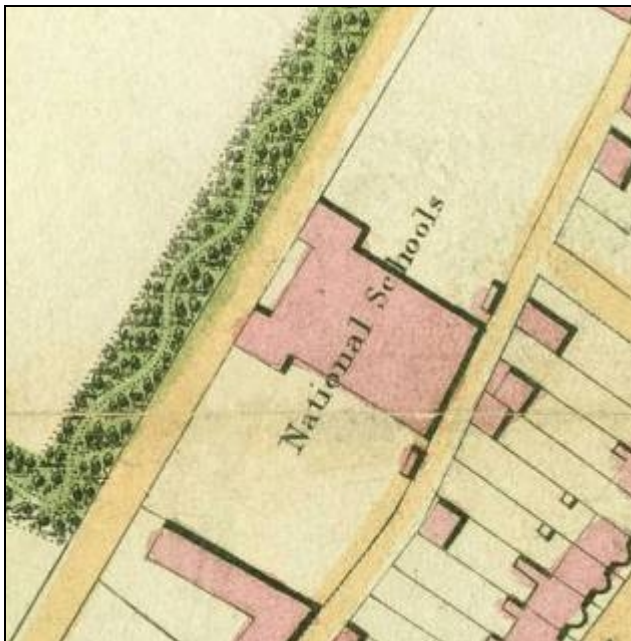


## St. George's Schools

St George's School has for many years been widely regarded as Ramsgate's school. Its beginning can be traced back as far as 1839 when the Vicar of Ramsgate, Reverend Richard Harvey, purchased land in Church Road on behalf of the National Schools, and the new National School opened in 1841.

The school was founded to *"increase the means of providing a moral and religious education according to the tenets of the established Church in England for the children of both sexes of the poor of the parishes of Ramsgate and St. Laurence and to engraft therein a suitable course of instruction to their station in life"*. Initially teaching was provided in separate classes for approximately 130 boys and 150 girls of primary and secondary ages, plus 150 infants. Entrance to the school was by payment of a fee, although some relief was available for poorer families at the discretion of the School Guardians. This system remained until 1918 when the Education Act provided free tuition for all.

Additional buildings were added in stages throughout the second half of the nineteenth century and pupil numbers increased proportionately until 1890 when there were over 2,000. Funding of the expansion was from the National Schools fund plus other local subscriptions, and in 1872 the schools were known as St. George's Schools (National). A new road was built parallel with Church Road and was known initially as Back Road, later to become School Lane.



National Schools in 1849 (G M Hinds map)

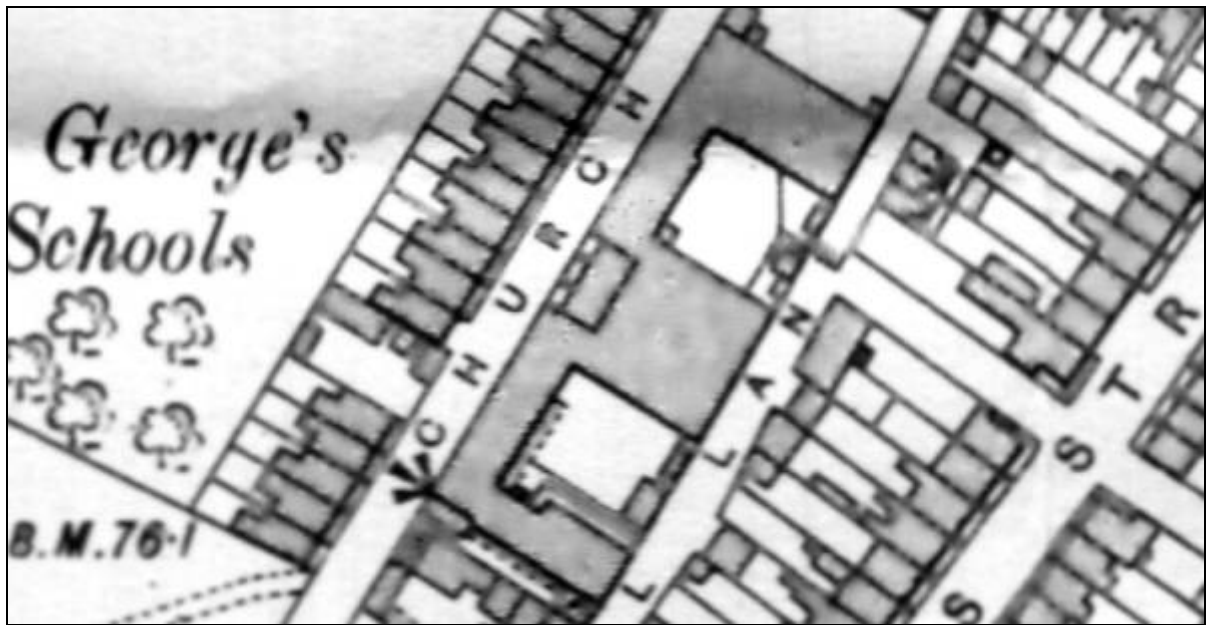


St. George's Schools in 1872 (Ordnance Survey map)

In 1875 a new building was completed to house the infants on vacant land at the corner of King Street and Belmont Street. It was in the same year that the schools became fully united with the National Society.

Ramsgate continued to grow and the Schools kept pace with the increase in numbers and changing attitudes towards education. In 1914 the "Lower School" closed and its pupils were transferred to the new Ellington School. The Infants School in King Street was closed and the pupils were transferred back to the old "Lower School" building in School Lane.

Changes continued and by 1925 the Infants School had closed. On St. George's Day 1926 the boys and girls schools were inaugurated as St. George's Selective Central Schools, admission to which was gained at age eleven by examination.



The Schools had expanded into the playgrounds by 1907 (Ordnance Survey Map)



Pupils of Com VI, c.1917-1918



Pupils of Class VII, c.1920



During World War II the Schools were closed for a period and the pupils were evacuated to Stafford, where some of the boys moved into jobs in Birmingham and the Midlands. By 1943 it was decided to re-open in Ramsgate but class sizes were low as some of the pupils remained in Stafford. The Schools had their own entrance into Ramsgate's underground air raid shelter system and classes were often interrupted during times of bombing and shelling.

At the end of the war much re-organisation took place at local level and Ramsgate Borough's Education Committee ceased to exist. The schools were transferred to the newly formed Kent Education Committee who didn't recognise selective schools, and St. George's reverted back to non selective, and were known as "Secondary Modern" schools. In 1949 they became known as Church of England Voluntary Controlled, which meant that Christian teaching was protected and the Church retained some say in the way they were run.

Due to the Schools' popularity the buildings increasingly became overcrowded, and in 1967 the Girls School was moved to new premises at Westwood Road, Broadstairs. Further development took place

at the new school in 1973 to make way for the Boys School to accommodate increased numbers resulting from the raising of the school leaving to 16 in 1974. Pre-fabricated buildings were erected as a low cost and quick method, a process which was adopted across Kent.

The latest development in the School's history was the opening of new state of the premises at Westwood Road in 2010. The school maintains its Secondary Modern status, although it is now known as St George's Church of England Foundation School. Many traditions live on, and although the School has lost its bond with Ramsgate, it still remains one of the most respected schools in the area.

