

Hard work and fun in schools

One of Gosberton's grandest Georgian buildings stands hidden in its own leafy grounds — surrounded by wide, green fields.

It was once the private home of the Welby-Everard family, but in the 1950s it was taken over for a very special purpose.

The gracious mansion at 11 Westhorpe Road, right next to the parish church, is Gosberton House School.

It is the only school of its kind in the county and caters for more than 80 slow learners between five and 11-years-old.

Most of the children travel to the school and home again daily, but there is a boarding wing for 25 children who "live in" from Monday to Friday.

Headmaster Mr Harold Smith said the school aimed to "equip the children to find their right place in society."

He said teaching the children was a specialist job, and required properly trained teachers.

There are seven teachers working with the children, plus three welfare assistants and a matron and boarding staff.

"Although there are other special schools in Lincoln-

shire, this is the only one that takes children from the age of five.

"Most of the others deal only with older children, like the Priory School at Spalding for example," said Mr Smith.

"In practice, however, we get most of our pupils when they are about eight or nine — which only gives them two years with us.

"When they leave here, some of the children go onto regular secondary schools and others go into special schools like Priory."

PLAY AREA

The school has its own swimming pool, built at a cost of £2,000 in 1965, a large sports field and a grass play area with swings and slides and small wooden huts.

"Of course, the play areas are very important for the children — they really enjoy being able to run about and play on the swings at break.

"But it is not all fun and games, there is a lot of work to be done between 9 am and



Having a swinging time at Gosberton House School play area, from left, are deputy headmaster Mr John Hobson, Sally Rosling, aged six, Shane Gaunt, eight, headmaster Mr Harold Smith, Leon Jackson, seven, and Tracy Rosling, six.

3.30 pm," Mr Smith said.

As well as the special school, Gosberton has its own county primary school.

Established about 1877, it has more than 150 infants and juniors and five teaching staff, including headmaster Mr Peter Wakefield.

"We have an excellent staff and some very good school governors," said Mr Wakefield, who has been at the school for five years.

"The parents are also very actively involved with the school, they often help out as

classroom assistants and join in school events.

"I like to think we are closely connected with village life, many of our children are members of local Cub and Brownie groups.

"We have organised two exhibitions with the help of Gosberton British Legion, and have had talks by the Preservation Society, which looks after old tractors and other pieces of machinery."

As in most primary schools, the infant and junior sections are separate — but

there is no difference in the approach to classroom teaching.

"Everyone must have a fair chance in education, we always try to bring out the full potential of the children," said Mr Wakefield.

"To do this we like to create a happy working atmosphere, that is very important."

"As soon as the children arrive at school they do paintings and drawings on the wall — things that stimulate their imagination," he added.