

1944 - 1960

The heavy hand of the state meets social change

Two World Wars radically changed attitudes and values both in society and in the school

The Welfare State was developing and Government was exerting more control over all departments, particularly education.

The 1944 Education Act made free education compulsory from 5-15

A selective system was introduced with three tiers: fee paying private schools; selective Grammar, Secondary Technical and Art Schools; and Secondary Modern Schools. This was intended to provide equal opportunities for children of all backgrounds. Instead it reinforced the status quo. The 11+ entrance examination was used to limit admissions to selective schools to 15 percent of pupils.

The School was renamed Moseley Road Secondary School of Art. A national secondary curriculum was introduced but the school remained heavily biased towards arts and crafts. In 1950 the School Certificate was replaced by GCE 'O' and 'A' levels. Pupils frequently finished school without any formal qualifications except in arts and craft subjects.

The school came under the control of the Local Education Authority instead of the Central Art School

A new Headmaster Charles Adams was appointed, highly influential, he sought to reinforce the school's reputation, building awareness of its achievements and emphasising its unique position in Birmingham. Adams falsely attributed earlier innovations, specifically '*Executed Design*' started at the Central Art School in 1890, to Moseley.

This was a period of significant social upheaval

The concept of the 'teenager' appeared for the first time and tradition was questioned. People expressed their individuality through dress, lifestyle and attitude. Commercial television broadcasting begins, and immigration from Kenyan and Ugandan Asians in 1967 and 1972 led to a more visible ethnic minority in the city.

By 1960 the school was one of only a few Secondary Art Schools left in the country

Whilst the School began to change as society was modernising, one aspect remained constant: the belief in education through visual means:

"The experience of making, creating, and bringing to life something imagined and made real through technical knowledge, awareness, skill and visual imagination."

John Swift

