



Pooles Park's first telephone

On the 5th of November 1946 the school's first telephone was installed

“School Telephone Installed – ARC 2655 – in alcove by Junior Girls' Head's office on first floor”.

This number, prefixed by letters as in the old Director system, amazingly, remains the number of the school today!

The Director System was a system which made it possible to call subscribers at other exchanges without operator intervention.

Each subscriber was given a seven digit number where the first three digits corresponded to the local exchange name, and were chosen to give the name a meaningful mnemonic. This was done by linking each number on the telephone dial to letters – you see this system on old telephone dials:

- 1
- 2 ABC
- 3 DEF
- 4 GHI
- 5 JKL
- 6 MN
- 7 PRS
- 8 TUV
- 9 WXY
- 0 OQ

Thus, a subscriber in Wimbledon could be allocated the number **WIMbledon 1234**; the first three letters, written in capitals, indicated the code to be dialled. The actual trains of pulses from the subscriber's dial would, of course, be **946 1234**.

So, as in the case of Pooles Park, the number **ARC 2755** becomes 272-2755; add 020 7 and you get **020 7277 2755** – and, if you're lucky, Marie Ruane. Amazing!