



No. 28,175 (91st Year) 5d. SATURDAY, JAN. 20, 1968

# SUSSEX SCHOOL BLAZE: BOY FOUND DEAD



The fire-damaged buildings of Newells Preparatory School, Lower Beeding, where a young Indian boy died as he tried to rescue a school friend.

A young Indian boy died as he tried to rescue a school friend during a fire at Newells Preparatory School, Lower Beeding, near Horsham today.

He had been helping his friend to safety when the floor fell under him. All of the other pupils, still in pyjamas, were safely evacuated.

Five firemen were injured in the blaze which badly damaged the school in the West Sussex countryside.

Sixty-seven boys who had returned for the start of the term yesterday were in the school's sleeping quarters when the fire broke out shortly after 1 a.m.

West Sussex firemen, directed by the county's Chief Fire Officer (Mr. S. Crook) from Chichester, brought the blaze under control after nearly six hours.

### Helping friend

A fireman who was one of the first at the scene said "The young Indian boy was helping his friend to escape. Suddenly the floor collapsed under him and he disappeared."

Later police and firemen found the boy's body in the basement. Police were trying to trace his father, who is abroad, and withheld the boy's name.

The fire, thought to have started in the basement beneath the school's tower, was discovered by the headmaster, Captain Peter Hope-

Lang, who was awakened by smoke pouring under the door of his bedroom on the first floor.

He roused the boys asleep in several dormitories on the first and second floors and they left the building by a fire escape.

### Records lost

A member of the school staff said that the boys had observed normal fire drill and followed prefects from the building in an orderly way.

The dead boy was missed when his section got outside.

Police said that checking on all the boys was difficult because all school records had been destroyed in the fire, but 66 boys had been accounted for.

Police allowed only parents of pupils into the grounds. The headmaster was not available for comment.

His wife said "We have been told by the police not to say anything."

Other members of the staff also declined to talk about the fire.

The school normally has 85 pupils in residence. They come from various parts of the country and abroad.

Fees are 130 guineas a term. The house stands 350ft. above sea level in its own 70 acres of parkland and woods, according to the prospectus. The school has its own chapel, theatre, workshops, science room and hobby room.

There is a playing field, swimming pool, rifle range, tennis courts and a riding school.

This article contains numerous factual errors and is not to be considered a reliable source of information