



arrived in Oswestry but if

Sister Agnes with pupils at Oswestry Roman Catholic School.

Sister Agnes retiring as head of Catholic School

Sister Agnes, the headmistress of Oswestry Roman Catholic School is retiring this summer.

She came to Oswestry in 1970 and was appointed headmistress about 12 months later.

Sister Agnes (60) was brought up in Ireland and educated by nuns and, on leaving school, entered a convent.

She belongs to an order called the Sisters of Charity and St Paul the Apostle or, as they are more commonly known, the Selly Oak Nuns. The name is taken from the Selly Oak, Birmingham, headquarters of the order.

"A lot of us entered straight from school and from my point of view it proved to be all right", said Sister Agnes. "I would do the same thing again but the theory nowadays is that girls should not enter until they have a lot more social experience".

After completing her teacher-training she took up an appointment in Kendal, Cumbria, and remained there for 11 years. In 1957 she went out to South Africa, teaching first at a missionary school and then at a boarding school for

Europeans. She returned to Britain in 1960.

Sister Agnes described her time in Oswestry as "12 very happy years".

Catholic schools, she said, had tried to keep a traditional approach to teaching as well as incorporating new ideas.

"I think too much was thrust down our throats in my day. It was just given to us as knowledge and we had to digest whatever we could. Now there is more discussion, the children absorb things in a more leisurely way and perhaps it will have a more lasting effect".

Sister Agnes said the school aimed to give its pupils an all-round education and Christian background.

"I always tell them that if they are good Christians they will be good citizens and having good citizens is very important at the present time in our society".

She teaches mathematics at the 180 pupil school and believes a teacher's life can be very strenuous in a small school.

"You have to be able to teach all subjects and are expected to be specialist in every one. I have gained a lot of satisfaction in helping children academically and in their Christian life. The parents, too, have been very co-operative for which I am very grateful".

She expects to leave Oswestry at the end of July or in August but doesn't know which convent she will join or what the future holds for her.

"I don't mind what work I do, whether it is teaching or social or parish work", said Sister Agnes.