Dataset Description and Variable List

North Surrey School District (NSSD) Record of Children Vol. 1

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Sources

London Metropolitan Archives, North Surrey School District, Record of Children Vol. 1, NSSD/176.

Transcription Process

The dataset was transcribed from digital images of the original records held in the London Metropolitan Archives. The transcription took place between April and August 2015 and was conducted by a record transcription company that had experience transcribing historical, handwritten sources. Each record was transcribed by two people with discrepancies being checked by a supervisor. Any questionable entries after that were flagged to the PI who provided guidance on transcription.

The PI and RO also performed a series of checks on the transcribed data to ensure that the transcription was accurate. This included checking to make sure that the day, month and year transcriptions were plausible: i.e. they were in the correct range (1-12 for months and 1-31 for days) and they followed the correct ordinal pattern (birth date, then admission date, then discharge date). We also checked the anthropometric measurements in a couple of cases: 1) if the values were out of the correct range (0-11 inches, 0-13 lbs when stone were used) or 2) if the measurement was implausibly high or low. Many odd cases were verified as correct in the original. When implausible results were verified, we left the measurements intact in the data but coded the anthro_meas_err (anthropometric measurement error) variable as equal to 1. We excluded these cases from our analysis of the data, but they have been deposited here.

We ended up only using the dataset as a comparison to the training ship records (although there are many other uses for it), so we did not expend as much effort in data cleaning or generating secondary data such as locations as for the other datasets deposited as a part of the grant.

Variables

Variable naming and labelling principles

Different prefixes to the data refer to time periods or people that the variable relates to.
- b_ denotes variables related to the child's birth
- ad_ denotes variables related to the child's admission to the NSSD

- dis_ denotes variables related to the child's discharge from the NSSD
- f_ denotes variables related to the child's father
- p_ denotes variables related to the child's parents
- post_ denotes variables related to the child after they were discharged from the NSSD

Different suffixes also indicate different treatments of the data
- _prior indicates that the variable refers to a prior period of admission in the NSSD.

Whenever verbatim is listed in the variable label, this indicates that this variable has not been cleaned or streamlined and reflects the original document precisely.

Variable list

id	Unique id for each child in the dataset.
forename	Forename of child (verbatim)
surname	Surname of child (verbatim)
male	Male = 1, female = 0. Based on the forename of the child.
b_year	Birth year of child. This was the primary thing listed in the document, but in a few cases the child's age at last birthday was listed in the birth year field. In these cases we have subtracted the age at last birthday from the admission year to get the child's birth year.
parish	Parish that the child was sent from. These reflect the parishes that formed a part of the poor law union that fed into the school. In general only one or two letters have been given to indicate the parish. These have been simplified where possible.
ad_day	Admission day
ad_month	Admission month
ad_year	Admission year
ad_weightst	Weight at admission (stone)
ad_weightlb	Weight at admission (lbs)
ad_heightft	Height at admission (ft)
ad_heightin	Height at admission (in)
ad_educlass	Educational class at admission to the NSSD (verbatim). This is recorded for approximately 25% of children, and it is not clear whether the classes are constant or change over time.

ad_day_prior	Prior admission day to the school, i.e. the admission day for the last time the child was in the school.
ad_month_prior	Prior admission month to the school
ad_year_prior	Prior admission year to the school
dis_day_prior	Prior discharge day to the school
dis_month_prior	Prior discharge month to the school
dis_year_prior	Prior discharge year to the school
p_living	This variable notes verbatim which of the child's parents was alive (if any) when the child was admitted to the NSSD. It also sometimes provides further information such as whether the child was deserted, was an orphan or was in the care of another family member. If the parents' status is unknown, the record lists 'not stated' or 'unknown'.
f_occ	Father's occupation (verbatim)
p_address	Parent's address (verbatim)
p_addinfo	Additional information about the parents before the child was admitted to the NSSD (verbatim)
dis_day	Discharge day
dis_month	Discharge month
dis_year	Discharge year
dis_weightst	Weight at discharge (stone)
dis_weightlb	Weight at discharge (lbs)
dis_heightft	Height at discharge (ft)
dis_heightin	Height at discharge (in)
dis_educlass	Educational class at discharge from the NSSD (verbatim). This is recorded for relatively few children and it is not clear whether the classes are constant or change over time.
trainingremarks	This field provides remarks on the children's general training while they were in the NSSD (verbatim). It is not entirely clear what this means, but it may be an overall training ranking separate from the educational class.
post_occupation	The occupation that the child took up after leaving the NSSD (verbatim). This is available for a small percentage of children.
post_destination	Where the child was sent after their time in the NSSD (verbatim). Common destinations include 'to parents', 'to service', 'to training ship' and to various hospitals.

post_reports   This field records additional details about the child after they left the NSSD including at times the address where the child was housed after leaving the NSSD (verbatim). It also discusses whether the children completed their probation or absconded from their placement.

anthro_meas_err   This variable is equal to 1 if there is a verified height or weight measurement in the original record which has been deemed implausible. Many of these are where the height and weight may have been inadvertently switched, but it is not clear either way. Others are verified values outside of the typical range such as 13 inches.