Deaf School to 1907
(notes partly based on research by Dan Hershon)

The new head teacher was Mr Clyne from the Glasgow School in 1852. It is suggested that Mr Clyne was deaf himself. However, Mr Webster continued a critical correspondence through the newspapers, creating such a problem that the committee in 1855 resolved:

"...in future, Mr. Webster be not allowed to enter the doors of the Institution upon any occasion whatever."

and at the same time, the Secretary claimed of Mr Webster:

"...he succeeded, notwithstanding his written stipulation to the contrary, and his positive disavowal of any such intention, in withdrawing the whole of the private pupils from the Institution, preventing applications for the admission of others coming to the knowledge of the Committee and securing them for his own private establishment."

However, Mr Clyne also had problems when asked to continue to teach out of hours (as his contract allowed) because he wanted more money.

The school moved again in 1858 across the road to larger premises. Mr Clyne appears to have been successful in general terms in the education of pupils but only lasted until 1862. The School was not recruiting enough pupils and the Committee wanted to cut costs. They began to look for a different head teacher.

At the end of 1862, Mr Clyne was dismissed and Mr Jackson from the Birmingham school took over. He appears to have been successful and wrote a book of instruction for teachers and schools to use in 1868.

Mr Jackson suggested increasing the school day to 8 hours and brought in religious instruction and gymnastics. However, he was also told off for teaching in sign language, instead of just in fingerspelling which was the policy of the school at that time.
His major contribution however, was the design of the new school in Tyndall’s Park. The picture was taken later after the school was closed but gives a better indication than previous drawings. It cost £4,500.

Mr Jackson decided to leave in 1873, before the school was ready and William Barnes Smith took over. The school opened in 1874; one of the teachers was Miss Yeoman who had been a Deaf pupil at the school. She left in 1876 to marry Sidney Smith, who was also a former pupil. The Smith family had a long association with the Deaf community in Bristol. Their son Charles Smith also attended the school.

Mr Barnes Smith brought in the Oral method in 1878 but the school continued to use signing with the children.

The school reached its jubilee year in 1891 (report extracts from the Bristol Mercury).
The Barnes Smith years were seen as successful with many pupils finding and keeping jobs. He acted as interpreter on occasions and was fully involved in the setting up of the Adult association in 1884. He continued with signing in the school but this was under pressure from the Education acts and the setting up of State schools in Bristol.

Despite this, the school had appointed Mr Gill as an assistant and he was deaf himself. He stayed in the school for 20 years.

There was considerable disagreement between the school and the Inspector Mr Eicholz who appeared to criticize at every opportunity. There were also problems with the Education Authority. Because of the uncertainty and the existence of Kingsdown school which was Oral-only, parents began to withdraw children and the schools was not viable any longer.

By the early 1900s, the new State schools were paying salaries more than double what the Deaf school paid. When Mr Barnes Smith retired in 1907, the school closed down.
However, they did manage to have a big party to celebrate the retirement of Mr Barnes Smith (extract shown)

The proceeds of the sale of the school, created the BDIDD charity, which later became the Bristol Trust for the Deaf and still exists.