

Orphanage and children's home records



DP26509 - Diamantina Receiving Depot, Kedron Pk Woolloowin, 1948

Research Guide to orphanage and children's home records at Queensland State Archives

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Queensland State Archives (QSA) is the official repository for Queensland Government records selected for permanent retention because of their continuing value. The archived public records are from state government departments, state courts, local government authorities and statutory authorities. The records are in our facility at [Runcorn, Brisbane](#), and open records are available for viewing in the Reading Room, free-of-charge.

QSA holds records of orphanages and children's homes created by the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs and its predecessor agencies.

The main finding aid for records held at QSA is the [Queensland State Archives' online catalogue](#) (known as ArchivesSearch).

The following citation abbreviations are used throughout our catalogue:

- ITM QSA Item (describes the item)
- PR Physical Representation (generally the original or microfilm copy)
- DR Digital Representation (for a digital image)
- S Series ID (for a series of records)
- A Agency ID (for the creating or responsible agency).

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised that our catalogue contains images, names and voices of people who have died.

Orphanages, Reformatory Schools and Industrial Schools

Diamantina Orphanage (later Warilda)

From 1865 children were admitted to the Diamantina Orphan School, later named the Diamantina Orphanage. It ceased to function as an orphanage in 1893, however the renamed Diamantina Receiving Depot continued its role of reception, care and boarding-out of children to foster care.

Index to admission registers to Diamantina Orphanage and Receiving Depot

Circa 1/1/1865 – 31/12/1905

[ITM268112, DR7319 Section A to DR7344 Section Z](#) in [S6867](#)

The entries in this index record name, page number in admission register and admission number.

Admission register to Diamantina Orphanage and Receiving Depot

Circa 1/1/1865 – 31/12/1908

[ITM268111, DR29897 Part 1 to DR29905 Part 9](#) in [S6866](#)

The entries record name, number, when and where born, when, why and on what terms admitted, when discharged and to whom, name, occupation, religion and residence of parents, and remarks.

Industrial and Reformatory School for Girls, Toowoomba

The Industrial and Reformatory School for Girls, Toowoomba was established on 1 April 1881, and was renamed the Industrial School for Girls, Toowoomba in 1890. The Industrial School for Girls, Toowoomba closed on 14 October 1903.

Letterbooks - Industrial and Reformatory School for Girls, Toowoomba

13/04/1881–7/9/1895

[ITM104863](#) and [ITM104864](#) in [S16295](#)

Letters include details of girls at the school, court matters, character assessments, license details for girls in service, general administrative matters, finance and the purchase of goods and services.

Diary of discharges

21/4/1882–25/9/1903

[ITM104862](#), [DR8716–DR8836](#) in [S16294](#)

The diary entries record details of girls discharged from the school including name, date, number, and remarks.

Admission Registers - Industrial School for Girls, Toowoomba

1/4/1881– 31/12/1903

[ITM212557](#), [DR56900](#) in [S6594](#)

These entrance books include name, number, name of ship and year of immigration, where born, religion, trade, age, height, build, complexion, colour of hair and eyes, education and remarks.

Meteor Park Orphanage (later St Joseph's Home, Neerkol)

Meteor Park Orphanage, near Stanwell, Rockhampton was licensed under *The Orphanages Act of 1879* on 11 December 1885. It was later renamed St. Joseph's Home, Neerkol. Government funding for this home ceased in 1985.

Admission Registers - Meteor Park Orphanage, Rockhampton

11/5/1885 – 10/5/1909

[ITM313140](#), [DR66346](#) in [S16533](#)

These registers include child's name, admission number, place and date of birth, date of admission, reason for admission, date of discharge, to whom discharged and why, details of parents, religion of parents.

Registers of Children Hired Out from Meteor Park Orphanage and St. Joseph's Home, Neerkol

29/7/1882 – 28/2/1978

[ITM313142](#), [DR58723](#) and [ITM1453387](#), [DR8069–DR8071](#) in [S16535](#)

Meteor Park Orphanage Case Files

29/3/1886 – 30/1/1986

[S19362](#)

Registers of children released on probation from Meteor Park Orphanage, Neerkol

21/7/1915 – 15/1/1930

[S19368](#)

Rockhampton Orphanage (later Birralee)

The Rockhampton Orphanage was established in 1870. It was re-named the Rockhampton Receiving Depot in 1894. On 17 Dec 1964, the Depot was re-named Birralee and from 1967/68 acted as a Receiving and Assessment Centre until Birralee Hostel was opened in 1981.

Admission register to Rockhampton Orphanage and Receiving Depot

18/12/1871 – 3/6/1909

[ITM313131, DR63731](#) in [S16525](#)

Receiving depot admission registers

20/11/1875 – 28/5/1919

[ITM313129, DR58710–DR58718](#) ; [ITM313130, DR63730](#) ; [ITM313128, DR9698–10486](#) in [S16524](#)

Register of children hired-out

9/7/1881 – 26/6/1905

[ITM313132, DR58720](#) in [S16526](#)

Register of applicants

21/2/1910 – 3/1/1959

[S16527](#)

Register of illegitimate children

1/1/1915 – 22/5/1923

[S16529](#)

Register of nursing homes

11/6/1906 – 13/11/1918

[S16530](#)

St. Joseph's Orphanage, Mackay

St. Joseph's Orphanage, Mackay was licensed on 14 April 1880 under *The Orphanages Act of 1879*. The children of St. Joseph's Orphanage, Mackay were transferred to Meteor Park Orphanage, Rockhampton on the 22 December 1885.

Admission register to St. Joseph's Orphanage, Mackay

11/5/1880 – 4/8/1884

[ITM313137, DR9505–DR9660](#) in [S16531](#)

St Vincent's Orphanage, Nudgee

On 15 December 1866, Roman Catholic children previously at the Diamantina Orphanage were placed in a newly established Roman Catholic orphanage at New Farm. In 1869, St Vincent's Orphanage moved from New Farm to Nudgee. St Vincent's Home, Nudgee ceased to receive funding as part of the Licensed Residential Care Program when the program was discontinued in 1991. Funding continued as part of the Alternative Care and Intervention Program under the name St Vincent's Home, Nudgee until 1994.

Index to admission register to St Vincent's Home, Nudgee

14/12/1866 – 26/4/1905

[ITM268102, DR82102](#) in [S6862](#)

Admission register to St Vincent's Home, Nudgee

Circa 1/1/1866 – 31/12/1908

[ITM268099, DR29906–DR29916](#) in [S6859](#)

Townsville Orphanage (later Carramar)

The Townsville Orphanage was established on 30th August 1878 by order of the Executive Council. Under the Orphanages Act of 1879, orphanages were charged with the care, teaching and training of children whose circumstances included death of one or both parents, desertion by parents and neglect. The Act also provided for the boarding-out, hiring-out and apprenticing of orphanage children.

Index to admission register

Circa 1/1/1879 – 31/12/1911

[ITM823062, DR17816–DR17843](#) in [S5150](#)

Admission Registers to Townsville Orphanage and Townsville Receiving Depot

17/05/1879 - 11/06/1908

[ITM823066, DR61051](#) in [S5152](#)

17/05/1879 - 19/10/1911

[ITM823075, DR106606](#) in [S5152](#)

11/07/1895–31/12/1917

[ITM823067, DR61052](#) in [S5152](#)

15/02/1912–20/06/1918

[ITM823069, DR59536–DR59537](#) in [S5152](#)

Register of children hired out from the orphanage

4/7/1883 – 20/07/1896

[ITM104865, DR66347](#) in [S16296](#)

Committee minute books

19/8/1885 – 15/1/1924

[S5146](#)

Treatment Books

5/12/1916 – 8/6/1935

[S5148](#)

Westbrook Training Centre

In 1881, the Reformatory School for Boys - Hulk 'Proserpine' closed and moved to a new premises at Signal Hill, Lytton. On 1 October 1900 the Diamantina Reformatory School for Boys was opened at South Brisbane and the boys from the Reformatory School at Lytton were moved to Diamantina. In 1919, the Westbrook Reformatory for Boys changed its name to the Farm Home for Boys, Westbrook. On 26 May 1966 the Farm Home for Boys was renamed the Westbrook Training Centre.

Admission register to the Industrial and Reformatory School for Boys

16/3/1871 – 6/9/1906

[ITM532416, DR57731](#) in [S986](#)

Discharge Register

14/3/1872 – 6/9/1916

[ITM512131, DR52066](#) in [S550](#)

Farm Home for Boys, Westbrook Case Files

1/3/1890 – 20/8/1953

[S19337](#)

Visiting Medical Officers' Journals

18/2/1873 – 19/4/1990

[S989](#)

Visitors' Books

18/2/1873 – 9/7/1984

[S988](#)

Visiting Justice's Minute Book

16/9/1874 – 29/3/1916

[S1773](#)

General Correspondence

26/6/1885 – 29/11/1941

[S998](#)

Papers Relating to the History of Westbrook

22/2/1892 – 31/12/1992

[S1223](#)

Superintendent's Punishment Registers

14/1/1924 – 17/6/1988

[S549](#)

Administration Files

Circa 1/1/1959 – 31/10/1994

[S997](#)

Visiting Psychiatrist's Journal

3/7/1962 – 25/8/1966

[S991](#)

Matron's Daily Report Book

10/12/1968 – 2/10/1990

[S993](#)

Record of Tetanus Injections Administered

1/11/1977 – 26/2/1990

[S994](#)

Visiting Medical Officer's Record of Hospital Treatment

28/3/1979 – 23/9/1985

[S992](#)

Isolation Register

21/11/1993 – 13/6/1994

[S996](#)

Handcuff Register

25/11/1993 - Circa 4/7/1994

[S999](#)

Home Secretary's Office (later Health and Home Affairs Department)

Register of state children employed in the Kilcoy Police District

29/7/1916 - 6/9/1922

[ITM532271, DR8715](#) in [S940](#)

Nursing Home Roll Registers

10/2/1912 – 28/10/1946

[S5147](#)

Register of Illegitimate Children

22/10/1915 – 6/6/1927

[S343](#)

Correspondence, Papers & Newspaper Clippings re Child Welfare

Circa 1/1/1904 – 31/12/1926

[ITM18189](#) in S8400, Special Batches

Correspondence, Printed Reports & Newspaper Clippings re Benevolent Societies & Institutions A–Ch

Circa 1/1/1885 – 31/12/1932

[ITM18280](#) in S8400, Special Batches

Correspondence, Printed Reports & Newspaper Clippings re Benevolent Societies & Institutions Ci–K

Circa 1/1/1872 – 31/12/1929

[ITM18281](#) in S8400, Special Batches

Correspondence, Printed Reports & Newspaper Clippings re Benevolent Societies & Institutions L–S

Circa 1/1/1899 – 31/12/1931

[ITM18282](#) in S8400, Special Batches

Correspondence, Printed Reports & Newspaper Clippings re Benevolent Societies & Institutions T–Y

Circa 1/1/1897 – 31/12/1929

[ITM18283](#) in S8400, Special Batches

State children, reformatories other than Westbrook

Circa 1/1/1897 – 31/12/1925

[ITM279894](#) in S8400, Special Batches

State children, generally

Circa 1/1/1900 – 31/12/1939

[ITM279892](#) in S8400, Special Batches

State children, generally

Circa 1/1/1912 – 31/12/1938

[ITM279893](#) in S8400, Special Batches

Westbrook (Reformatory School for boys)

Circa 1/1/1899 – 31/12/1915

[ITM279901](#) in S8400, Special Batches

Westbrook (Reformatory School for boys)

Circa 1/1/1906 – 31/12/1915

[ITM279902](#) in S8400, Special Batches

Westbrook (Reformatory School for boys)

Circa 1/1/1899 – 31/12/1937

[ITM279903](#) in S8400, Special Batches

Indexes to State Children's allowances

Circa 1/7/1910 – 31/1/1914

[S6577](#)

The general correspondence and special batches of the Colonial Secretary's Office (later Home Secretary's Office) under tabs headings such as Reformatories, and the Department of Public Instruction may also be useful. For more details, please view our [Research Guide to Colonial Secretary's correspondence 1859–1903](#).

Labour and Tourism Department

This series comprises batch files about staff, the Apprentices and Minor's Acts, Police, Queensland Government Tourist Bureau, Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Acts, state enterprises, relief assistance, income (state development) tax, cases filed in the Industrial Court, Machinery and Scaffolding Acts, factories and shops, profiteering prevention and tourist resort proposals.

General correspondence batches

Circa 1/1/1921 – 31/12/1974

[S9187](#)

To find specific records during the period 1964–1971 refer to the records below.

Girl's Remand and Assessment Centre, Wilson Youth Hospital

14/4/1965-7/1/1971

[ITM294239](#)

Institutional Care, Rehabilitation of Teenage Children, Ministerial visits to these Homes

Circa 1/1/1965 – 31/12/1967

[ITM294240](#)

Periodic detention for young offenders

Circa 1/1/1964 – 31/12/1967

[ITM294242](#)

Children's Court records

Records held at Queensland State Archives were created by children's courts in jurisdictions including District Courts, and regional Courts of Petty Sessions. These records are about serious offences alleged to have been committed by juveniles under 17 years, such as arson, burglary and stealing, entering premises with intent to commit an indictable offence, breaching probation orders or community service orders. The records are subject to a restricted access period of 100 years. View our [Using ArchivesSearch](#) videos to learn how to search and apply for access to these closed records.

For additional sources of information other than records held at QSA, and for support services, please see details on the following page.

Need more information?

Check our online catalogue [ArchivesSearch](#).

Phone us on (07) 3037 6777 or you can [email](#) an archivist.

Sources of information other than Queensland State Archives records

Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs - Time in Care Information Access Service (TICIAS)

Information about the service is in the [Information sheet \(PDF, 162 KB\)](#)

Phone: 1800 809 078 (freecall)

Email: rti@cyjma.qld.gov.au

National Redress Scheme

The National Redress Scheme is in response to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. Applications may be made before 30 June 2027. Find out more at www.nationalredress.gov.au or call 1800 737 377.

Support for Forgotten Australians

This Queensland Government web page [Support for Forgotten Australians](#) provides a list of organisations and support services for people who grew up in orphanages, children's homes, institutions and foster homes.

Find and Connect Australia

This web resource was created by the national government for [Forgotten Australians](#), [Former Child Migrants](#) and anyone with an interest in the history of out-of-home care in Australia. Find out more at <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/> or call 1800 16 11 09.

Care Leavers Australasia Network (CLAN)

Care Leavers Australasia Network advocates and campaigns for justice and redress for all Care Leavers. Find out more at <https://clan.org.au/> or call 1800 008 774.

Alliance for Forgotten Australians (AFA)

The Alliance for Forgotten Australians is committed to recognition and healing for Forgotten Australians and encourages their active engagement in the development of policy and services. Find out more at <https://forgottenaustralians.org.au/> or call 0488 460 646.