

# Government Reformatory for Protestant Girls

1864? – 1893

**Other Names:**

- Protestant Girls' Reformatory
- Jika Reformatory for Protestant Girls

## Details

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The Reformatory for Protestant Girls set up by the Victorian government after the passage of the Neglected and Criminal Children's Act in 1864 was originally situated in Sunbury, in close proximity to the Industrial School for Boys.

With the demise in Victoria of industrial schools and the introduction instead of a system of 'boarding out' 'neglected' children, the girls' reformatory was moved to temporary quarters in Melbourne. It soon relocated again to Coburg, to new premises 'in immediate contiguity' to Pentridge Prison, in what was later known as 'G Division'. It operated there from 1875 until 1895 when it closed. At this time it was also known as the Jika Reformatory for Girls.

The girls' proximity to prisoners, not to the mention to the city, caused the government to consider relocating the reformatory to more appropriate surroundings. The Secretary of the Department reported in 1891 of how the next 'desirable site' for the reformatory would be distant from the prison, the city, and also inaccessible to the girls' relatives and former associates, 'whose visits almost invariably have been found to have an evil influence and very unsettling effect on the girls'.

At the reformatory, girls were trained in domestic service, sewing and doing the laundry of private citizens in the area.

In 1890, an editorial in the *Age* lauded the private reformatory known as Brookside and compared its farm life with the conditions facing girls at Coburg. It posed the question, 'Can no one else be found to emulate this truly noble example?'

Following the closure of the Jika Reformatory for Girls, the residents were allocated to either the Homes at Brookside, the Roman Catholic Reformatory for Girls at Oakleigh, or the Albion Reformatory for Girls, run by the Salvation Army in Brunswick.

## More info

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### Related Entries

**Run by**

- [Department of Industrial and Reformatory Schools, Colony of Victoria \(1864 - 1887\)](#)  
The Department of Industrial and Reformatory Schools oversaw the administration of the Government Reformatory for Girls.  
Date: 1864? - 1887
- [Department for Reformatory Schools, Colony of Victoria \(1887 - 1900\)](#)  
Date: 1887 - ?

#### Related Organisations

- [Convent of the Good Shepherd, Oakleigh \(1883 - 1981\)](#)
- [Woodlands Home \(1886 - 1890s\)](#)
- [Brookside Private Reformatory for Protestant Girls \(1887 - 1903\)](#)
- [Brunswick Girls' Home \(1892 - 1902\)](#)

#### Related Legislation

- [The Neglected and Criminal Children's Act 1864, Victoria \(1864 - 1888\)](#)  
The Government Reformatory for Protestant Girls was established under the provisions of the Neglected and Criminal Children's Act 1864.

## Resources

- Lynn, Peter, [Pentridge Prison](#), eMelbourne: the city past and present, 2008
- [A Reformatory School Sensation](#), Colac Herald, 26 January 1892
- [State Children: Abolishing Barrack Reformatories](#), South Australian Register, 15 March 1894
- Victoria. Children's Welfare Department and Reformatory Schools, [Report of the Secretary / Department for Neglected Children and Reformatory Schools](#), 1887 - 1895. *Relevance:* Mentioned in reports dated 1888-1893

## Records

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For more information and to access your records, follow the links below:

### Records held by other organisations

- [Victorian Government Wardship and/or Out of Home Care Records \(1864 - current\)](#)
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