

St Joseph's Girls' Home

1900 – 1979

Other Names:

- St Joseph's Lane Cove
- St Joseph's Gore Hill

Details

St Joseph's Girls Home was established in 'Gladstone House' at Lane Cove (Gore Hill) in 1900. The home was a replacement for St Joseph's Providence at The Rocks. It housed around 90 girls aged 5 to 15. By the 1970s the Home was divided into units for small group accommodation. St Joseph's Girls' Home closed in 1979.

In August 1900 the money received by the Congregation when the Government resumed the land on which The Providence stood was used as a deposit on a property on the Pacific Highway (then known as Lane Cove Road) at Gore Hill, in Sydney's north.

The first residents of the home were 37 girls from The Providence. As Sister Kathleen Burford has written, the new home provided significantly more playground area, including shady trees and picturesque scenery, than the girls from Dawes Point were used to.

St Joseph's Girls Home held approximately 90 girls, aged from 5 to 15. Committals varied, from short to long term, while some children had come from homes catering for younger children.

The Home provided a standard education, as well as training in sewing and knitting and the skills required by domestic servants, which was the intended role of girls in the home. Relatives and friends visited the girls once a month.

In September 1902 the Archdiocese of Sydney and the St Vincent de Paul Society hosted an 'Orphans' Fair' at Sydney Town Hall to raise funds for Lane Cove and Kincumber (the boys' home). Children from both homes participated.

In 1932 a new wing was built to replace older buildings. In 1951 a proper classroom building was also added.

In the 1970s the Home was divided into units for small group accommodation. By 1977 the residents were all teenagers who lived in groups of four or five in the units. At the end of 1979 the Home was closed. Any girls who still required accommodation after this time moved to Croydon, where a cottage had been purchased for them to live in.

In all, 3000 girls passed through Lane Cove. Some were returned to family and friends, others adopted (informally) or placed as domestic servants. In later years, girls were found better forms of employment.

St Joseph's Girls' Home was mentioned in the Lost Innocents Report (2001) as an institution involved in the migration of children to Australia.

Gallery



St Joseph's Girls Home Lane Cove

More info

Chronology

- St Joseph's Providence (1880 - 1901)
 - **St Joseph's Girls' Home (1900 – 1979)**

Related Entries

Run by

- [Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart \(1866 - current\)](#)

Related Events

- [Visit of John Moss \(1951\)](#)
John Moss inspected this home as part of his 1951 tour and report
- [Fact-Finding Mission on Child Migration \(1956\)](#)

Related Organisations

- [St Joseph's Home for Children, Croydon \(1925 - 1981\)](#)
Older girls were transferred from St Joseph's Home Croydon to St Joseph's Home Lane Cove

Resources

- Community Affairs References Committee, [Lost Innocents: Righting the record - Report on child migration](#), 30 August 2001
- [The Cry of the Children: Mr P McGarry Introduces a Deputation: The Chief Secretary's Sympathetic Words](#), Freeman's Journal, 25 November 1915
- Australian Catholic Social Welfare Commission and the Australian Conference of Leaders of Religious Institutes, [A piece of the story : national directory of records of Catholic organisations caring for children separated from families](#), November 1999

Records

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

Records

- [Admission Forms \(dates uncertain\), St Joseph's Girls' Home \(1880? - 1979?\)](#)
 - [Admission Registers, St Joseph's Girls' Home \(1880 - 1979\)](#)
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