

Ormond School

1980 – 1984

Other Names:

- Special School for Truants, Ormond Special School
- Ormond Special School
- Ormond School for Specific Purposes

Details

Ormond School in Westleigh was established by the Department of Youth and Community Services in February 1980. It used the buildings of the former Ormond Training School in Duffy Avenue, Westleigh (formerly part of Thornleigh). It was a co-educational institution with capacity for 60 boys and girls. Ormond School was a secure unit for young offenders, many of whom were committed by the court for failure to attend school or minor criminal offences. Some of the children and young people at Ormond School were 'Day Attenders' who went home at night, and some were 'Live-in Students' who went home on weekends. Ormond School closed in late 1984, and in 1985 the Ormond Regional Youth Centre was established in the same buildings.

The site in Westleigh (which was formerly in the suburb called Thornleigh) had been the Ormond School from 1946 until 1977. After the training school had closed in late 1977, the site continued to house a small number of state wards in the two former 'privilege cottages'. Ormond School was established by the Department as a coeducational training school in February 1980, not long after changes at Anglewood, which ceased functioning as a Special School for Truants.

Ormond was one of 8 'training schools' run by the Department of Youth and Community Services. The Department's annual report in 1980 described Ormond 'specialist approaches required for the problem of school truancy', including the appointment of a Resident Psychologist as a staff member (p.16, p.53).

The Principal of Ormond School, Mrs Margaret Wick (who had formerly worked at Taldree), developed a system to extend its educational program to 'voluntary attenders'. Some students requiring intensive remedial education were referred to Ormond School and, with parental permission, were Day Attenders (going home each night) or Live-in Students (going home on weekends). According to Boyle (1996), there was no difference in the way these children and the 'truants' were treated: 'considerable attention was given to making the school as close as possible to a normal school' (p.452).

Principal Wick also introduced a system that allowed children and young people committed to Ormond School to attend outside schools during the day and return to the institution each night. With good behaviour, some committed children were able to return home for weekends (Boyle, 452).

In the annual report for 1980-81, the Department stated that committals to its training schools was dropping – since 1971-72, the number of children and young people in training schools had decreased by 45%. The Department noted that 'there is mounting evidence of emotional or other behavioural disturbance in the boys and girls being committed to training schools'. In 1981, 1,124 males and 220 females were committed to training schools in New South Wales. (Of the girls and young women, only 40 were committed for statutory offences; the remainder were committed for non-statutory offences such as being 'uncontrollable' or 'exposed to moral danger' (p.26).

In 1984, the Department reported that the accommodation at Ormond had been improved, 'with the full renovation of two buildings enabling residents to be accommodated in single bedrooms' (p.82). That year, the New South Wales government announced a reorganisation of services to young offenders, with the aim of developing alternatives to institutions and 'assisting young offenders to function more adequately within the community' (p.30). The next year, the Department reported on its program of reform, towards a juvenile justice system in which incarceration is only one of the many options available to the Courts (Annual Report 1984-85, page i).

In late 1984, Ormond closed as a training school for truants, and reopened in February 1985 as the Ormond Regional Youth Centre, providing remand and committal programmes for up to 20 residents referred by the courts (Annual Report 1984-85, p.75).

More info

Chronology

- Ormond Training School (1962 - 1980)
 - **Ormond School (1980 – 1984)**
 - Ormond Regional Youth Centre (1985 - 1998)

Related Entries

Run by

- [Department of Youth and Community Services, State Government of New South Wales \(1976 - 1988\)](#)
Date: 1980 - 1984

Related Glossary Terms

- [School for Specific Purposes - New South Wales \(1923 - current\)](#)
- [In Moral Danger \(c. 1939 - c. 1980\)](#)

Related Organisations

- [Anglewood \(1943 - 1994\)](#)
Children from Anglewood were sent to Ormond School
Date: 1980 - 1984
- [Minda \(1966 - 1991\)](#)

Resources

- Quinn, Peter E, [Unenlightened efficiency: the administration of the juvenile correction system in New South Wales 1905-1988](#), 27 March 2006
- [Effie Ray interviewed by Joanna Penglase in the Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants oral history project \[sound recording\]](#), 28 November 2010 - 29 November 2010

Records

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

Records held by other organisations

- [Departmental Records relating to State Wards, New South Wales \(1918 - current\)](#)
- [Ormond Regional Youth Centre, Thornleigh: Institutional files \(\[I\] "B" files\) \(1979 - 1985\)](#)

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