

Brookway Park

1965 – 1978

Other Names: • Junior Boys Reformatory, Campbelltown

Details

Brookway Park opened as a government reformatory in Campbelltown in February 1965. It accommodated boys aged 9 to 15, initially transferred from the Boys' Reformatory, Magill. In 1965 it accommodated close to 60 boys. Extensions were added in 1966 and by 1970, 97 boys were accommodated. Brookway Park closed in 1978. Boys were transferred to Vaughan House, prior to its renaming as the South Australian Youth Remand and Assessment Centre.

Brookway Park was established as a government reformatory in Campbelltown in February 1965. It was built to segregate younger boys from older boys, who remained at the Boys' Reformatory, Magill. Initially the institution took in boys of school age from the Boys' Reformatory with the first group arriving in June 1965. However, school-aged boys were also committed directly to the Home as soon as they came into State care for committing offences. Other boys were moved from the Bedford Park Boys' Training Centre which had closed that same year. The majority of boys were aged between 9 and 15.

When it was first built, Brookway Park could accommodate 40 boys in a combination of dormitories and single rooms. However the institution had been planned with the potential to be extended to accommodate up to 20 more boys. Almost immediately, the Department stated in its Annual Report that there was 'considerable pressure on the accommodation'. During 1965-66, the institution was already housing up to 56 boys which meant that the extensions were 'urgently needed'. In late 1965 the superintendent resigned after complaining of overcrowding, not enough staff, and limited focus on the well-being of boys. He stated that these issues had led to older boys preying on younger boys. By 1966 the Director of Social Welfare wrote to the Minister expressing his concern about the 'general deterioration in the condition of the institution'.

At Brookway Park boys were primarily accommodated in dormitories based on how their progress in the institution was regarded by staff. Boys placed in an 'honour' group resided in dormitories furthest from the staff station.

The routine at Brookway Park was regimented with strict times for waking, dressing, eating, for organised schooling and activities and bedtime. During the night, staff woke boys who wet their beds twice, at 11pm and 3 am. During the day boys were taught by an Education Department teacher and receiving regular schooling as well as instruction in crafts. They attended religious services, held in a chapel which had been built as part of the new institution. Clergymen from different faiths also visited the chapel weekly to give lessons and services.

While not in classes, boys were under the supervision of staff of the Department of Social Welfare. Any punishments had to be authorised by the Superintendent of Brookway Park and all details were to be entered into a punishment book. In the mid-1960s, it was reported that caning was used minimally. The same report noted that the institution was required to keep files on each of the boys with medical, psychological and behavioural information. Any critical incidents involving the boys were also recorded in the files.

A log book was used to record the movements of boys in and out of the institution. Children were permitted to have visitors and these were controlled by a permit system. They also attended an annual summer camp which was held at a Departmental campsite, Woorabinda, at Stirling in the Adelaide Hills.

Overcrowding continued to be a problem at the institution throughout the late 1960s. By 1967 up to 63 boys were accommodated in the Home at one time. Extensions were finally begun that year but by 1968 the Department reported that 'numbers have increased so rapidly that even when extensions are completed overcrowding is still likely to occur'. By 1969-70 the maximum number of boys living at Brookway Park had risen to 97.

From 1971, new procedures were adopted at the institution which included a 'Programme Panel' which interviewed and set up a program of work for each boy and a Review Board which assessed each boy's situation monthly. Regular counselling and group discussion sessions were also introduced.

In 1975 when the Windana Remand Home closed, a residential assessment unit was also erected at Brookway Park.

Brookway Park closed on 1 September 1978 and boys were sent to Vaughan House, which although it had not yet been renamed the South Australian Youth Remand and Assessment Centre (SAYRAC), had already become a residential assessment centre for girls and boys, aged between ten and eighteen.

Brookway Park came under scrutiny during the 2004-2008 Children in State Care Commission of Inquiry. Thirteen men came forward to speak of abuse at the institution. Allegations crossed the entire period of the institution's existence.

Gallery



Brookway Park

Description: This is a copy of an image that was published in the Annual Report of the Children's Welfare and Public Relief Board 1965.



Brookway Park - craft room

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More info

Related Entries

Run by

- [Children's Welfare and Public Relief Board \(1927 - 1966\)](#)
Children's Welfare and Public Relief Department, and its successors, ran Brookway Park.
Date: 1965 - 1966
- [Department of Social Welfare, South Australian Government \(1966 - 1970\)](#)
Date: 1966 - 1970
- [Department of Social Welfare and Aboriginal Affairs, South Australian Government \(1970 - 1972\)](#)
Date: 1970 - 1972

- [Department for Community Welfare, South Australian Government \(1972 - 1990\)](#)

Date: 1972 - 1978

Related Organisations

- [Boys Reformatory, Magill \(1891 - 1967\)](#)

From 1965 school aged boys from the Boys' Reformatory, Magill, were sent to Brookway Park

Date: 1965 - 1967

- [Vaughan House \(1947 - 1979\)](#)

When Brookway Park closed in 1978 the boys were sent to Vaughan House shortly before it was renamed South Australian Youth Remand and Assessment Centre (SAYRAC)

- [Bedford Park Boys' Training Centre \(1961 - 1965\)](#)

When Bedford Park Boys' Training Centre closed in 1965 a number of boys were sent to Brookway Park.

- [Windana Remand Home \(1965 - 1975\)](#)

When the Windana Remand Home closed a residential assessment unit was erected at Brookway Park

- [McNally Training Centre \(1967 - 1979\)](#)

McNally Training Centre provided secure care for boys aged 15 to 18 sentenced by the Juvenile Court for committing offences. Younger boys were sent to Brookway Park.

- [Woorabinda Hostel \(and Campsite\) \(1968 - 1993\)](#)

Boys from Brookway Park attended annual camps at Woorabinda Hostel and Campsite

Date: 1965 - 1978

- [Gilles Plains Community Unit \(1979 - 1990\)](#)

Boys from Brookway Park considered by the Department to be ready to move back into the community were accommodated at the Gilles Plains Community Unit

- [Ningana Community Unit \(1979 - 1984?\)](#)

Ningana Community Unit operated on the site of the former Brookway Park

Resources

- [Dwelling, 'Lochiel Park'](#), SA Heritage Places Database, 2018

Records

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

Records held by other organisations

- [Records of the Social Welfare Department and predecessors \(1849 - c. 1987\)](#)
- [Records of the South Australia Youth Remand and Assessment Centre \(c. 1961 - c. 1999\)](#)
- [Correspondence files \('CW & PRD' and 'SW' files\) -Children's Welfare and Public Relief Department and successors \(1927 - c. 1979\)](#)

Held by State Records of SA. These records contain files of letters and other documents, some of which may relate to Brookway Park.

- [Annual Reports - Department for Families and Community Services and predecessor agencies \(1971 - 1997\)](#)

Held by State Records of SA. These reports contain regular summaries of developments at homes under the control of the Department.

You can view this page online by visiting <https://findconnect.efront.digital/entity/brookway-park-2/>