

Vaughan House

1947 – 1979

Details

Vaughan House was opened at Enfield in 1947 as a Government reformatory for girls who were state wards. It was formerly the Salvation Army run Barton Vale Girls' Home. Initially most girls were Protestant as Catholic girls were sent to the Convent of the Good Shepherd, The Pines. In 1960, 40-50 girls were in residence. A new building opened in 1965 with room for 72 girls. In 1979 Vaughan House was renamed the South Australian Youth Remand and Assessment Centre.

The Annual Report of the Children's Welfare and Public Relief Board for 1947 stated that 'the purchase of a Government institution for the training of [sic] delinquent girls in modern welfare methods is receiving the serious consideration of the board'. That same year the Salvation Army announced their intention to close the Barton Vale Girls' Reformatory at Enfield. The government acted quickly and purchased the property, renaming it Vaughan House after Dorothy Vaughan who had been a member of the board since 1916. Vaughan House was officially opened on 17 October 1947 as a Government reformatory for girls who were state wards.

The building was extensively renovated and extra furniture and equipment was provided. In its first year the institution was home to 13 girls, ranging in age from 14 to 20 years. The majority of girls were Protestant as most Catholic state wards were placed at the Convent of the Good Shepherd, The Pines. Local ministers visited the home to provide religious instruction. Some girls attended church outside of the home of Sunday evenings, chaperoned by church members.

At Vaughan House girls were taught housework, cooking, dressmaking, music appreciation, dance, physical education and handicrafts. By the 1960s education at the home was under the charge of an Education Department teacher. The regular school curriculum was taught as well as vocational training in commercial subjects, first aid, home nursing and mothercraft. Girls could also take up a postal and telegraph course. After a period of training selected 'trusted' girls left the home daily. Some carried out occasional domestic work at the Kumanka Boys Hostel in North Adelaide. 'Trusted' girls were also allowed occasional approved daytime outings. These privileges increased as they reached the end of their sentence. All girls received a weekly allowance from the Department and those who were considered to have behaved well and worked hard were rewarded with extra pocket money.

Due to overcrowding at Vaughan House in the mid 1950s Allambi Girls' Hostel at Norwood was temporarily used as an annexe of the reformatory. For approximately one year, from June 1956 to May 1957, selected girls, considered to be 'trust-worthy', were sent to Allambi. In November 1959 Allambi Girls' Hostel was once again used as temporary overflow accommodation with 11 girls from Vaughan House staying at the Hostel in Norwood for six months.

By 1960 the number of girls placed at Vaughan House had increased to between 40 and 50. Between 1961 and 1962 overcrowding became such an issue that temporary facilities were established at Bedford Park Boys' Training Centre to take some of the overflow of girls from Vaughan House. A number of temporary buildings were erected at Vaughan House allowing the institution to accommodate up to 50 girls, and construction of a new permanent building was begun.

The new building was constructed in two stages. Stage I was officially opened in June 1962 and provided dormitories and rooms for 47 girls. Stage II was completed and officially opened in February 1965. The new building could now accommodate 72 girls in 50 single rooms and four small dormitories. All of these were on the first floor of the building. The ground floor housed classrooms and recreation rooms a gymnasium, kitchen and dining rooms and a chapel.

In 1970 a Probation Officer was appointed to the home to help in assessing girls approaching their release date. After release, girls were visited regularly by departmental probation officers. In 1970 initial assessment was also introduced with the aim of better classifying each girl and setting up personalized training.

In 1972 lower numbers at Vaughan House, combined with pressure on the Windana Remand Home, led to the institution being remodelled to provide discrete sections for girls on remand and girls requiring secure accommodation and 'intensive treatment'. In June 1973, 11 girls from Windana were moved to the new remand and assessment units at Vaughan House, and Windana became a remand centre for boys only. An open hostel section was also introduced at Vaughan House for girls working in the community. In 1975 this hostel was transferred to a new location in North Adelaide and became known as the Elizabeth Grace Community Unit.

In 1979 Vaughan House was renamed the South Australian Youth Remand and Assessment Centre and it became a secure institution for girls and boys aged between 10 and 18. Two units at the centre catered for girls on remand or sent for training, while two further units catered for boys on remand. Other children under the care of the Department were also placed in the new Centre for assessment.

Vaughan House was one of the institutions that came under scrutiny for allegations of abuse during the Children in State Care Inquiry 2004-2008. The majority of the reported incidents at Vaughan House were from the 1960s and 1970s.

Gallery



Vaughan House Remand Home, Enfield

Description: The library description states: External view of Vaughan House Remand Home, prior to its closure. According to a researcher, these rooms were the back end of the house and you were able to talk to each other across the yard. Some of the rooms were occupied by children that were not allowed into the main stream areas but could talk to each other across the yard. The consequences for doing so were considered harsh at the time, by the inmates.



Vaughan House

Description: This is a copy of a photo from the archival series 'Photographs of Departmental Institutions', Volume 2, the original caption states: "Vaughan House" Girls' Training School, Enfield. Opened in 1947.



Vaughan House

Description: This is a copy of a photo from the archival series 'Photographs of Departmental Institutions', Volume 2, the original caption states: The building in 1953.



Vaughan House, Assembly room fireplace

Description: This is a copy of a photo from the archival series 'Photographs of Departmental Institutions', Volume 2, the original caption states: One of the fireplaces in the girls' assembly room.



Vaughan House, Basket weaving

Description: This is a copy of a photo from the archival series 'Photographs of Departmental Institutions', Volume 2, the original caption states: The art of basketry is one of the trades taught by instructors.



Vaughan House, Bedroom

Description: This is a copy of a photo from the archival series 'Photographs of Departmental Institutions', Volume 2, the original caption states: 'Individual wardrobes and lockers are provided for trusted girls who make their own bedspreads. 1947.'



Vaughan House, Dining room

Description: This is a copy of a photo from the archival series 'Photographs of Departmental Institutions', Volume 2, the original caption states: Portion of the dining room, showing table amenities. 1947.



Vaughan House, Handicrafts

Description: This is a copy of a photo from the archival series 'Photographs of Departmental Institutions', Volume 2, the original caption states: "'Vaughan House' Girls' Training School: Dressmaking, babies clothing, handicrafts, folk dancing, physical culture, cooking, hairdressing, organised games, etc, elp girls to readjust themselves.'



Vaughan House, Piano

Description: This is a copy of a photo from the archival series 'Photographs of Departmental Institutions', Volume 2, the original caption states: Musical appreciation is taught regularly to the girls.



Vaughan House, Weaving

Description: This is a copy of a photo from the archival series 'Photographs of Departmental Institutions', Volume 2, the original caption states: Weaving of various articles is one of the occupations taught to the girls.

More info

Chronology

- Barton Vale Girls' Home (1922 - 1947)
 - **Vaughan House (1947 – 1979)**
 - South Australian Youth Remand and Assessment Centre (1979 - 1993)

Related Entries

Run by

- [Children's Welfare and Public Relief Board \(1927 - 1966\)](#)
Date: 1947 - 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 - 1979

Related Organisations

- [Convent of the Good Shepherd "The Pines" \(1942 - 1974\)](#)
Vaughan House accommodated mostly Protestant girls as Catholic girls continued to be sent to the Convent of the Good Shepherd, The Pines
- [Kumanka Boys' Hostel \(1946 - 1980\)](#)
Some girls from Vaughan House carried out domestic work at Kumanka Boys Hostel
- [Allambi Girls' Hostel \(1947 - 1977\)](#)
Allambi Girls' Hostel was occasionally used as alternative accommodation for girls from Vaughan House.
Date: 1956 - 1959
- [Bedford Park Boys' Training Centre \(1961 - 1965\)](#)
Girls from Vaughan House were temporarily accommodated at Bedford Park Boys' Training Centre.
Date: 1961 - 1962
- [Brookway Park \(1965 - 1978\)](#)
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)
- [Windana Remand Home \(1965 - 1975\)](#)
In June 1973, 11 girls from Windana Remand Home were moved to the new remand and assessment units at Vaughan House
- [Elizabeth Grace Community Unit \(1975 - 1979\)](#)
The Elizabeth Grace Community Unit was an open hostel for girls from Vaughan House who were working in the community.

Related Concepts

- [Stolen Generations](#)

Resources

- [Interview with Grace Warlimont and Kathleen Grimmett by Beth M Robertson, Vaughan House](#), 12 February 1997

Records

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

Records held by other organisations

- [Records of the South Australia Youth Remand and Assessment Centre \(c. 1961 - c. 1999\)](#)
 - [Records of the Social Welfare Department and predecessors \(1849 - c. 1987\)](#)
 - [JD Somerville Oral History Collection \(1904 - current\)](#)
 - [Records of the Department for Community Welfare and Successor Agencies \(1972 - current\)](#)
 - [Records of Vaughan House \(c. 1955 - 1997\)](#)
 - [Lists of state wards, Social Welfare Department and Predecessors \(1960 - 1960\)](#)
 - [Photographs of Departmental institutions, Social Welfare Department and Predecessors \(1945 - 1970\)](#)
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You can view this page online by visiting <https://findconnect.efront.digital/entity/vaughan-house-3/>