

Out-of-home care records



TTM862607, Letter 2401/1917 - Children of London treated to Christmas Dinner at the Guildhall by the people of Queensland

Research Guide to out-of-home care records at
Queensland State Archives

Research Guide to out-of-home care records

Queensland State Archives (QSA) is the official repository for Queensland Government records selected for permanent retention because of their continuing value. The archived public records are from state government departments, state courts, local government authorities and statutory authorities. The records are in our facility at [Runcorn, Brisbane](#), and open records are available for viewing in the Reading Room, free-of-charge.

The term 'out-of-home care' refers to any type of residential care for children provided by organisations and institutions outside of a family setting, including foster and kinship care, and care provided in orphanages, missions, family group homes or children's homes.¹

The main finding aid for records held at QSA is the [Queensland State Archives' online catalogue](#) (known as ArchivesSearch).

The following citation abbreviations are used throughout our catalogue:

ITM	QSA Item (describes the item)
PR	Physical Representation (generally the original or microfilm copy)
DR	Digital Representation (for a digital image)
S	Series ID (for a series of records)
A	Agency ID (for the creating or responsible agency).

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised that our catalogue contains images, names and voices of people who have died.

Records

There are three main groups of out-of-home care records. These records are important in helping people piece together the stories of their childhood.

The records relate to:

- **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children**
Stolen Generations forcibly removed from their families and culture, in line with government policies.
- **Former Child Migrants**
Most children were already part of the child welfare system in Britain, and they were brought to Australia under formal Child Migration schemes, both before and after World War II.
- **Forgotten Australians or Care Leavers**
People who had also grown up in institutional or out-of-home care in Australia who were neither Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nor Child Migrants.

Contextual records include correspondence between the institution and governing authorities; meeting minutes; maps and plans of home buildings and grounds; governance and administrative records including policies, procedures, reports; staffing and employment records; records of chores and work done by children; and records describing special events such as camps or arrangements for Christmas and other holidays.

Many of the records which may be relevant are listed in our various [Research guides](#). Follow the web link provided to learn about series of records held at Queensland State Archives.

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Access

Every record at QSA is allocated an access category:

- **Open** – researchers may view open records without seeking permission from the responsible agency. All researchers are welcome to visit the Reading Room to request and view open records.
- **Restricted** – researchers may not view records while the restricted access period applies without written permission from the responsible agency. The restriction period may be 30 years or longer, and a 100 year restricted access periods may be applied for privacy reasons, and permission to access a restricted record is at the discretion of the responsible agency.

View our [Using ArchivesSearch](#) videos to learn how to search and request records to view in the Reading Room, and how to apply for permission to access records subject to a restricted access period.

In some instances, the Queensland Government agency responsible for the record may require that requests for access are made through their [Right To Information](#) processes.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

These records provide the opportunity to research family and community links, background to contemporary issues facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples including native title determination and other legal matters. For more details, please view our [Research Guide to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples](#).

Adoption and Permanent Care

Most of the records about births, deaths and adoption of children under the age of five years held at QSA controlled by over-riding legislation. These records are not accessed under the provisions of the *Public Records Act 2002*. Please contact the [Adoption and Permanent Care Services](#) in the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women to apply for information about the identity of the birth parent/s of an adopted person.

Adoption Files

1/9/1979–31/3/1995

[S1144](#)

Files may include the adoption order, the application to adopt, character references and medical reports on the prospective adoptive parents, correspondence between the department and the prospective parents, information on the child for adoption including the child's birth history and details about the birth parents.

Infant Life Protection Files

1/1/1907–31/12/1986

[S923](#)

These case files were created under the *Infant Life Protection Act 1905*. Files may include the Registrar General's notification at the time of birth, reports by the Police of the region where the child was born, details of children placed in a nursing home, notices of the death of an illegitimate child under the age of five years

Orphanages, Reformatory Schools and Industrial Schools

Many early records are accessible online through [our catalogue](#). Follow the hyperlinks below to search.

- [Diamantina Orphanage \(later Warilda\)](#)
- [Industrial and Reformatory School for Girls, Toowoomba](#)
- [Meteor Park Orphanage \(later St Joseph's Home, Neerkol\)](#)
- [Rockhampton Orphanage \(later Birralelee\)](#)
- [St. Joseph's Orphanage, Mackay](#)
- [St. Vincent's Orphanage, Nudgee](#)
- [Townsville Orphanage \(later Carramar\)](#)
- [Westbrook Youth Detention Centre](#)

For more details, please view our [Research guide to orphanage and children's home records](#).

School records

School pupil records

Admission registers.

These registers record annual enrolments of children, and may include admission date, name and age, date of birth, parents/guardians name and occupation, religious denomination, grades, date of leaving, date of return. Many digitised registers are in [our catalogue](#). View our [4 tips to find school admissions](#) video to learn more.

Corporal punishment registers

These registers were kept by the head teacher of each school and record all corporal punishment administered by the head teacher or an assistant (authorised by the Minister). The register contains: date, pupil/s punished, fault or incident requiring punishment, kind and extent of punishment.

Teacher Records

Some of the teachers' records held at Queensland State Archives are arranged chronologically, by school, and then alphabetically by teacher's name. A good starting point is to search teacher staff cards.

Teacher's Staff Cards (Resigned and "Current" Teachers)

1/1/1890 –31/12/1987

[S17557](#)

Staff cards record male and female teachers employed by the Department of Education and its predecessor agencies. Details may include teacher's full name and female's maiden name; employment number; marital status; date of birth; private address; date/s of admission, resignation and any transfer; classification of appointment/s; allowances paid; senior school, teacher education and tertiary qualifications. For more details, please view our [Research guide to school records](#).

Court records

Children's Courts

Records held at QSA were created by children's courts in jurisdictions including District Courts, Magistrates Courts, and regional Courts of Petty Sessions prior to 1964. These records are about serious offences alleged to have been committed by juveniles under 17 years, such as arson, burglary and stealing, entering premises with intent to commit an indictable offence and breaching probation orders or community service orders.

Magistrates Courts

Family Law Proceedings, Stanthorpe

Circa 01/01/1989–21/12/2008

[S21122](#)

This series includes family cases heard under the *Family Law Act 1975* about parenting orders and property.

Bench record and summons books – Magistrates Court, Home Hill

21/1/1965–17/2/1971

[S10594](#)

This series records cases heard in the Home Hill Magistrates Court. Offences dealt with include assault, arrears of maintenance and child desertion. Details include names of the complainant / defendant, type of offence, breach of duty or cause of action, plea entered, name of magistrate and conviction.

Supreme Court

Originating Summonses (Supreme Court Brisbane)

Circa 1/1/1901–31/12/2014

[S5753](#)

This series includes Originating Matters heard in Chambers rather than in Open Court. Matters include summons for maintenance, application for custody, summons to commence action and protection orders.

Maternal and Child Welfare

Maternal and Child Welfare Home, Sandgate

Home files

10/05/1943 – 02/12/1957

[S4044](#)

Documents filed include requests for care and letters of appreciation from mothers; correspondence relating to children's diphtheria tests (necessary before entry); complaints from parents and resulting memorandums on children's stays/returns to parents (including information on children's health and behaviour); correspondence re rations, facilities/inadequacies, appointment of staff; and Annual Reports, which detail home admissions,

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health/treatments, diseases/illnesses, statistics, habits/development of children, "returns" from the Home vegetable and flower gardens, etc.

Admission Cards

Circa 01/01/1976 – 31/12/1979

[S4045](#)

Details on each card include date of admission, child's name, age, date of birth, home address, previous illnesses, immunization details, parents' remarks, habits; name of parents and information on their health; information on siblings; reason for admission; and details of physical condition upon admission. Attached to some cards are additional papers including signed parental permission for admission.

Cases Files

28/10/1965 – 22/06/1983

[S4046](#)

This file contains information on investigations, complaints, etc, relating to admissions at the Sandgate Maternal & Child Welfare Home.

Correctional facilities

Sir Leslie Wilson Youth Centre

From 1983 to 1993, the Sir Leslie Wilson Youth Centre was the centre for assessment and treatment of children under 'care and control' or 'care and protection' orders and those remanded in custody.

Admission / Discharge Cards - Wilson Youth Hospital and Sir Leslie Wilson Youth Centre, Windsor

Circa 1/1/1942–31/12/1993

[S19637](#)

This series includes admission and discharge dates, child's name, address, date and place of birth, parent/guardian names, religion, school (last grade), work (last job), physical description and idiosyncrasies.

For additional sources of information other than records held at QSA, and for support services, please see details on the following page.

Reference

¹ *An outline of National Standards for Out-of-home Care: A Priority Project under the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009 – 2020*. Compiled by Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs together with the National Framework Implementation Working Group, 2011, available at https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/pac_national_standard.pdf, accessed 28 October 2021

Sources of information other than Queensland State Archives' records

Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety - Time in Care Information Access Service (TICIAS)

For eligible applicants, details in information sheet, [Time in Care Information Access Service \(TICIAS\)](#). Contact details include phone 1800 809 078 (freecall) and email rti@cyjma.qld.gov.au.

National Redress Scheme

The National Redress Scheme is in response to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. Applications may be made before 30 June 2027. Find out more at www.nationalredress.gov.au or call 1800 737 377, and view [Updates to the Scheme | National Redress Scheme](#).

Support for Forgotten Australians

This Queensland Government web page [Support for Forgotten Australians](#) provides a list of organisations and support services for people who grew up in orphanages, children's homes, institutions and foster homes.

Find and Connect Australia

This web resource was created by the national government for [Forgotten Australians](#), [Former Child Migrants](#) and anyone with an interest in the history of out-of-home care in Australia. Find out more at <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/> or call 1800 16 11 09.

Care Leavers Australasia Network (CLAN)

Care Leavers Australasia Network advocates and campaigns for justice and redress for all Care Leavers. Find out more at <https://clan.org.au/> or call 1800 008 774.

Alliance for Forgotten Australians (AFA)

The Alliance for Forgotten Australians is committed to recognition and healing for Forgotten Australians and encourages their active engagement in the development of policy and services. Find out more at <https://forgottenaustralians.org.au/> or call 0488 460 646.

Maximising Access To Care Leavers' Records

This guideline by the Council of Australasian Archives and Records Authorities shows records holders or archival institutions how to provide access to out-of-home care records, consistent with key principles identified in [Access to Records by Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants \(Best Practice Guidelines\)](#).

Need more information?

Check our online catalogue [ArchivesSearch](#).
Phone us on (07) 3037 6777 or you can [email](#) an archivist.