

# Holy Cross Home

1965 – 1973

**Other Names:** • Industrial School for Girls, Woolloowin

## Details

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Holy Cross Home, in Woolloowin, was operated by the Sisters of Mercy. The institution was renamed in 1966 – formerly it was known as the Industrial School for Girls, Woolloowin. Holy Cross Home discontinued accepting girls in care and control from 1 April 1973. State Government funding ceased in 1974.

Holy Cross Home was located on the same site as the [Holy Cross Retreat](#), a maternity home also run by the Sisters of Mercy.

The Holy Cross Home was licensed under the *Children's Services Act 1965* on 4 August 1966.

A publication from 1976 stated that Holy Cross Home ceased accommodating girls in 1973 (previously it had accommodated girls, single mothers as well as women with intellectual disabilities).

“In recent years, girls as young as 12 years of age were being admitted. By law these girls were required to have a formal education. The lack of educational facilities to take care of their needs was another factor which resulted in a decision to phase out this group from 1 April 1973. From 1 June 1972 until 1 April 1973, there had been 83 girls in care and control who had been assisted by the Home’ (Ann Amen, 1976, p.9).

According to the 1999 report of the Commission of Inquiry into Abuse of Children in Queensland Institutions, Holy Cross Home was one of 3 denominational (ie non-government) institutions for the reception of ‘delinquent girls’ in the 1960s and 1970s.

Reflecting on these institutions, the report concluded:

*For much of their histories, the denominational training schools were large, impersonal institutions where the labour demanded of the girls was both arduous and monotonous, and not likely to significantly enhance their future employment prospects, and where solitary confinement was used to discipline recalcitrant inmates. The emphasis was on punishment, with little or no effort made to assist in the rehabilitation of the girls. However, these were institutions that received little government funding, which made it virtually impossible to implement a more individually focused treatment program or to employ staff more attuned to the problems and sensitivities of the girls. These institutions were components of a wider system that survived on a limited budget, and had done so for many years, and they quickly became redundant as essential improvements were made to that system in the 1970s. It is not surprising that many of the residents believed they were damaged by their experiences at these institutions (pp.148-149).*

## Gallery



### Holy Cross entry/despatch section of laundry building

**Description:** This image is from page 144 of the Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Child Abuse in Queensland institutions and the image is an Inquiry photograph. The Holy Cross laundry was located on the same site as the Holy Cross Home and Holy Cross Retreat.



### Holy Cross at Woolloowin, operated by the Brisbane Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy

**Description:** This image is from page 141 of the Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Child Abuse in Queensland institutions and the image is an Inquiry photograph.

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## More info

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### Chronology

- Industrial School for Girls, Woolloowin (1904 - c. 1966)
  - **Holy Cross Home (1965 – 1973)**

### Related Entries

#### Run by

- [Sisters of Mercy, Brisbane Congregation \(1861 - current\)](#)

#### Related Events

- [Commission of Inquiry into Abuse of Children in Queensland Institutions \(1998 - 1999\)](#)  
Holy Cross Home was an institution mentioned by a number of witnesses to the Commission of Inquiry into Abuse of Children in Queensland Institutions.
- [Inquiry into Children in Institutional Care, Parliament of Australia \(2003 - 2005\)](#)  
Holy Cross Home was mentioned in Submissions 120, 229, and 500 to the Inquiry into Children in Institutional Care

#### Related Legislation

- [State Children Act 1911, Queensland \(1911 - 1966\)](#)

#### Related Organisations

- [Holy Cross Retreat \(13 October 1889 - 1978\)](#)  
The Holy Cross Home was located on the same site as the Holy Cross Retreat.

### Resources

- Queensland. Dept of Children's Services, [Centenary of care for children 1879-1979](#), 1979
- Social Work Staff, Faculty of Education, University of Queensland, [Directory of Social Services Queensland](#), 1958
- [Institutions](#), Forced Adoptions History Project, 2014

## Records

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

# Records

- [Records and Archives, Children's Institutions, Sisters of Mercy Brisbane \(c. 1900 - c. 1995\)](#)
  - [Adoption Records](#)
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