

Churinga Special Residential School

1967 – 1990

Details

The Churinga Special Residential School, located in Greensborough, was established by the St John of God Brothers in 1967. It housed 60 Catholic and Protestant boys (aged 7 to 16) and, in later years, some girls. It was an institution for children deemed to have an intellectual or developmental disability. From 1987, Churinga was registered as a Special School and ran a day-program. Churinga closed in 1990.

Churinga was purpose designed and built to provide a range of residential care, training and treatment programs for boys with intellectual disabilities. According to the guide, *A piece of the story* Churinga provided residential care to boys (aged 7 to 16) with a developmental disability.

There was capacity to accommodate 60 residents. Catholic and Protestant boys were accepted. A focus on the boy's family was a key aspect of the program. Some girls were admitted as residents in the latter years of the service. A small day-centre program was also conducted until 1987 when Churinga became a registered Special School.

According to an article on the Broken Rites website, there were initially five Brothers working at Churinga.

The same article also makes the point that:

Many SJOG inmates, especially wards of state, had behavioural or learning difficulties and were not necessarily born with an intellectual disability, although they certainly became educationally disadvantaged through their incarceration at St John of God.

Gallery



Brother Matthew O'Donnell

Description: Summary: Whole-length, to right, wearing white lab coat standing in front of Churinga with papers in his hands.

More info

Related Entries

Run by

- [St John of God Brothers \(1947 - current\)](#)
Churinga catered for boys with severe intellectual disabilities.
Date: 1967 - 1990

Related Organisations

- [St John of God Training Centre \(1953 - 1967\)](#)
In 1966 the Cheltenham site was sold to Myer and associated interests, as the Brothers prepared to re-establish the home at Greensborough. The new home was called Churinga and catered for boys with severe intellectual disabilities.
- [Marian Lodge Training Centre \(1953 - 1967\)](#)
Churinga catered for boys with severe intellectual disabilities.

Resources

- Public Record Office Victoria, [Finding Your Story: a resource manual to the records of the Stolen Generations](#), 2005
 - Name withheld, [Submission no 130 to the Senate Inquiry into Children in Institutional Care](#), 2005
 - Ewing, Tania, [Claims of sexual abuse by intellectually disabled](#), The Age, 23 May 1998
 - Callinan, Rory, [At 11, given cans of beer, cigarettes, then abused](#), The Age, 9 November 2012
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