

# Ormond House

1884 – 1923

**Other Names:**

- Central Depot for State Children
- Girls' Shelter
- Juniper Hall
- Ormonde House
- Metropolitan Girls Shelter
- Central Home
- Metropolitan Children's Shelter

## Details

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Ormond House, in Oxford Street Paddington, was used by the State Children's Relief Board from 1884 until 1923. It was the Central Home or Central Depot, and was a receiving home and shelter for children of all ages. It took girls from [Shaftesbury Reformatory](#) in 1904 and [Hillside Home for Mothers and Babies](#) moved there in 1915, becoming [Hillside Training Home](#) in 1919. The Children's Court and Metropolitan Children's Shelter was at Ormond House from 1905 until 1911, during which time 2,400 children passed through the house every year. It was designated the Metropolitan Girls' Shelter from 1911 until 1923. In 1923 the State Children's Relief Board changed its name to the Child Welfare Department and moved its operations to other properties.

Ormond House, the oldest surviving mansion in Sydney, was a significant building in the history of the State Children's Relief Board and many children who were state wards or moving through the court system passed through its doors from 1884 until 1923. Effectively, it was a transit point for children who were moving from one place to another, but some children, particularly older girls, spent years there. Ormond House dates from 1823-1826 and is the oldest building in Paddington and the oldest surviving mansion in New South Wales. It was built by Robert Cooper as Juniper Hall, but renamed in the 1840s as Ormond House.

Ormond was first established as a depot in 1884 and was called Central Home. Children were taken there when they were removed from the Roman Catholic and Protestant Orphanages, the [Benevolent Asylum](#) or the [Randwick Asylum for Destitute Children](#). From Ormond House they were issued with a set of clothing and boarded out (placed with foster guardians). Children being returned from boarding out placements were sent back to Ormond House, and some older girls lived there semi-permanently, caring for smaller children and sewing their clothes. From 1890 Ormond House was commonly called the Central Depot but it was also a children's home. In 1904 the girls from [Shaftesbury Reformatory](#) were moved to Ormond House, and Ormond House seems to have been used as a place to send female state wards who were difficult to manage.

In 1905 the *Neglected Children and Juvenile Offenders Act* created the Children's Court and, while the State Children's Relief Board waited for a new Children's Court to be built at Albion Street the court hearings took place at Ormond House. The house served as a shelter and receiving home for children who were waiting for court hearings or for transfer to boarding out or an institution until 1911, when the boys were moved to the [Metropolitan Boys' Shelter](#) at the Albion Street Children's Court. Ormond House was then designated the Metropolitan Girls' Shelter.

The 1908 State Children's Relief Board Annual Report states that 2,395 children passed through Ormond House in that year. Of these, 1,435 were wards of the State Children's Relief Board and 960 were children dealt with by

the Children's Court. The figures the previous year had been similar.

Ormond House remained the Central Depot and served as the Metropolitan Girls' Shelter until 1923. In that year the State Children's Relief Board was replaced by the Child Welfare Department and the girls were moved to [Bidura](#) in Glebe. The Child Welfare Department relinquished Ormond in the same year.

## Gallery

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**"Ormond House," Paddington, which includes girls' shelter**

**Description:** This is a copy of an image that appeared in the State Children Relief Board Report for year ended 5 April, 1912. It shows the outside of Ormond House.

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**Juniper Hall**

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**Ormond House, Paddington**

**Description:** This is a picture of Ormond House in Paddington, the first location of the Asylum for Destitute Children. This image is a copy taken from John Ramsland's *Children of the back lanes: destitute and neglected children in colonial New South Wales*.

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## More info

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### Related Entries

#### Run by

- [State Children's Relief Board \(1881 - 1923\)](#)

#### Related Organisations

- [State Children's Relief Department \(1881 - 1923\)](#)  
The State Children's Relief Department conducted many of its operations from Ormond House.  
Date: 1884 - 1923
- [Bidura \(1920 - 1977\)](#)  
The Metropolitan Girls' Shelter moved from Ormond House to Bidura in 1923.  
Date: 1923 -
- [Metropolitan Children's Court \(1911 - 1983\)](#)  
The Children's Court moved from Ormond House to the Metropolitan Children's Court building in Albion Street Surry Hills in 1911.  
Date: 1911 -
- [Children's Court of New South Wales \(October 1905 - current\)](#)  
The first Children's Court in New South Wales was opened in Ormond House in 1905 and the property performed this role until 1912.  
Date: 1905 - 1912
- [Shaftesbury Reformatory School \(1880 - 1904\)](#)  
In 1904 girls from Shaftesbury Reformatory School were moved to Ormond House.

Date: 1904 -

- [Hillside Home for Mothers and Babies \(1913 - 1919\)](#)

Hillside Home for Mothers and Babies was located at Ormond House from 1915 until 1919

Date: 1915 - 1919

- [Hillside Training Home for Girls \(1919 - 1923?\)](#)

Hillside Training Home for Girls was located within Ormond House.

Date: 1920 - 1923

## Resources

- State Records Authority of New South Wales, [Bidura](#), No date
- [Fifth Sectional Report Covering the Administration of the Acts relating to State Children](#), Royal Commission to Inquire into the Public Service of New South Wales, August 1920

## Records

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

### Records

- [Departmental Records relating to State Wards, New South Wales \(1918 - current\)](#)
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You can view this page online by visiting <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/entity/ormond-house/>