

# Farr House

1935 – 1982

**Other Names:**

- The Orphan Home, Adelaide
- Mitcham Girls' Home

## Details

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Farr House was the new name given to The Orphan Home in 1935. It was situated on Fullarton Road, Upper Mitcham and operated as a Home for girls of primary school age. In later years it also accepted teenage girls. Farr House was run by an independent management committee that reported to the Anglican Diocese of Adelaide until 1978, when Anglican Child Care Services took over. The Home closed in 1982.

Farr House was the new name given to the Orphan Home at Mitcham in 1935. The name change came about when the home was incorporated and recognised the work of Mrs Julia Farr who had played an integral part in the establishment and continuation of the Home.

Like the Orphan Home, Farr House took in girls of primary school age. In 1938 the policy was to provide accommodation for girls between the ages of six and twelve. Younger and older girls were placed at St Mary's Mission of Hope. As with the Orphan Home, girls attended daily and weekly worship and were trained in the domestic arts as most were expected to enter service when they left school.

In later years residents attended the local parish school, St Michaels, as well as nearby state schools. In 1938 of the 26 girls in the Home, 12 attended St Michaels, 12 Highgate School and two attended Unley High School.

By the 1950s teenage girls were also accepted at Farr House and encouraged to take up further education, especially in nursing. In 1950 a newspaper report noted that an aftercare committee 'keeps in touch with the girls who leave the home each year, helping them to adjust themselves to their new environment'.

In 1974, when the government established the Residential Child Care Advisory Committee to oversee non-government homes for children, the Farr House management committee signed an agreement with the government. This led to the provision of government funding to employ a social worker in 1976.

Anglican Child Care Services was established in 1978 and from that year oversaw the management of Farr House.

In 2007 during the Children in State Care Inquiry, a former departmental officer described Farr House as it was when he visited in the 1970s. He referred to the Home as 'a closed environment' with an 'old-fashioned attitude' towards caring for 'the needy'.

Changes in social attitudes towards residential child care during the 1970s, however, led to a decline in the number of girls placed in Farr House. By 1980 twenty girls, aged between eight and 18, lived at the Home. A report published in 1980 noted that Farr House gave preference to:

*Girls who need residential care because parents and relatives are unable to cope, and the child is unsuitable for fostering. Farr House is set up to function as closely as possible to a small family unit, in order to provide care, consistency and individual attention.*

In 1980 a new body known as Anglican Child Care Services (ACCS) took over the management of the Home from the in-house committee. This body noted that although Farr House 'was available to all children between the ages of eight and 18', it still catered primarily for adolescent girls. Although the Home preferred not to take in children with disabilities, it would accommodate children with behavioural problems.

During the early 1980s, the Anglican Church, like many other welfare providers, began to move away from congregate institutional care. In 1981 it redeveloped Farr House to provide smaller group care. In March 1982 the superintendent and his wife resigned from their positions because they felt that they 'were out of sympathy with the new attitudes towards child care being developed by the ACCS Committee'.

Shortly after their resignation, Farr House closed. The girls who were still resident in the Home were transferred to other forms of care.

## Gallery



### Orphan Home, Mitcham

**Description:** The library description states: The gate of the picket front fence stands open showing a man and woman standing at the entrance of this twin gabled house with a group of girls. This photograph was possibly taken during the 69th annual meeting of the Orphan Home in August 1928.

## More info

### Chronology

- The Orphan Home (1860 - 1935)
  - **Farr House (1935 – 1982)**

### Related Entries

#### Run by

- [Anglican Child Care Services \(1978 - 1988\)](#)  
Date: 1978 - 1982

#### Related Events

- [Children in State Care Commission of Inquiry, South Australia \(2004 - 2008\)](#)
- [Interstate movement of Northern Territory children \(1930s - 1970s\)](#)

#### Related Organisations

- [St Mary's Mission of Hope \(1904 - 1953\)](#)  
During the 1930s the home operated in cooperation with The Orphan Home at Mitcham, also known as Farr House. It took charge of toddlers and teenagers while the Orphan Home took mostly children of school age.
- [Anglican Diocese of Adelaide \(1847 - current\)](#)

# Records

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

## Records

- [Farr House Records \(1906 - 1983\)](#)
  - [The Orphan Home Inc. \(Adelaide, S. Aust.\) \(1860 - 1981\)](#)
  - [Records related to Church of England Social Welfare Bureau \(1947 - 1991\)](#)
  - [Admission Forms, Orphan Home/Farr House \(1918 - 1938\)](#)
  - [Admission Register, Farr House \(1934 - 1944\)](#)
  - [Minutes of Management Committee, Farr House \(1880 - 1966\)](#)
  - [Matron's Reports, Farr House \(1914 - 1980\)](#)
  - [Annual reports of the Orphan Home, Farr House \(1899 - 1979\)](#)
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