

Redhill Reformatory School

1903 – 1922

Other Names:

- Redhill Mental School
- Redhill Senior Industrial School for Church of England Boys
- Redhill Home for Mentally Defective Boys
- Red Hill Industrial School
- Redhill Institution

Details

Redhill was established by the Anglican Church (Perth Diocese) in 1903 as a 'senior reformatory school' and 'home for neglected boys', beginning with six boys sent by a magistrate. In 1921 Redhill became a home for boys and youth up to 18 years with intellectual development disorders (described at the time as 'mentally defective'). Redhill closed in 1922 and the untenanted building was destroyed by bushfire in 1937.

Redhill Reformatory was established in 1903 as an industrial school and 'home for neglected boys' in the Middle Swan area, on 57 hectares of land held by the Anglican Church which was used as a 'model farm'. By 1920, Redhill was described as being for 'senior' boys, but younger boys may have been sent there in earlier years. Senior boy in this era possibly meant 12 years or older.

On 31 January 1921 Redhill ceased to be a reformatory, but stayed open as a home for children and young people with learning disabilities, (described at the time as 'mentally defective'). The Minutes of the Anglican Orphanage Committee in 1921 (p.555) describe Redhill's change of function from a reformatory:

The place had been closed as an Industrial School on the 31st January. At the request of the government and by arrangement with the Archbishop, it was re-opened temporarily as a special school for mentally defectives, for 3 months when the Government would decide whether they would take it over.

It is possible that there was a policy to send boys under the age of 14 years to Redhill, but in practice it is likely that boys were kept at Redhill until their wardship expired at age 18.

Reports show that Redhill had 17 boys in residence at year end in 1910; 12 boys in 1911; 12 boys in 1920; 18 boys in 1921; and thirteen boys in 1922. These thirteen boys were sent to the Salvation Army's Seaforth Home when Redhill closed in early 1922.

Gallery



Redhill reformatory

Description: 'Redhill reformatory' is a copy of an image printed in *The Noisy Mansions; the story of Swanleigh*. In the book, the image has the caption, 'Redhill Reformatory. (Founded 1903). Three men in the foreground are - L. to R. Frank Mathews (teacher), Rev. Armstrong (manager), Mr R.S. Spice (superintendent). On verandah with the boys are Mrs. Spice and Miss Parker.'



Redhill Industrial School Midland Junction, 1906

Description: 'Redhill Industrial School Midland Junction, 1906' is an image included (after p.22) in the *Report by the Superintendent of Public Charities and Inspector of Industrial and Reformatory Schools* for the year ending 31 December 1906. This image shows a group of 15 boys, five adults and a baby with the top verandah and roof of the Industrial School visible in the background. The boys, who are mostly barefoot, are holding various garden tools, including axes, spades, and rakes.

More info

Related Entries

Run by

- [Orphanages' Committee \(1889 - 1939\)](#)

Related Organisations

- [Seaforth Salvation Army Boys' Homes, Gosnells \(1920 - 1955\)](#)

When Redhill Reformatory School closed, the boys were transferred to Seaforth Salvation Army Boys' Homes, Gosnells.

Date: 1922 -

Related Legislation

- [State Children Act 1907, Western Australia \(1907 - 1948\)](#)

Redhill Reformatory School was classed as a reformatory school within the meaning of the *State Children Act 1907*.

Resources

- *Annual report of the State Children Department, 1908 - 1927. Relevance: 1922, p.3*
- Hetherington, Penelope, [Reformatories](#), Historical Encyclopedia of Western Australia, 2009

Records

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

Records held by other organisations

- [Anglican Diocese of Perth, Western Australia, Records \(1880s - 2010\)](#)
- [Files - Child Welfare, State Records Office of Western Australia \(1 January 1917 - 16 June 1972\)](#)