

# Catholic Child Welfare Council, United Kingdom

1929 – 2003

## Details

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The Catholic Child Welfare Council was founded in 1929 in Britain. When it appeared before the British Parliament's Inquiry into the Welfare of Former British Child Migrants it was the peak agency for Catholic welfare agencies. In 1994, the CCWC created a Child Migrant Sub-Committee to collate the records and develop a database of children sent as child migrants to Australia and other countries. The Chairman (Canon Fisher) and General Secretary of the CCWC visited Australia in March 1995 to investigate records and post-care services. That visit stimulated the development of mechanisms for information-sharing between Australian and British Catholic 'receiving' and 'sending' agencies to help with family tracing and reunion. In 2003, the CCWC merged with other agencies to form the Caritas Social Action Network.

On 2 February 1939, the Catholic Council for British Overseas Settlement (CCBOS) had been established to take over from the Catholic Emigration Society and the Catholic Emigration Association (which had been founded in 1903 to administer Catholic child migration to Canada). Essentially, these organisations grew out of a 'rescue' type of mission which sought to take children from poverty in Britain to give them a brighter future in the colonies and populate the empire with 'good British stock'. In the 1930s, Catholic authorities became aware that some Catholic children had been sent to Australia via the Salvation Army and Fairbridge schemes and this motivated them to move on earlier ideas to establish a scheme of their own. A children's sub-committee of CCBOS was formed to liaise with the religious congregations and Catholic Child Rescue Societies who ran Children's Homes and oversee emigration to Australia, with an emphasis on Western Australia.

CCBOS seems to have been short-lived because the responsibility for organizing post-war Catholic emigration was taken up by the Catholic Child Welfare Council (CCWC). The degree of 'control' exercised by the CCWC over the migration practices is unclear. A document given in evidence to the Inquiry into the Welfare of Former British Child Migrants cites the following example:

*Throughout the migration of children to Australia it appears that representatives of the Catholic Hierarchy in Australia were by-passing CCWC and going directly to the children's homes run by religious orders in the UK to recruit children for migration to Australia. Such was the case in November 1953 when Canon Flint discovered from Australia House that 114 children from England and Wales had gone to Australia without the knowledge of CCWC. The complaints from CCWC were finally addressed in 1954. Mgr Crennan, Secretary to the Australian Federal Catholic Immigration Committee, agreed with Bishop Craven, auxiliary Bishop in Westminster Diocese, that all correspondence of whatever nature was to be directed to his Federal Office to avoid confusion.*

Apart from two children sent in 1963 to Perth 'at the request of their parents' all Catholic child migration to Western Australia had ended by December 1956.

The Catholic Child Welfare Council was one of the organisations looked at during the Child Migration Programme Investigation of the UK's Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse. The Inquiry found that the CCWC did not

# More info

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## Related Entries

### Related Events

- [Inquiry Into Child Migration, Parliament of Australia \(2000 - 2001\)](#)
- [Inquiry into the Welfare of Former British Child Migrants, House of Commons Health Committee, Parliament of the United Kingdom \(July 1997 - 23 July 1998\)](#)

The Catholic Child Welfare Council gave evidence at the Inquiry into the Welfare of Former British Child Migrants.

Date: 1998 -

### Related Organisations

- [Castledare \(1934 - 1983\)](#)  
The Catholic Child Welfare Council was a British peak group for agencies that sent boys as child migrants from Britain to Castledare.
- [Clontarf \(8 September 1901 - 1983\)](#)
- [Nazareth House, Geraldton \(1941 - 1979?\)](#)  
The Catholic Child Welfare Council was involved in sending unaccompanied child migrants to Nazareth House from Britain.  
Date: 1947 - 1957
- [Bindoon \(1936 - 1966\)](#)  
Date: 1947 - 1957
- [St Joseph's Girls' Orphanage \(1901 - 1971\)](#)
- [St Vincent's Foundling Home \(1914 - 1971\)](#)  
The Catholic Child Welfare Council was involved in sending unaccompanied child migrants to St Vincent's Foundling Home from Britain.  
Date: 1947 - 1957
- [Tardun Farm School \(1928 - 2008\)](#)
- [Family Care Society \(1989 - current\)](#)
- [Father Hudson's Society, United Kingdom \(1902 - current\)](#)

## Resources

- Community Affairs References Committee, [Lost Innocents: Righting the record - Report on child migration](#), 30 August 2001
- Senate Community Affairs References Committee Secretariat, Parliament of Australia, [Lost Innocents and Forgotten Australians Revisited: Report on the progress with the implementation of the recommendations of the Lost Innocents and Forgotten Australians Reports](#), 2009
- Independent Inquiry Child Sexual Abuse, [Child Migration Programmes Investigation Report](#), March 2018
- Coldrey, Barry M., *The Scheme: the Christian Brothers and Childcare in Western Australia*, 1993
- [Cosgrove, Oliver Manuscript Note](#), State Library of Western Australia website, 1998
- Health Committee, House of Commons, [Health - Third Report](#), 23 July 1998. *Relevance:* The Catholic Child Welfare Council made a submission to the Select Committee on Health Third Report
- Family Care Society, [Memorandum by the Family Care Society](#), Minutes of Evidence Taken Before the Health Committee on 11 June 1998, 11 June 1998
- Caritas Social Action Network, [Caritas Social Action Network \(CSAN\) website](#), 2012

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