

# Castledare Special School

1929 – 1934

## Details

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Castledare Special School was established in 1929 in Queen's Park (later, Wilson) by the Christian Brothers. Its purpose was to provide a specialised institution for up to 30 boys (including non-Catholics) with intellectual disabilities. Admissions were low so the special school was closed at the start of 1934. Later in 1934, a mainstream residential Catholic primary school was opened. The school was called various names, including Castledare.

Castledare Special School was established in 1929 in Queen's Park (later, Wilson) by the Christian Brothers, with financial backing from the Catholic Archdiocese of Perth. Its purpose was to provide a specialised institution for up to 30 boys (including non-Catholics) with intellectual disabilities. It opened in March 1929. Admissions were from referrals by the State Psychologist. This function ceased by 1934 and most of the boys resident at the special school were transferred to Clontarf.

Coldrey (*The Scheme* 1993, p.56) writes that Castledare was a pre-existing building that had been vacant for some time prior to its purchase by the church around 1927. According to Coldrey's research (p.423), Castledare had been occupied since 1895 as a farming property.

When Castledare was originally established (as Castledare Special School), it was designed to accommodate up to 30 boys. Coldrey says (pp.56-57) that Castledare Special School began with 10 boys in residence and its first Director, Br Hyland, was a qualified, registered teacher from Britain. Hyland 'spent several weeks studying and observing the work done' at the Glenfield Park School in Sydney (a 'special residential school' for children with intellectual disabilities) prior to taking up his role at Castledare.

Annual reports of the Child Welfare Department (CWD) show admissions were always lower than capacity: 19 boys (1929); 20 boys (1930); 13 boys (1931, 1932).

The 'Castledare Home for Backward Boys' as it was called in the CWD annual report in 1934 (p.4) was closed at the beginning of 1934. Seven boys were transferred to a 'special section' of Clontarf, three were put out to service and three boys remained at Castledare, which became a 'preparatory school' for primary school age boys.

The reason Castledare closed its backward section was because there were not a sufficient number of admissions to justify keeping it open. According to the annual report of the Child Welfare Department in 1934 (p.5), the few boys who had been transferred from Clontarf to Castledare as 'backward' seemed to be suffering not so much from an intellectual disability, but from physical malnourishment or illness.

## Gallery



## Castledare, January 1985

**Description:** This is a photo of the main building at Castledare, taken in January 1985. It shows the front of a decorative single-storey building with a central turret with windows on all sides. There is a crest or decoration above the front door featuring what appear to be thistles sitting in a vase. The name 'Niana' is painted on the window above the door. This photo is one of a group of seven photos taken at Castledare by the photographer, Betty Smith, and held by State Library of Western Australia. The other photos show the chapel, a house, and shrines/statues within the grounds of Castledare.

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## More info

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### Chronology

- **Castledare Special School (1929 – 1934)**
  - Castledare (1934 - 1983)

### Related Entries

#### Run by

- [Australasian Province of the Christian Brothers \(1885 - 1953\)](#)

#### Related Organisations

- [Clontarf \(8 September 1901 - 1983\)](#)

When Castledare Special School closed, seven of the resident boys were placed in Clontarf.  
Date: 1934 -

### Resources

- Australian Catholic Social Welfare Commission and the Australian Conference of Leaders of Religious Institutes, *A piece of the story : national directory of records of Catholic organisations caring for children separated from families*, November 1999

## Records

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

### Records

- [Records of Christian Brothers Children's Institutions in Western Australia \(1888 - 1983\)](#)
  - [Files - Child Welfare, State Records Office of Western Australia \(1 January 1917 - 16 June 1972\)](#)
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