

HIGHGATE PRIMARY SCHOOL, PERTH



| PLACE INFORMATION | |
|-------------------|------------------------------|
| Place name | Highgate Primary School |
| Other names | |
| Place type | Individual building or group |

| HERITAGE LISTING | |
|--------------------------|---|
| inHerit ID: | 2180 |
| State Heritage Register: | 20 April 2004 |
| Other Listing: | Municipal Inventory Adopted 13 Nov 1995 |

| SITE LOCATION | |
|----------------|----------------------|
| Street address | 147 Lincoln St |
| Locality | Perth |
| Survey | LOT: 138 D/P: PERTH7 |
| Vol/folio | |
| Reserve | RES: 3269 |

| SIGNIFICANCE | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Level of significance | <p>Exceptional</p> <p>Essential to the heritage of the area. Rare or outstanding example. Consider for nomination for State Register of Heritage Places if not already included.</p> |
| Management category | <p>Category 1</p> <p>The place should be retained and conserved. Any alterations or extensions should reinforce the significance of the place and be in accordance with a Conservation Plan if one is in place.</p> |
| Statement of significance | <p>The place is a rare example of a group of school facilities predominantly in Federation styles dating from the 1890s, and the former Teacher's Quarters is one of the few remaining in the metropolitan area.</p> <p>The individual components of the place collectively form a handsome, efficient, adaptable and integrated cultural environment of a large predominantly Federation period public school, despite being developed incrementally.</p> <p>The place demonstrates, through its incremental additions and consistently large school population, the rapid development of the Highgate area in the first half of the twentieth century</p> <p>The development of facilities at the place, and changes in the nature of usage of those facilities, demonstrates the evolution of public school education from 1895 to the 1930s.</p> <p>The place has social significance for past and present students, staff and community, connected to the school through its continual use as an educational facility from 1892 to 2003, its distinctive appearance, and as a large, longstanding, educational facility, in the local area.</p> |

| PLACE USE | |
|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| Original use | Educational: Primary School |
| Current use | Educational: Primary School |
| Other use | Educational: Housing or Quarters |

| CONSTRUCTION DETAILS | |
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| Construction date | 1897; 1906; 1956; 1968 |
| Walls | Brick |
| Roof | Corrugated metal sheeting |
| Architectural Style | Federation Queen Anne Federation Arts and Crafts |
| Physical description | The single storey Primary School comprises the original Highgate Senior School facing Lincoln Street and the Infants School on Bulwer Street. |
| | They were built to standard evolving patterns for Government schools of the time. |
| | The Senior School has classrooms arranged in wings around an internal assembly space with a lantern roof. The building has high hipped roofs with gabled projections. The red face brick walls, set on limestone footings, are embellished with bands of stucco. The tall windows are multi-paned and on the southern façade are capped in decorative gables. The brick chimneys have corbelled stucco trim. |
| | The Infants School has classrooms arranged around an internal assembly space with highlight windows. The building has hipped and gabled roofs. The red face brick walls, set partly on limestone footings, are embellished with bands of stucco. |

| CONSTRUCTION DETAILS | |
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| Physical description | The former Staff Quarters was a modest residence arranged around a central passage, providing accommodation of the standard of the time. Whilst keeping its original external appearance and much of its internal spaces and elements, the former Staff Quarters has been converted to Infant schooling and is proposed to be converted to staff facilities. |
| | The site also contains a former temporary classroom, a manual arts training room and a shelter shed, from the Interwar years which are now comparatively rare elements. |
| | Recent facilities are a transportable classroom and a new Assembly Space with associated canteen and toilets. |
| | The grounds are tidy, but worn, and contain elements left from the temporary structures erected during the Interwar period. Mostly setback from streets with gardens and plantings around the perimeter. |
| Condition | Good |
| Integrity | High |
| Authenticity | High |

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Highgate Hill was an early subdivision north of Newcastle Street that was developed by surveyor Charles Crossland in 1874, and named for his birthplace in London. Highgate Hill Primary School was one of the State's earliest suburban primary schools and appears on the c1897 PWD sewerage plans. Ten parents living in the immediate vicinity with 25 children between them, ranging in age from four to eleven, signed a formal application for a school. The Chief Government Architect at the time was George Temple Poole, and a single room was constructed initially on School Reserve No. 3269. When it was discovered that there would be a lot more children enrolling, a second room was erected.

The first classes were held in the new two-room school buildings on 1 November 1895 and, as it turned out, 80 children were enrolled. The head teacher was Athol McGregor who remained at the school until 1926. He also instigated the inaugural meeting of the Public School's Association, which was held at the school in 1896. This association was short-lived but he later became involved in the State School Teachers' Union of WA and was awarded a life membership. A week after the school opened, Mr McGregor received an assistant, Anni Mitchell, and a monitor, Frederica Mitchell. Joshua Hamill joined the staff in January 1896.

Teacher's quarters (designed by a private architect) were constructed in 1898 at a cost of 1000 pounds and a large extension and re-arrangement of classes was carried out between 1897 and 1899 at a cost of 1,400 pounds. Athol McGregor occupied the teachers quarters until his retirement at the end of 1926. He was followed by A. M. Cooke who, although he retired in 1935, remained in residence until his death in 1947. The new building for the Highgate Infant's School (which had previously operated in a circus tent) was opened on 22 January 1900, to cater for the large amount of pupils at the school (340). The buildings were constructed to a standard plan of the time and accommodated 100 children.

The head teacher occupied the house next door at No. 145 Lincoln Street. There were further additions to the Primary School in 1901 and 1903 (to accommodate another 50 children) plus a new room in the Infant's school for another 50. Further changes in 1905 - 1906 added room for another 50 to both the Primary and Infant's schools. In 1909 - 1910 extensive additions were carried out on the Infant's school at a cost of 870 pounds. Further additions in 1910 and 1912, a new classroom in 1913 and a manual training shed for woodwork and sewing followed in 1913 - 1914.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

As the number of enrolments grew, pavilion classrooms were added in the school ground. These were timber framed rectangular buildings, clad in asbestos with an iron roof. They each comprised a classroom and a small storeroom. A shelter shed was also erected c.1948. A number of these buildings are shown on the 1953 MWSSDD sewerage plan. Declining numbers in the post-World War II period saw some of the classrooms being occupied by pupils from Girdlestone High School in 1952 and in 1955 the Primary and Infants' school's jubilee year, there was a total enrolment of nearly 700 students. A school library was also built in 1952 and it was officially opened on 22 June that year by the Hon. Lady Gairdner, wife of Sir Charles Gairdner, the state's longer serving Governor.

The school grounds were divided into boys' and girls' playgrounds, with the ablution block on the shared boundary. There were ongoing problems for drainage in the grounds which were only finally resolved with underground and surface drainage in 1952. For many years the grounds were ably looked after by the school's gardener, Frank Wardell-Johnson, whom they shared with the North Perth Primary School. Frank lived with his parents Dr and Mrs Wardell-Johnson at No. 418 Beaufort Street, Highgate and later in Vincent Street, North Perth opposite Hyde Park.

In 1970, the year the school celebrated 75 years of operation, it had 24 staff members. In a publication commemorating that anniversary Headmaster, George Spisbah, wrote that: 'The increasing international complexity of the student population became more and more evident in the transition period since 1964. At first Greek and Italian pupils dominated the school scene in 1964, 1965 and 1966, to be followed by large groups of young people from Burma in 1967 and 1968 and finally in 1969, 1970 ever growing numbers of children from Yugoslavia'.

The school had always had a mixture of ethnic groups, many of the Jewish children, who lived in the area of Brisbane Street synagogue in early times had attended the school and in more recent times it has experienced waves Vietnamese children and those from China and other Asian countries and from the Middle East. In 1999 there were 54 different nationalities attending the school and in 2002 it was reported that the Chinese and Vietnamese communities were using the school at weekends for language classes for children to continue to learn their hereditary language as well as English.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A covered assembly area was erected in 1997 - 1998 and in 2002 additional classrooms were designed by Oldfield Knot Pty Ltd for an Early Childhood Education Program. In 2004 a new toilet block (replacing the 50 year-old toilets) and a covered walkway were designed, again by Oldfield Knott Pty Ltd. The subject place was entered as a permanent entry in the Register of Heritage Places in 2004. In 2007 permission was granted for a new library to be erected. That year the Principal was Chris Sandi and the total number of students was 450. At that time the school has 22 teaching areas; 11 normal -sized classrooms, seven IEC classrooms (15 - 16 students per class), a music room, art room, and two pre-primary rooms. As of 2024, the school has 39 classrooms with another two located at an offsite kindergarten and around 890 students.

Aerial photographs from the mid 20th century onwards show the gradual growth of the school beginning in the 1950s when there were only a dozen or so buildings on the site. These were added to in the late 1970s and early 1980s, as were courtyards for sport. The late 1990s had some demolishing of old buildings that were replaced by the aforementioned assembly area and grass fields added. More changes mentioned above in 2002, and 2008 saw the next structural additions to the site, with the new library, and the extension of the grass spaces. More building additions came in 2010 – 2011 which added a purpose built art room and new classrooms.

In 2017, a double-storey building was added to the site on the corner of Lincoln and Bulwer Streets, which was completed by the end of the year, adding eight classrooms, purpose built as an early childhood centre. More structural additions were made in 2021, adding three new classrooms and this was the most recent visual change to the subject place.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

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| Historic theme | Social Services: Education Peopling WA: Demographic development | |
| Associations | Charles Crossland George Temple Poole Athol McGregor A. M. Cooke Frank Wardell-Johnson Oldfield Knot Pty Ltd | Surveyor Chief Government Architect Head teacher Head teacher Gardener Architects |
| Sources | P2180 Highgate Primary School, Assessment Documentation for State Registration, DPLH, 2004. Municipal Heritage Inventory 2006 Landgate Aerial photographs 1953-2024. Highgate Primary School website 2021 | |

ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHS



ARCHIVAL IMAGES



Highgate Primary School 1895. Courtesy SLWA



Highgate Primary School c1914. Courtesy SLWA