

## Heritage Citation



### Wynnum Central State School (former)

#### Key details

**Also known as**

Wynnum State School

**Addresses**

At 105 Florence Street, Wynnum, Queensland 4178

<b>Type of place</b>	State school
<b>Period</b>	Federation 1890-1914, Postwar 1945-1960
<b>Style</b>	Free Classical
<b>Lot plan</b>	L4_SP265623; L5_SP265623
<b>Key dates</b>	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 January 2004 Date of Citation — January 2013
<b>People/associations</b>	Department of Public Works - Brick School Building (Architect)
<b>Criterion for listing</b>	(A) Historical; (D) Representative; (G) Social

Wynnum Central State School opened in February 1896 as Wynnum State School, providing a much-needed educational facility for the growing Wynnum-Manly area. A timber building fronting Charlotte Street was constructed for the school in 1895, with partial funding from the local community. The imposing two-storey Free Classical style brick building was erected in 1949, in the aftermath of the Second World War. It is the only building remaining onsite and reflects the transition toward more permanent, imposing masonry structures in Queensland's education system during the mid-20th Century.

## History

Europeans first arrived at what became the seaside in the suburb of Wynnum in the mid-19th Century, with land sales in the 1860s. The opening of the railway to Cleveland in 1889 boosted Wynnum's growth. In 1891, the population of Wynnum stood at just 683. By 1921, the population was 8,357.

As the area grew, so did the need for local educational facilities. Before the school was established at Wynnum, the closest available was at Lytton, which residents felt was too far for younger children to travel to each day. It was felt that, as Wynnum population grew, a local school was required. At a public meeting in 1892, a committee was appointed to find a suitable site for a new local school. Later that year, a petition was sent to the Department of Education requesting a new school for Wynnum and Manly, which was refused on the basis that they would not 'erect a new school while Lytton State School was in existence.'

In 1894, another request was made to the Department of Education citing that, from 1890, 'the number of residences in the Wynnum Division had increased from thirty-seven to 134, and eleven were then in course of construction.' Approval for the new school was given in 1895, and a tender by A.W Herd for \$685 was accepted to construct a timber classroom. Both the Queensland Government and the community provided funds.

The new Wynnum State School was officially opened on 24 February 1896, with a capacity of 125 students. The official enrolment was 77 students when the school opened. The new school site had been pegged out in July 1895 by the Works Department's chief draftsman, Mr. Pye. A tender by A.W Herd for \$685 was accepted in 1895 to construct a timber classroom.

Various additions were made to the original school over time as it grew. This included a playshed (1900), a new timber wing (1902), a gymnasium and flagpole (1903), an additional classroom wing (1908), an open-air timber

annexe (1917), and a final additional classroom (1919). In 1923, a War Memorial commemorating those who died in the First World War was erected in the school grounds along the Charlotte Street frontage. This memorial, a drinking fountain, was designed by respected Brisbane architect E.P. Trewern. The original school building was subsequently relocated to Lota State School in 1951.

Enrolment numbers continued to rise in the interwar period and, by the end of the Second World War, it was clear that radical improvements were needed. In 1944, the Parents and Citizens' Association applied to the Department of Public Instruction to construct a new school building. In 1945, extensive plans for a two-storey, plus basement, brick school building were drawn up by Queensland Government's Department of Public Works' architect, E. Cooper. It was to contain nine classrooms with accommodation for 400 pupils costing £25,000 and described as 'one of the most modern in Queensland.'

The first phase of construction was completed in 1949 and officially opened in February that year. It reflects the transition toward more permanent, imposing masonry structures in Queensland's education system during the mid-20th Century. The first phase included the eastern wing, the entrance and the front stairs. The second phase, the western wing, was completed in 1953. While many brick schools in Queensland date from the 1930s, this is one of the later, larger and more impressive brick suburban schools to be constructed.

In 1953, a set of memorial gates was constructed at the Florence Street entrance commemorating those who lost their lives in the Second World War. These gates have since been removed from the site, though the pillars remain. The First World War memorial fountain was moved behind the memorial gates in the 1950s. Only a stone plinth within a small garden at the front of the brick school building remains.

Two new buildings were added to the site by 1958, however only the 1949 brick building remains on the site. The school was ultimately closed in 2010 as part of an amalgamation with Wynnum North and Lindum State Schools to form Wynnum State School.

---

## Description

The former Wynnum Central State School is an educational building in the Free Classical style, built in the early post-Second World War period. It fronts Florence Street in Wynnum and backs onto Charlotte Street. Its materials, form, openings, and scale reflect its original use as an education building, designed by the Queensland Government's Department of Public Works.

The building's key features are its monumental scale, form and classical detailing. It is a substantial two-storey masonry-and-brick structure with a high basement level in rendered masonry that serves as a plinth. The front elevation is symmetrical and comprises a central pavilion with prominent wings at either end that project towards the rear. The rear elevation is characterised by the projecting wings and a symmetrically composed central pavilion with a gable roof. The building features a complex hipped roof with terracotta tiling. The distinct ridge lines clearly delineate the separate wings and junctions of the structure.

The building's primary walling on the upper two floors consists of red and brown face brickwork. The brick facade is balanced by prominent horizontal rendered banding that wraps continuously around the building, except at the central pavilions at the front and rear. The banding aligns with the windowsills. The banding (architrave and frieze) above the second storey is continuous around the building.

The front elevation features a projecting central pavilion housing the building's main entrance, topped by a gable roof. Four rendered masonry pilasters are integrated into the design. The central pavilion is crowned by an ornamental, triangular, rendered masonry pediment with an entablature. The pediment is bounded by a cornice

with a prominent circular louvred oculus at the centre. The oculus is framed by a raised moulded circular trim, accented by four symmetrical block-style keystones at the compass points. This feature is replicated on the rear central pavilion, as are the pilasters. Directly beneath the pediment, on the frieze are the words: 'WYNNUM CENTRAL SCHOOL.'

Entry to the building is via a prominent double-flight concrete staircase on the front elevation, with vertical metal balustrades and handrails rising symmetrically from the left and right sides. A marble foundation stone is set into the staircase. The two flights meet at a central elevated landing directly in front of a recessed timber-framed, panelled main entrance door with a transom above. Framing the door is a decorative overdoor entablature and flat hood supported by scrolled corbels. The openings on the first and second floors consist of single or tripartite banks of two multi-paned casement windows with transoms above. Each set of windows sits on a prominent, thick, rendered masonry sill. The first-floor windows feature a flat projecting rendered concrete hood and rendered dividing mullions. The basement-level windows consist of multi-pane utility frosted windows. A modern ramped entry is located on the right-hand side of the front elevation at the basement level with suspended steel awning. On the left-hand side is a set of multi-paned glazed double doors. The window style is replicated on the sides and rear of the building. Only the windows on the projecting face of the rear wings feature rendered dividing mullions. On the basement level at the rear, several modern openings replace the multi-pane utility windows.

The building is set back from the main road and within a paved entry courtyard. The front of the lot consists of the remnants of the school's entry gate, with four brick pillars and is lined with mature fig and camphor laurel trees. The inner pillars are taller than the outer ones. In front of the concrete staircase leading to the entry is the remnants of a war memorial. At the rear of the building is a car park and landscaped gardens with mature plantings. A historic Carron Cannon can be found in the grounds at the rear of the building.

## Significant features

Features of cultural heritage significance include:

- Form: Multi-storey educational building in the Free Classical style with a central pavilion and two wings and a complex hipped roof
- Structure:
  - Roof: Terracotta tiles
  - Walls: Multi-toned red and brown face bricks and rendered masonry
  - Openings: Original location, size, arrangements, joinery, and materials of all original doors and window openings, including recessed timber-framed, panelled main entrance door with a transom, single or tripartite banks of two multi-paned casement windows with transoms, decorative concrete hoods, and multi-pane frosted utility windows.
- Key features and elements: Marble foundation stone. Remnant of the school's entry gates. Remnants of the war memorial. Historic Carron Canon.
- Setting: Set back and orientation of the building from Florence Street and all mature vegetation. Views to and from the building from Florence Street and Charlotte Street.

## Non-significant features

Non-significant features include:

- Car park
- Modern ramped entry including its suspended awnings.

---

## Statement of significance

## Relevant assessment criteria

This is a place of local heritage significance and meets one or more of the local heritage criteria under the Heritage planning scheme policy of the *Brisbane City Plan 2014*. It is significant because:

---

### Historical

#### CRITERION A

The place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of the city's or local area's history

as it is an early school developed for the education of local children in 1896, and subsequently expanded to meet the requirements of the growing population of the Wynnum district.

---

### Representative

#### CRITERION D

The place is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class or classes of cultural places

as the post-Second World War Free Classical style two-storey brick building incorporated education and design philosophies of the time of its construction.

---

### Social

#### CRITERION G

The place has a strong or special association with the life or work of a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons

as it has a longstanding connection with local residents, generations of whom received their education there.

---

## Copyright Brisbane City Council

**Note:** This citation has been prepared on the basis of evidence available at the time including an external examination of the building. The statement of significance is a summary of the most culturally important aspects of the property based on the available evidence, and may be re-assessed if further information becomes available. The purpose of this citation is to provide an informed evaluation for heritage registration and information. This does not negate the necessity for a thorough conservation study by a qualified practitioner, before any action is taken which may affect its heritage significance.

Citation prepared by — Brisbane City Council (page revised June 2026)



*Dedicated to a better Brisbane*