

## Heritage Citation



### Oakleigh State School

#### Key details

<b>Addresses</b>	At 44 Ashbourne Street, Ashgrove, Queensland 4060
<b>Type of place</b>	Preschool, State school
<b>Period</b>	Interwar 1919-1939
<b>Style</b>	Georgian Revival
<b>Lot plan</b>	L839_B3834; L128_RP40655; L127_RP40655; L124_RP40655; L130_RP40655 ; L129_RP40655; L126_RP40655; L132_RP40655; L131_RP40655; L125_RP40655; L133_RP40655

**Key dates** Local Heritage Place Since — 30 October 2000  
Date of Citation — February 1997

**Construction** Walls: Face brick

**People/associations** Queensland Government Works Department (Architect)

**Criterion for listing** (A) Historical; (E) Aesthetic; (G) Social

This state school opened in 1934 to accommodate growing numbers of children in the Grove Estate area. Built on land donated by the Oakden family, Oakleigh State School was one of 30 schools designed in the Georgian and Neo-Classical style in Queensland between 1930 and 1945 as part of a Queensland government works programme. The school has continued to provide education for children in the wider Ashgrove area for more than 70 years.

## History

This imposing red brick building was built as the Oakleigh State School in 1934-35. The first stage of the building, the west wing, was the original school building when the school opened in 1934. The construction of substantial brick school buildings during the 1930s was part of the Queensland Government's efforts to stimulate the economy and provide employment during the severe economic depression. 30 brick schools of Georgian and New-Classical design were constructed in Queensland between 1930 and 1945 as part of the Government's capital works building programme. These included buildings at Newmarket State School (1932), Ithaca Creek State School (1933) and Ashgrove State School (1937). The schools were designed by Works Department architects. Other public buildings built at this time included the Herston Medical School and court houses in Brisbane and provincial areas.

During the 1930s, the Ashgrove area was experiencing a building boom with an accompanying population explosion. This growth was precipitated by the extension of the tramline to Oleander Drive on Waterworks Road in 1924 and the development of Glenlyon Gardens Estate and other residential estates during the mid-1920s.

Although some areas of Dorrington, including around the site of the proposed school, had been subdivided and offered for sale as early as the 1890s, they were slow to develop. More residential estates including Dorrington Park and Glenlyon Gardens Extension were subdivided in the 1920s, but a substantial amount of the housing in these areas was built after World War II. The nearby Grove Estate, first offered for sale in the 1870s and 1880s, was well populated by the inter-war period. Children from this area faced a walk of over one mile, sometimes across swollen creeks, to attend the Ashgrove State School at West Ashgrove.

In the early 1930s, the Oakleigh State School Building Committee was formed to lobby the Department of Public Instruction for the construction of a school to accommodate some 170 children from the Grove Estate area. The name Oakleigh was derived from the Oakden family who donated the site for the school. One of the Oakdens married a Miss Leigh and settled in the area. The chairman of the school building committee was Mr. George Oakden Snr.

In 1932, part of the site was cleared and levelled by relief workers under the government's scheme to provide work for the unemployed. The cost of the first school building, which included three classrooms, 8 ft. verandahs, a teacher's room and fencing was approximately ?£1,500. This first stage of the school was quite small, being only the western wing of the present building. The school was officially opened on 30 January 1934 with 147 students. The opening was attended by members of the building committee, Mr. F.A. Cooper, the Minister for Public Instruction and local Girl Guides and Scouts.

Extensions to the school, comprised of the centre portion of the building, were approved in July 1934, at a cost of £4,000. The foundation stone was laid on the 29 September by G.C. Taylor, MLA. At the request of Mr. Thomas Kilby, the first headmaster, a balcony was constructed from which he could address the school assembly. The extensions were opened in 1935. An additional wing on the eastern side of the school was later added, completing the symmetry of the building.

Improvements to Oakleigh State School included the installation of a "modern sanitary system" and antbed tennis courts built by relief workers in the late 1930s. The school site was extended by the securement of land on the southern and eastern sides of the school. During World War II, the school was declared a No. 1 Danger Area because of its proximity to the Enoggera Army Camp. Air raid practises, the building of trenches and other precautions were carried out in the effort to ensure the safety of the school's population.

Today, Oakleigh State School is a modern facility which continues to provide a pre-school and primary education for local families.

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## 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:

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#### Historical

##### CRITERION A

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

for the evidence it provides of the rapid population growth in the Ashgrove district during the interwar period which led to a need for increased educational facilities.

## Aesthetic

### CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance

as a substantial example of an Interwar Georgian Revival style brick school constructed by the Queensland Government during the 1930s as part of a capital works program.

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## 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

for its significance to generations of local Ashgrove residents who have attended the school.

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## References

1. Burmester, Paul, Margaret Pullar and Michael Kennedy. Queensland Schools: A Heritage Conservation Study. November 1996
  2. Hayter, Dot, (ed.). *The School Bell Retolled: Oakleigh State School Golden Jubilee 1934-84*
  3. Ashgrove: P & C Association Oakleigh State School, 1984
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**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.

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