

THE HISTORY OF
ST. JOSEPH'S HOME
AND HOSPITAL

HOWARD HILL, SHEFFIELD
1860 – 2002

by
Bryn David



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**THIS BOOKLET IS DEDICATED TO THE DAUGHTERS OF CHARITY OF
ST VINCENT DE PAUL AND TO ALL WHO LIVED, WORKED AND
HELPED AT ST JOSEPH'S HOME AND HOSPITAL.**

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Bryn David

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Introduction

THIS BOOKLET charts the history of St Joseph's from the early 1860's to 2002.

Initially St Joseph's was a girls reformatory then in 1887 it became an industrial school and from 1934 until it closed in the 1980's it was a hospital for mentally handicapped women and girls. In 2002 St Joseph's Church and adjoining house became a Buddhist Centre.

From 1863 to 1974 St Joseph's was run by the Daughters of Charity. The Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul became known as the Sisters of Charity but gradually reclaimed the name Daughters of Charity.

Now they are officially known as the Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul.

Throughout this booklet the term – *Daughters of Charity* is used.



The Company of the Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul was founded in France in 1633 by Vincent de Paul and Louise de Marillac. Vincent de Paul and Louise de Marillac selected a small group of girls to be trained in 'solid virtue' and thus the Company of the Daughters of Charity was born.

In 1642 four sisters made vows for the first time. These vows were – to serve those who are poor and to live in chastity, obedience and poverty. These vows are made yearly.

The Company of the Daughters of Charity expanded in France and in the nineteenth century a period of overseas expansion began. In 1848 the congregation of the Mission was established in Ireland.

Canon Scully, an Irish priest and friend of the Vincentians had been involved with the first Mission in Ireland. By 1853 he was working in Yorkshire and he persuaded Bishop Briggs of Beverley to request that members of the Irish Province of the congregation come to Sheffield.

At this time Sheffield was a rapidly expanding industrial city with a population of about three hundred thousand people which included a high proportion of Irish immigrants.

Early in 1857 the Vincentian Superior General paid his first visit to Sheffield. He was very impressed with the work of the Mission and he readily agreed to the request by Father Burke, a Sheffield priest, for the services of the Daughters of Charity.

The Duke of Norfolk, head of England's Catholic aristocracy donated twenty-five pounds and Father Burke acquired premises on Solly Street. So in 1857 the Daughters of Charity returned to England.

(The Daughters of Charity had been in Salford from 1847-49 but because of anti-Catholic aggression and lack of financial backing they had been recalled to Paris.)

The Sisters moved into 157 Solly Street, Sheffield and it became the first Home in England to be established by the Daughters of Charity.

Sister Louise de Missy an English born French Sister was the Superior and the other Sisters were Sister Marie Merve, Sister Vincent O'Farrell and Sister Josephine Clarke, Sister Josephine Clarke having returned from nursing in the Crimea. Their work included visiting and caring for the sick and homeless of all denominations. Initially met with verbal insults and missile throwing from children they were given protection by the men of the parish and gradually they became accepted in the community dressed in their dark habits and distinctive white cornetted headwear.

By 1860 it was apparent that the accommodation for the Daughters of Charity in Solly Street was inadequate and plans were made to purchase a building in Walkley Sheffield.

Facing North high above the valley of the River Don, Howard House, which still stands today, had been a boarding school for the sons of wealthy families.

With the aim of setting up a Reformatory for Catholic girls a meeting was held in York in 1861. Amos Court Reformatory in Bristol was full and because of its central location Sheffield was chosen as a suitable place for a reformatory.

The committee of the Yorkshire Catholic Reformatory School approved the suitability of the property, Howard House, Howard Hill. The house was stone built and stood in about three acres of land. The cost was two thousand one hundred and fifty pounds. A generous benefactor was Robert J Gainsford of Darnall Hall, Sheffield and with the Catholic Bishop of the Northern Diocese he was instrumental in establishing the Reformatory. To lessen the debt the Dioceses of Beverley, Liverpool, Salford, Nottingham, Shrewsbury and Hexham were each asked to contribute one hundred pounds. The Institution was to be put under the management of the Daughters of Charity and they would be living in part of the house.

So Howard House, Howard Hill became a Home for the Daughters of Charity and a Reformatory for twenty five girls.

The Reformatory was certified on 26 July 1861 and on 15 August 1861 Father Burke blessed and opened the Home. Father Burke the Parish Priest obtained eighty pounds from the Vincentians in Paris and this money was used to provide outfits and support for the Daughters of Charity.

Now named St Joseph's Home the person overseeing the running of both the Home and Reformatory was Sister Stephanie (Elizabeth Crawford). Sister Stephanie was born into an old Meath Ireland family in 1826. She passed her Noviciate in Paris in 1849 and became a Daughter of Charity. From Paris she went to Italy where she remained for six years looking after orphaned children. Having shown great business aptitude she was sent to Dublin as Superior of a Lunatic Asylum for women but this was not congenial and she returned to Paris. From Paris she was sent to Sheffield in 1858.

Reform schools were established following the passing of the Reform Schools Act of 1854. At this time many children were unschooled and prone to illness through malnutrition. Because of their poverty-stricken

background many children became delinquent. Girls from the ages of nine to twelve were sent from the courts to St Joseph's Home and they would be detained there until they reached the age of sixteen. On discharge the girls would be found employment and somewhere to live. Most of the girls went into domestic service on their discharge.

An early report about St Joseph's Reformatory by Rev. Turner an Inspector of Reformatories found that in the two years since it opened in 1861 the establishment had made satisfactory progress.

There were twenty five inmates and the Reformatory was full. The Report of 1863 said the girls looked well and cheerful. Only one had deserted but she had returned of her own accord. The Report stated that one of the rooms at the Reformatory was a chapel and the girls also worshipped at a neighbouring church (St Vincent's on Solly Street). The girls were employed in needlework, laundry work and doing the work of the house and garden. The Report noted that the girls passed fair examination in the usual elementary subjects.



It soon became apparent that there was a greater National demand for reformatory school places and an extension to the existing Home and Reformatory was built. The extension was designed by Sheffield Architects – Hadfield and Son and built by W Reynolds at a cost of one thousand seven hundred pounds.

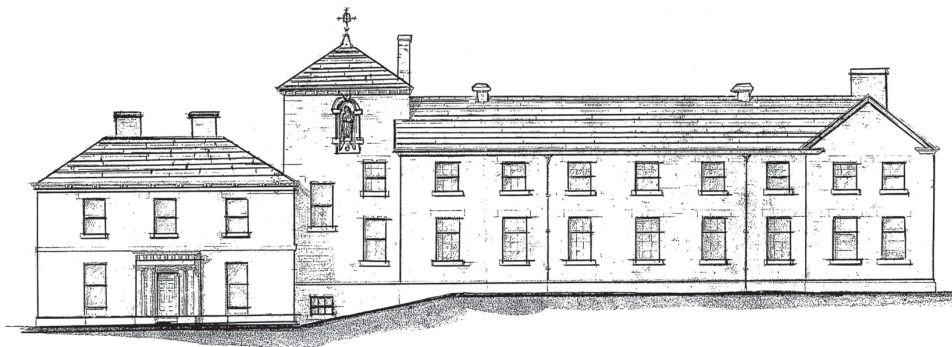
Part of the land surrounding St Joseph's House was sold for two hundred pounds, this money going towards the refurbishment of the Reformatory.

(St Joseph's School was eventually built on this land.)

In the new extension new kitchens were built. A small laundry was erected containing six drying horses, three on either side of the hot flue which ran in a horizontal direction from the iron store.

On the first floor was an infirmary and a dormitory measuring one hundred feet by thirty feet. The dormitory had an open timber roof and one room was fitted as a chapel for daily prayer. There was accommodation for a hundred girls who were employed in needlework, washing, housework and gardening.

The extension to the Reformatory was opened on 26 October 1864.



Howard House and north facing wing of St Joseph's Reformatory 1864

On the 1871 National Census there were seven Daughters of Charity living in the Home. The Superior was Sister Stephanie who like six of the other Sisters was Irish born. Also living at the Home was a seamstress, a cook and laundress.

There were eighty six inmates, all girls noted on the census form as 'scholars'. Fifteen girls were London born, eight from Leeds, seven from Sheffield, seven from Ireland and five from Liverpool. Other girls were from different parts of Great Britain.

The majority were aged between eleven and seventeen. There were three aged twenty one, three aged ten and the youngest was five years old.

A report by the Inspector of Reformatories of Great Britain undertaken at the end of 1871 stated that by then there were ninety-three inmates. The Report said the children looked strong and healthy and the premises were in a favourable condition. According to the report Sister Superior, Sister Stephanie was occasionally troubled by the introduction of 'very unsuitable cases, both in point of age and vicious experience.' The report went on to say that one consequence of this was that the discipline of the house was endangered and a favourable result not very hopeful. The Inspector found that the general intelligence of some inmates was not sufficiently developed but the state of education provision at the Reformatory was good. The cost of running the establishment in 1870 was reported to have been one thousand seven hundred and fifty pounds.

Sister Stephanie, Superior of St Joseph's House, wanted the Howard Hill area of Sheffield to have its own chapel. The walk from St Joseph's Home to St Vincent's on Solly Street was often difficult and unsafe.

Sister Stephanie sought and obtained an audience with the Duke of Norfolk to plead her case. Towards the cost of building a chapel the Duke donated a thousand pounds and five hundred pounds was obtained from members of the committee of St Joseph's House. A thousand pounds came from the Gainsford family of Darnall and work on the chapel commenced in May 1871. The architects were John Hadfield and son of Sheffield and John Pearson was the Clerk of Works.

The stone built chapel was designed in the Early English phase of the Gothic style. The nave was one span having a semi-circular apsidal sanctuary and the fifty-five foot high ceiling was wagon-headed with moulded arches and ribs of wood. The original stained glass was by Lavers, Barrand and Westlake but this glass was later replaced by small multi-coloured panes.

Because of the lie of the land it was possible for day school rooms and heating chambers to be built under the chapel. The Sisters and girls were able to enter the chapel directly from the Home and there was an external entrance for the public.



St Joseph's Church Walkley 1871

A bequest by the Gainsford family saw the erection of the alter chancel and fittings as a memorial to the late Robert John Gainsford who had been one of the founders of St Joseph's House. Robert Gainsford had died in Rome on 6 February 1870.

The new St Joseph's Chapel was opened on 21 April 1872 by Canon Walshaw, Rector of St Marie's Church, Sheffield. St Joseph's Chapel became a Chapel of Ease to St Vincent's Parish served by the Vincentian Priests for the celebration of Holy Mass.

The Chapel was an important place of worship not only for the Sisters and girls of St Joseph's Home but also for the many Catholics who lived in the surrounding area.

The Inspection of 1877 carried out by the Inspector of Reformatories

reported that there were ninety-three inmates under detention including eight voluntarily and three on licence. The premises were reported to be in very good order, well arranged, thoroughly comfortable with good laundries and drying ground. The general appearance of the inmates was reported to be most satisfactory. There had been no deaths and all the inmates seemed happy and well cared for.

In the past year there had been four cases of absconding and at the time of the inspection one girl was still absent. The Report said the educational state was very creditable, the first class of thirteen pupils reading well and ciphering very correctly. The same applied to a second class of twelve girls. In the third class arithmetic was a failure but reading and dictation was good. The inspectors said that education was well attended and the general intelligence of the girls was good.

With reference to industrial training, laundry work was the principal employment. Inmates were taught the general routine of housework and needlework. The inspector noting in his report that needlework was exceptionally well-taught. The result of cases discharged 1874 to 76 – fifty-two former inmates ‘doing well’, seven convicted of crime, five dead, one doubtful and two unknown.

The total cost of running the house in 1877 was one thousand nine hundred and nine pounds.

The National Census of 1881 showed eight Daughters of Charity living at St Joseph’s Home. All were Irish born. Also living at the Home were two domestic servants and two school mistresses.

Of the ninety-four inmates at the Reformatory sixty-six were aged between ten and sixteen and twenty-eight were aged between seventeen and twenty.

The age of discharge was sixteen but the older girls aged between seventeen and twenty would have remained at St Joseph’s working as servants. Some worked in the laundry others as general helpers. Running an establishment with almost a hundred inmates the Sisters would have needed additional help from these girls. In 1881 twenty inmates were Yorkshire born, ten from London, ten from Liverpool and six from Ireland. The remainder were from other parts of Great Britain including Scotland and Wales. One inmate had been born in New Zealand and another was born in the Cape of Good Hope.

One of the features of life at St Joseph’s House in the 1880’s was the annual bazaar held at the Sheffield Cutlers Hall. The aim was to raise money for the running of St Joseph’s Home.

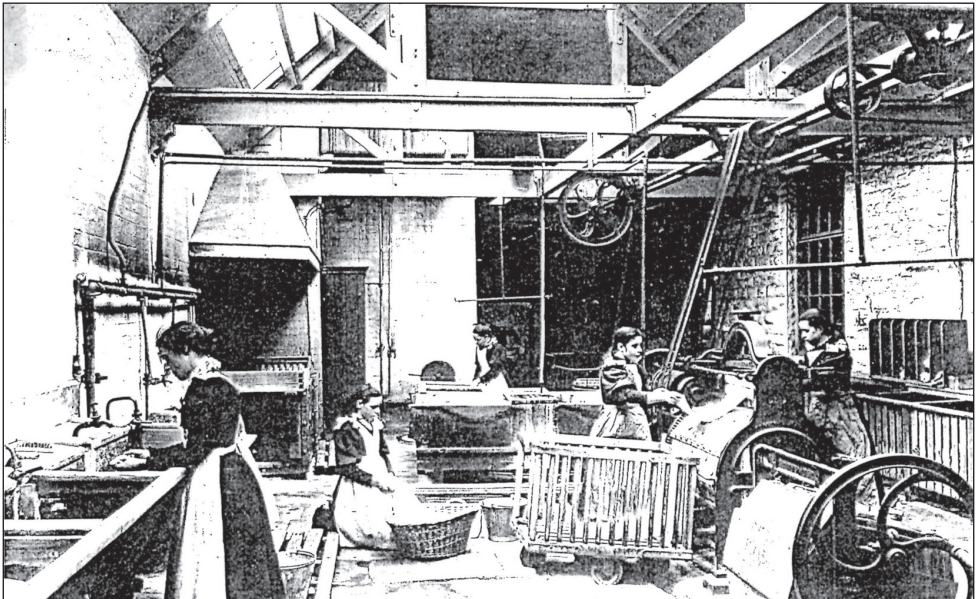
On 6 December 1881 the annual sale of the work done by the children of St Joseph's Home was opened at the Cutlers Hall by the Mayor of Sheffield, Michael Hunter.

The Mayor in his opening remarks referred to the fact that there were a hundred girls at St Joseph's. All the girls were waifs and strays and they were trained in plain and fancy sewing and instructed in the duties of domestic servants.

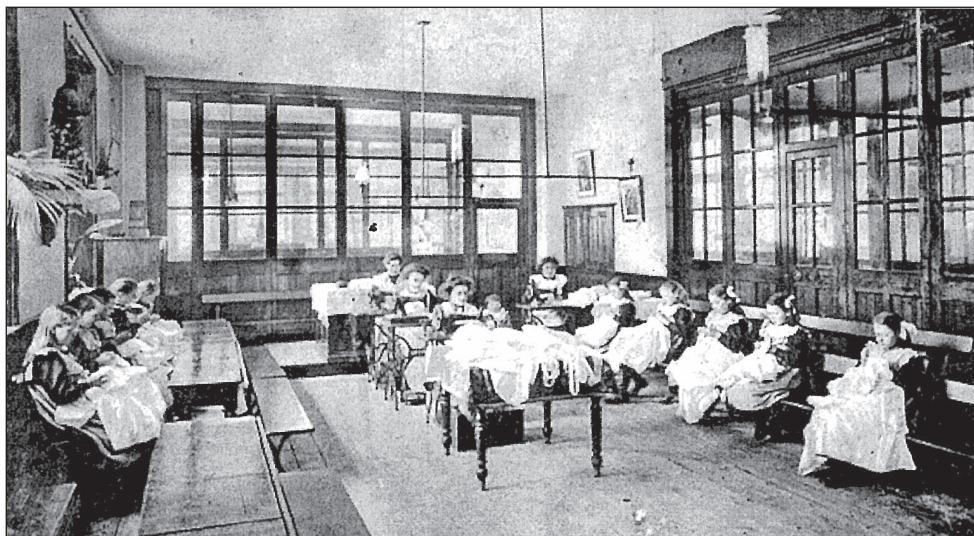
The Mayor praised Sister Stephanie, Superior at St Joseph's for taking young people from the gutter and preventing them from sinking into degraded lives. Not one of the girls who had left the institution in the previous year had gone to prison. They had all gone to fill positions as servants and housemaids. That fact, said the Mayor, spoke more eloquently than he could about the elevating influence of the Home.

Rev. Canon Walshaw then spoke saying how advantageous it was for such work as was done at St Joseph's to be under the influence of religion – the object being to make the girls happy in this world and safe for the next.

A representative from the South Lancashire Courts was present and he spoke in appreciation of the good work done by St Joseph's House and he gave a donation of forty pounds to Sister Stephanie for the improvement and enlargement of St Joseph's.



St Joseph's Reformatory – Laundry Rooms



St Joseph's Reformatory – Sewing Room

At the end of the opening ceremony some of the girls who were present in the music gallery struck up an air and then buying and selling commenced.

In 1887 St Joseph's changed its role from being a reformatory and it became an Industrial School for girls run by the Daughters of Charity. Children sent to a reformatory were juvenile offenders who had appeared before the courts and found guilty of a criminal offence.

Those sent to an industrial school as defined by the 1861 Industrial School Act were –

- (i) A child under the age of fourteen found begging.
- (ii) A child under the age of fourteen found wandering and not having a home or any visible means of support or who was in the company of thieves.
- (iii) A child under the age of twelve who committed an offence punishable by imprisonment.
- (iv) A child under fourteen who was declared to be out of control by the parents of that child.

A Government Committee of 1884 said that the industrial schools had effectively reduced the amount of both juvenile and adult crime and the schools were training a vast number of children for honest and useful lives. However the Committee of 1884 was critical and extremely dissatisfied at

the type of work done in many schools. Some young children spent hours each day chopping wood, oakum picking and matchbox making. In some schools the children were responsible for cleaning the school.

The Committee of 1884 recommended that more time should be spent on school work in the industrial schools.

The 1888 Industrial School Act added another two categories of children who could be committed to an industrial school in addition to those listed in the 1861 Act. Those two categories were –

- (i) Any child who was frequently in the company of prostitutes.
- (ii) Any child lodging in a house frequented by prostitutes.

The 1888 Act stated that courts should endeavour to ascertain the religious persuasion to which a child belongs and should, as far as possible, select a school conducted in that persuasion when committing a child to an industrial school.

The Act also stated that at the age of sixteen a child could be discharged conditionally or absolutely.

By 1890 the main objectives of the industrial schools were – to instil in the children the habit of working, to develop the latest potential of the destitute child, to help the children who had committed serious crime. The underpinning philosophy of the industrial schools was to remove the child from bad influence, give them an education and teach them a trade.

The timetable in industrial schools was a strict one, the children rose at 6.00 am and went to bed at 7.00 pm. There were set times for schooling, learning trades and religions. Girls learned knitting, housework and washing.

Since 1870 the industrial schools had been the responsibility of the Committee of Education. Parents were supposed to meet the cost of keeping a child in an industrial school but very often this proved impossible as most of the children were homeless.

When St Joseph's changed from being a Reformatory to an industrial school the amount of Government funding decreased. Industrial schools opened after 1873 got three shillings a head from the Government. The shortfall in funding was made up by local school boards who were responsible for funding girls who were sent to St Joseph's from their area.

Each industrial school was subject to regular Government inspections and those who met the requisite standard were certified.

A report in the Shields Daily Gazette (Durham) of 11 March 1890 shows how the system operated when a youngster was committed to an industrial school.

THE CHILDREN'S ACT SHOCKING CASE AT HEBBURN

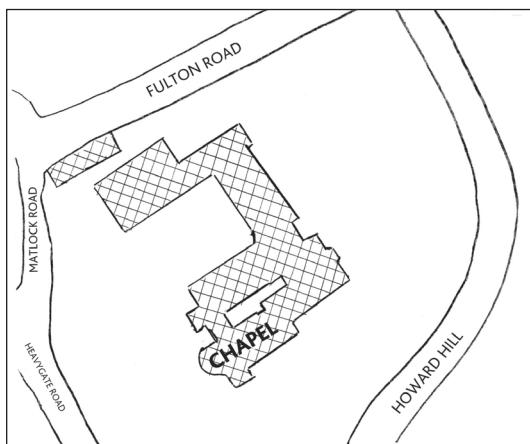
At Hebburn Police Court yesterday, Patrick Barrett and Catherine Barrett, husband and wife, were charged under the New Act with cruelty to their children. Defendants pleaded not guilty. Inspector Scowdon said that about 8 o'clock on Saturday night he visited the house of Patrick Barrett, 11 Station Lane, Hebburn, New Town. In the room he found 5 children: 4 of them were walking about and 1 was in the cradle. They were filthy. He examined the house and did not find a particle of food except four or five crusts, which were green and grey moulded in a box. All the furniture in the house was two mattresses, a rug and a chair. There was a small fire in the grate. Witness proceeded to say that he went into the back street and heard a voice singing at No. 15. He went there and found Mrs Barrett singing and the worse for drink. He asked her where her husband was, and she replied that he had gone to a music hall. He told the woman that she ought to be looking after her family. She did not go home, and he left her. He returned, about 11.20 in company of Sergt. Hildreth, to the house. When they got in they found Patrick Barrett lying on the bare floor, helplessly drunk and asleep. Mrs Barrett was also sitting on the bare floor with her head between her knees, drunk and asleep. They did not know the officers were in the house for a while. There was in the room two boxes and a table. Three of the children, a boy, a girl and an infant were laid on one of the mattresses. The bigger ones were going out. When the woman awakened she asked, with an oath, what the Inspector wanted, and said she would "pay the fine on Monday." Witness said they had not come to take the fine, but her husband for neglecting his children. She replied with another oath. He and Hildreth lifted the male Barrett up and brought him to the Police Station. Witness continued that the children were running about naked yesterday morning. When he was in the house he saw no clothing for them to put on. He had known them for some time, and they had been very little different. He had made inquiries about Barrett, who said he could not get work. He found that he left tenant's of his own accord in the first week in January. He was then making £1 9s 6d per week, and might have made £2. Since then he had made 4s 6d per day, and about 24s per week. The children, continued the Inspector, were in a very delicate state of health, and were just recovering from the measles. The

children were put forward. The Inspector said they had been washed, and one of them had had his hair cut this morning. They were: – Alice 10, Patrick 9, Francis 8, Peter 6, Job 2, and Edward James 4 months. – Sergt. Hildreth corroborated. Mr William Anderson, School Board Officer, said he had found the children running about very often. He had also found them begging about the streets. This sort of thing had been going on to his knowledge for 18 months. The parents had been six times before the Bench for neglecting to send their children to school. Barrett, in defence, said the children got as much good as he got, and the woman said the children always got their food. The Bench said the case was an exceedingly bad one. Barrett would be sent to prison for two months. The case of the woman would be adjourned till Monday next.

Alice Barrett died on the 1 July 1894 aged fifteen at St Joseph's House from Bronco-pneumonia and Phthisis. Her death was registered in Sheffield on 2 July 1894 and she was buried in St Michael's R.C. Cemetery Rivelin on 3 July 1894.

On the 1891 National Census for St Joseph's there were eleven Daughters of Charity living at the Home. Apart from one who came from Dorset and one who came from Liverpool they were all born in Ireland. Also living at St Joseph's were six laundry workers, four kitchen maids and a parlour maid. These were former inmates who had stayed on after reaching the age of sixteen. Also living at St Joseph's were two trained teachers.

Of the ninety seven inmates, sixty-two were Yorkshire born, thirteen born in Lancashire, Durham or Northumberland and seven were from Ireland. With the exception of two inmates who were born in India and one who was born in Canada the remainder came from other English counties.



Plan of St Joseph's Home 1891

Compared to the birth places of the inmates listed on the 1881 census when St Joseph's was a Reformatory it is apparent that by 1891 the St Joseph's Industrial School was primarily accepting girls from Yorkshire and other Northern counties.

Surrounded by a high stone wall St Joseph's House which was bordered by Fulton Road, Howard Road and Heavygate Road had been extended by 1891 to accommodate up to one hundred inmates.

From the plan of 1891 the Chapel can be seen adjacent to the original Howard House – near the Home. One wing of St Joseph's House ran parallel to the Chapel and Home whilst another ran from East to West from the Home and linked to that wing was another extension which ran North to South. A two storey building the upper floor housed the dormitories, sick rooms and sluice washrooms. On the ground floor were the laundry rooms, sewing room, kitchen, bakehouse, scullery, teaching rooms and three cells. A feature of the building was that all the rooms were high-ceilinged.

In 1897 further alterations were made to St Josephs. At a cost of two thousand pounds new baths, dormitories and laundry rooms were provided. Monies for the alterations came from the West Riding County Council – four hundred pounds, London School Board – two hundred pounds, Sheffield City Council – three hundred pounds, Bradford School Board – one hundred pounds. Legacies – sixty pounds and various donations that amounted to three hundred and fifty five pounds. Some school boards chose not to contribute as they thought it too expensive and a waste of money to 'de-pauperise the children.'

The refurbishments were opened in July 1897 by the Lord Mayor of Sheffield, the Duke of Norfolk and the Lady Mayoress, Lady Mary Howard.

At the opening ceremony Sister Stephanie welcomed his Grace and Lady Mary. Also present were aldermen, councillors and clergy connected to both Anglican and R.C. churches.

A newspaper report of 8 July 1897 says that the dignitaries proceeded through the beautiful chapel given by the Duke of Norfolk, past the beautiful altar donated by the Gainsford family and through the laundry where the girls were ironing. It was noted that everything was scrupulously clean and working with clockwork efficiency.

In his speech the Duke praised Sister Stephanie and commented how he was pleased to see her in full vigour. The Duke said he had received many letters from girls who had left St Joseph's thanking Sister Stephanie for her work. After the speeches a concert followed and the Lady Mayoress distributed prizes to the children.

Sister Stephanie died at the end of 1897 having been at St Joseph's for almost forty years.

According to the National Census of 1901 there were ten Daughters of

Charity living at St Joseph's Home. The Superior was Sister Monica (Weld). Also living there was Sister Honora (Byrne) who had been at St Joseph's for over thirty years. Apart from one Sister who came from Hereford and one who came from Dorset all the Sisters were from Ireland.

Living at St Joseph's were four teachers and two pupil teachers. (By 1901 education was compulsory for all those under thirteen and the teachers would have been employed to teach those of school age.)

Also living at St Joseph's were thirteen servants who worked in the laundry, a kitchen maid, housemaid, cleaner, scullery



At the Infirmary a young patient plays with her doll

maid and parlour maid. These servants were all aged between seventeen and twenty and were very likely to have been girls who had been committed to St Joseph's and had stayed on after the discharge age of sixteen.

The majority of the one hundred and eleven inmates came from Yorkshire and Lancashire. There were eleven inmates from London and only one from Ireland. Others came to the Industrial School from other parts of Great Britain. Over twenty inmates were noted on the census as having their place of birth 'not known.'

With the exception of six girls aged under nine and three aged sixteen all the girls were aged between ten and fifteen.

On the 1911 National Census there were ten Daughters of Charity living at St Joseph's all with the exception of two were Irish born. On the census form each Sister was noted as having a responsibility within a department at the House. The areas of responsibility were – sewing, cookery, singing, secretarial work, education, laundry and general work. The Superintendent in 1911 was Sister Monica (Weld).

Also resident at St Joseph's on the night of the census were seventeen laundry maids, a dressmaker and a cook.

There were also five school teachers living at the House.

The 1902 Education Act had created local education authorities and given responsibility for education to each authority. In 1911 education was compulsory for children up to the age of thirteen.

The school teachers at St Joseph's were connected to Sheffield Education Authority. The responsibility of the L.E.A. was to ensure teachers were properly qualified and to provide the necessary books and equipment.

In establishments like St Joseph's Industrial School which was run by a religious organisation the responsibility for the buildings and for providing religious instructions was to be met by the Church.



*The Industrial School
workroom*

In 1911 there were one hundred and fourteen inmates at St Joseph's. Ninety-nine were aged between ten and sixteen and there were fifteen aged between six and nine.

Being of compulsory school age those between the ages of six and thirteen are described as scholars on the census return form. Those between fourteen and sixteen were occupied as general house workers, laundry or kitchen maids.

Of the one hundred and fourteen inmates almost half were from Liverpool, thirty-six from Yorkshire and the remainder from different parts of Britain.

Periodically certified by Government Inspectors St Joseph's House continued as an Industrial School run by the Daughters of Charity from 1911 – 1934. St Joseph's held about a hundred inmates who came mainly from the North of England. The girls lived in an enclosed environment and followed a strict regime of physical work in the laundry or gardens and periods of sewing and housework. The girls attended lessons in English and Arithmetic and worshipped in the adjacent St Joseph's Chapel.

Discharged at sixteen many were found employment as live-in maids or servants.

As well as being funded by the Local Authorities who sent the girls to St Joseph's the House was also involved in fund raising. Each year a bazaar or garden party was held.

In 1922 a three day garden fete was held and this raised one thousand five hundred pounds for the work of the Daughters of Charity.

The Industrial School closed in 1933 and St Joseph's became a hospital for mentally handicapped women and girls.

The Mental Deficiency Act of 1913 made provisions for the institutional treatment of people deemed to be 'feeble minded' and 'moral defectives.' The Act proposed institutional separation so that the 'mental defectives' should be taken out of Poor Law institutions and prisons and placed in newly established 'colonies.' Someone deemed to be 'feeble minded' or 'morally defective' might be placed in an institution if the parent or guardian petitioned for this.

The 1913 Act established the Board of Control for Lunacy and Mental Deficiency to oversee the implementation of provision for the care and management of the mentally handicapped. The mentally handicapped were sub-divided into four categories –

- (i) Those who were so severely handicapped as to be unable to guard themselves against physical danger.
- (ii) Those who were unable to manage themselves or their affairs.
- (iii) Those who required a degree of supervision and control for their own protection or the protection of others.
- (iv) Those displaying mental weakness coupled with strong, vicious or criminal propensities.

Almost all of the St Joseph's women and children came from the first two categories. Those who were so severely handicapped as to be unable to guard themselves against common physical danger and those who were unable to manage themselves or their affairs.

St Joseph's House for Mentally Handicapped Women and Girls opened in 1934. The patients came from all parts of Great Britain and were referred through local Catholic organisations.

Over the next few years improvements and alterations were made to St Joseph's – plans being submitted to the Board of Control for approval.

In 1934 a sluice room and lavatory was built and also a glass covered veranda. A scullery, day room, bathroom, classroom and dormitory were added to comply with Board of Control requirements.

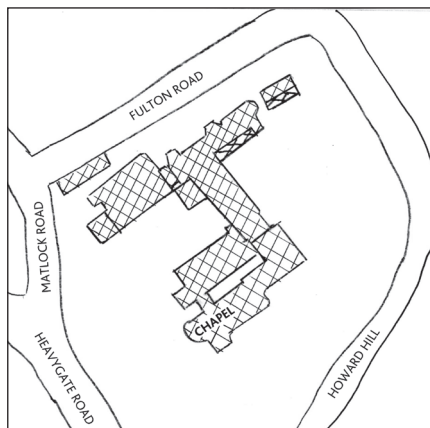
The building which was over seventy years old needed general repairs and re-decorating. The existing heating and hot water supplies needed up-grading and the defective cold water service needed renewing.

All these alterations cost four thousand one hundred and twenty-five pounds.

On 11 May 1936, two years after it opened as a hospital the members of the London Board of Control made its first visit to St Joseph's.

The very thorough inspection focussing mainly on the provision made for children led to a good report.

The report said the rooms were bright, there were comfortable and careful arrangements made for clothing, feeding and nursing the children who at the time of the report numbered twelve in all. The children's dormitory was attractive, bedding was excellent and the bed garments were warm and made in light colours.



Plan of St Joseph's Home 1935

At the time of the inspection six children were in the dormitory and one was being nursed with chicken-pox, five other children having had chicken-pox. The report recommended that when the chicken-pox infection was over the question of dental treatment for the children should be addressed. Another recommendation was that individual notes should be kept for each child and arrangements made for yearly physical examinations. Also arrangements should be made to keep poisons separate from other medicines.

The refectory had small tables and was bright and light. Five children in the school room were taught by a visiting teacher. Games were played in the playground and gardens. There was a piano in the school room and a gramophone in the cot and chair dormitory.

The children's clothing was separately marked and carefully kept for each child. Food included something dairy for breakfast in addition to bread and butter – a three course dinner – varied tea and supper. Fresh fruit was given daily. The Report said that the children looked well, were comfortable and the individual kindness shown to the children was reflected in their cheerful and contented behaviour. At the time of this Report the older patients were in an area known as the cot and chair ward. There were twenty-two beds in this area and was under the charge of a Sister who was a trained and Registered Nurse.

The Report concluded that the Institution had made an excellent start and an increase in numbers should be seen in the near future.

Following the inspection the London Board of Control renewed the certificate for one year from 22 October 1936 and authorised the admittance of more mental defectives of whom some shall be 'medium-grade' girls under the age of sixteen and twenty new 'cot and chair cases.' The Board of Control was in agreement to the existing Ironing Room being utilized after alteration as a day space for active patients. The Board of Control recommended that a veranda be provided, two additional water closets, sluice room and three lavatory basins. The Board advised that sanitary provision and dormitories for the 'cot and chair cases' should be separate from the accommodation provided for the 'medium-grade girls.'

In 1937 a new laundry and drying room together with a new playroom for active patients and a kitchenette were provided. Alterations were made to the existing day room to connect it to the cot and chair ward and new lavatories and a veranda added.

Also built was a Sister's bedroom and a nurses dining room.

An existing derelict outhouse was converted into a mortuary and a new boiler house built. Heating and hot water systems were repaired, new laundry machines and boilers installed and the general repair and redecoration recommended three years previously was completed at a cost of slightly under ten thousand pounds.

In 1938 an additional five hundred pounds was spent on further alterations. Additional bath and sluice rooms were built and the dining room for active patients was converted into a day room for the 'cot and chair' patients.

In 1938 St Joseph's Hospital received one pound two shillings and sixpence per week for the 'medium grade' girls and one pound and ten shillings for 'cot and chair' cases from the London Board of Control.

During the Sheffield Blitz of December 1940 St Joseph's Hospital suffered extensive damage but no loss of life. Seeing the tall boiler-room chimney the Luftwaffe mistakenly thought they were bombing a factory.

During the Blitz windows were blown in, doors smashed, ceilings lifted, floors rendered unsteady and plaster blown off walls. Eight stained-glass windows were blown out in the chapel, roof-supports shifted and there was severe damage to the Sacristy. During the actual bombing the Sisters were said to have taken as many of the patients as they could into the cellars under the chapel.

On 4 July 1942 a renewal certificate for three years was given to St Joseph's by the Board of Control. Some of the conditions for the renewal of the certificate were that there should be up to eighty patients living at St Joseph's – eighteen should be 'medium grade' under the age of sixteen and should be accommodated on the first floor. The remaining patients should be accommodated on the ground floor.

The certificate was issued on condition that the patients of any denomination should be admitted and they should receive religious instruction and attend religious service conducted in accordance with their religious persuasion.

In 1945 the Hospital received one pound and five shillings a week for 'medium grade' patients and one pound twelve shillings and sixpence for 'cot and chair' cases.

With the establishment of the National Health Service in 1948 responsibility for the Certification of St Joseph's and similar institutions passed to the Minister of Health.

In February 1949 the Hospital received a very detailed and extensive list of rules and regulations which had to be met before a Certificate of Registration could be issued. These Rules were in accordance with Regulation 52 of the Mental Deficiency Regulations of 1948.

The Committee of Management of the Institution was charged with inspecting the food, to enquire as to the improvement of particular patients, to enquire as to the treatment, health and general condition of all. The Committee of Management has to make periodic examination of books and supervise the Institution's expenditure.

The Superintendent was expected to give up the whole of her time to the duties of her office. She should frequently visit all the wards and make occasional visits at uncertain hours during the night. The Superintendent shall have control over all the officers, nurses and servants. She shall make a yearly report on the number of admissions, removals and discharges. The Superintendent shall be responsible for the condition of the patients. She shall never absent herself from the Institution without having a properly qualified person in charge. She shall keep a journal.

The Medical Officer will visit the Institution every week and in case of sickness more often. The Medical Officer shall make medical entries in the patients' records as well as supervising the patients' diets and take care that medicines are carefully stored and properly dispensed.

The Matron was to be under the control of the Superintendent and was responsible for housekeeping, the laundry and sewing room. Matron was also responsible for house linen and bed linen. The Matron should inspect all the wards frequently and should make occasional unannounced nightly visits.

The Secretary of the Institution shall be responsible for keeping the accounts, responsible for receiving and taking charge of all stores and for keeping accounts of all monies. She should not be absent from the Institution without the Superintendent's permission.

General Management – there shall be sufficient nurses at all times and no ward shall at any time be left without adequate staff. Suitable training, employment and recreation and an ample supply of books should be provided for the patients. Patients should be allowed to take walks or make excursions beyond the grounds of the Institution.

No patient should be struck or threatened and no patient should be placed in exclusion unless it is found necessary to do that in cases of extreme violence and then only on order of the Superintendent. No patient should be given a bath except for the purposes of cleanliness.

All accidents, injuries, suicide attempts and struggles between patients and nurses should be immediately reported to the Superintendent or her deputy.

Each patient shall be bathed immediately on admission and the attention of the Superintendent shall be at once drawn to any marks, bruises or other injury or peculiarity.

Relatives of patients shall be allowed to visit at least once a month between such hours as the Superintendent may direct.

If there is reasonable ground for suspecting that any person visiting a patient is exercising a bad influence or encouraging the patient to break the rules that person may be removed from the premises.

Patients shall be free to hold private conversations with persons visiting them but no male shall remain in a room with a female except in the presence of a nurse or third party who is not a patient.

Letters to and from patients shall pass through the hands of the Superintendent.

In case of death the body shall be delivered, if claimed, to the nearest relative or proper maintaining authority. If it be not claimed and removed by the fourth day after death it shall be buried by direction

of the Superintendent. If the Superintendent considers earlier burial absolutely necessary she shall have powers to order it.

The Superintendent should order a post-mortem examination of every patient who dies in the Institution unless a request to the contrary is made by the patient's relatives. A record shall be made of the appearance found and the result of the post-mortem examination.

Certificates of Registration were renewed every three years.

In 1949 an Agreement was made between the Daughters of Charity at St Joseph's and Sheffield Regional Hospital Boards whereby the Board would pay St Joseph's House two pounds ten shillings for 'medium grade' patients and two pounds fifteen shillings for 'cot and chair' patients. The money was to be paid quarterly.

In 1951 the Certification of Registration issued in accordance with Section 36 of the Public Health Act of 1936 was granted to St Joseph's Hospital. One of the conditions noted on the Certificate of Registration was that patients who were not Roman Catholic were to receive religious instruction and alternative religious services were to be conducted within their religious persuasion.

In 1955 St Joseph's Hospital was inspected and on 21 February 1955 a Report was sent to the Hospital Management Committee.

There were ninety-five patients on the books. All patients according to the Report were medium to low grade and all were resident at St Joseph's. Twenty-five patients were ambulant, they were deemed capable of training other than just habit and social training, and they were happily occupied.

The Report said that patients were found to be warmly and suitably dressed, many of the children's woollies having been hand-knitted by the Sisters. There was an adequate supply of books and toys and the radio and television was much appreciated. Ambulant patients were taken for a walk in good weather and regular outings were arranged. The Report noted that a recent visit to a local cinema had caused considerable excitement. The health of the patients was good, patients were weighed regularly, a local doctor visited regularly and the dental arrangements were satisfactory. As well as the Daughters of Charity there was one General Trained Nurse, three Mental Trained Nurses and eighteen Nursing Cadets. The Report concluded that the Hospital was run on excellent lines and patients received devoted and skilful care.

On 5 April 1961 the Certificate of Registration was renewed stipulating that no more than one hundred patients should be living at the Hospital at any one time.

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CITY OF SHEFFIELD.

THE PUBLIC HEALTH ACT, 1936 (Part VI)
as applied to Mental Nursing Homes by
Part III of the MENTAL HEALTH ACT, 1959.

17 APR 200



Certificate of Registration.

I hereby Certify that THE SISTERS OF CHARITY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL
are registered by the COUNTY BOROUGH Council of SHEFFIELD
under Part VI of the Public Health Act, 1936, as applied as above mentioned, as a person
carrying on a Mental Nursing Home at premises known as ST. JOSEPH'S HOME
and situated at HOWARD HILL, SHEFFIELD, 6,
for the reception and treatment of mentally disordered patients

The registration is effected subject to the following conditions:

NOT MORE THAN 100 SEVERELY SUB-NORMAL FEMALE PATIENTS
MAY BE RECEIVED INTO THE HOME.

M.

Date 5th APRIL 1961.

(Signed)

John Hesk
Town Clerk / Clerk of the Council

Note.—This Certificate must be kept affixed in a conspicuous place in the Home. Non-compliance with any condition imposed will render the person carrying on the Home liable to a fine of £5, on summary conviction, and to cancellation of the registration.

Local Taxation & Licences Dept.,
Byre St. Sheffield, 4.

Certificate of Registration 1961



The Daughters of Charity at St Joseph's 1961

In 1970 Sheffield Regional Hospital Board became involved with St Joseph's. At this time there were ninety female patients at the hospital – thirty were aged sixteen or under and none were aged over fifty. Only thirty-one patients were able to feed themselves, forty could participate in simple activities and sixty-three patients were doubly incontinent.

At a meeting at St Joseph's Hospital on 21 July 1970 the following problems were discussed by members of Sheffield Regional Hospital Board and the Daughters of Charity.

- (i) The urgent need to remedy maintenance deficiencies in the structure of the engineering service.
- (ii) Facilities were required for adequate day care, for adequate occupational therapy and to provide adequate fire precaution.

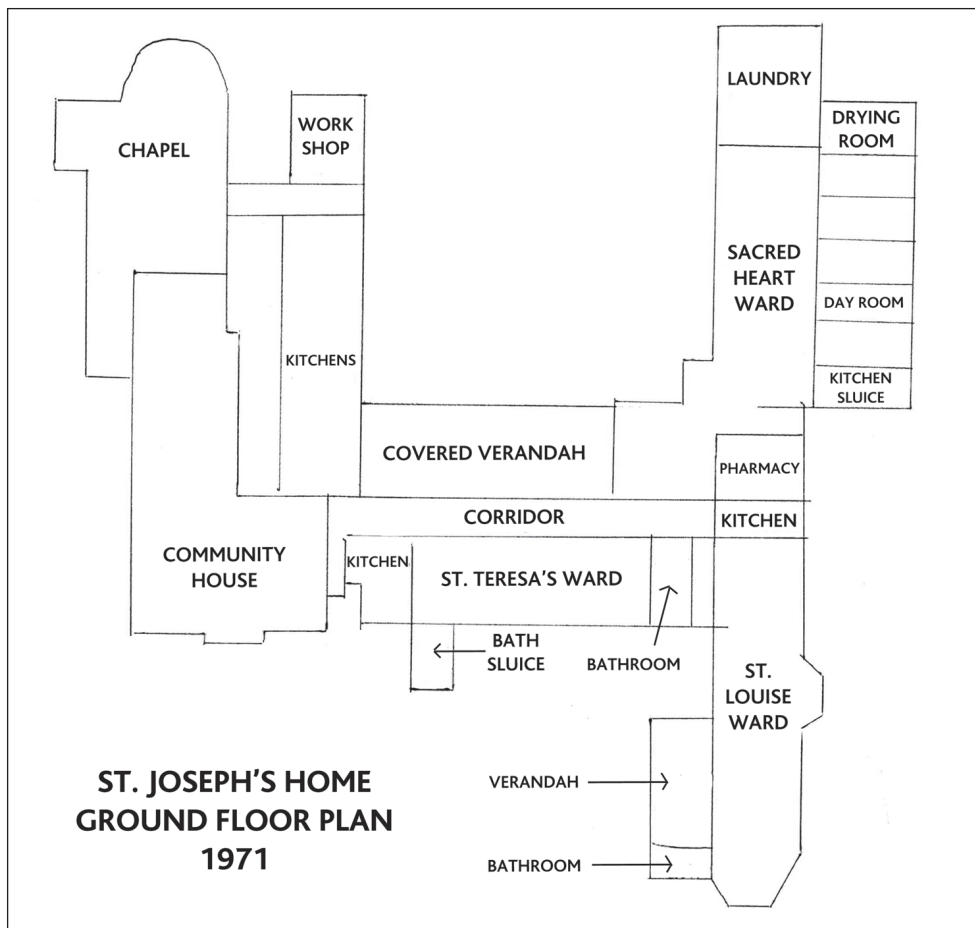
It was felt that it would be advantageous if St Joseph's Hospital could be placed under the general management of the Sheffield No. 2 Hospital Management Committee which would relieve the Sister-in-Charge of the day to day management problems and accounting.

The meeting considered that the Hospital would be required for a further period of five to seven years before alternative provision became available in Sheffield.

Sheffield Hospital Board wanted to take a lease on the Hospital at a peppercorn rent for as long as it remained open. This arrangement would relieve the Daughters of Charity of the financial responsibility for running the Hospital. However the Hospital Board wanted the Daughters of Charity to participate in the Nursing Service.

At the meeting one of the concerns expressed by one of the Daughters of Charity was that if the Hospital became the property of the State then the Daughters of Charity would have to abide by the laws of the State. The concern for this Sister was that if a relative of a patient wanted euthanasia to be administered to that patient this would be done if there was a law which legalised euthanasia. The Sister went on to say that if euthanasia was legalised and the Daughters of Charity stopped this then they, the Daughters of Charity, could be sued. The Sister made it very clear in the meeting that they could not accede to any demand for euthanasia.

Another concern of the Sisters was that male patients may be admitted and this would cause problems if they were aged over twelve and placed on the same wards as female patients. The Health Authority psychiatrist said she fully understood this concern.



In January 1971 some alterations were made to the Hospital. On St Vincent's ward on the first floor the nurses sleeping quarters were made into a day room as all the nurses were sleeping out. The veranda on St Louise Ward (ground floor) was to be made into a day room. The veranda could be closed with a folding door and was to be centrally heated. The kitchens were to be up-graded and re-wired.

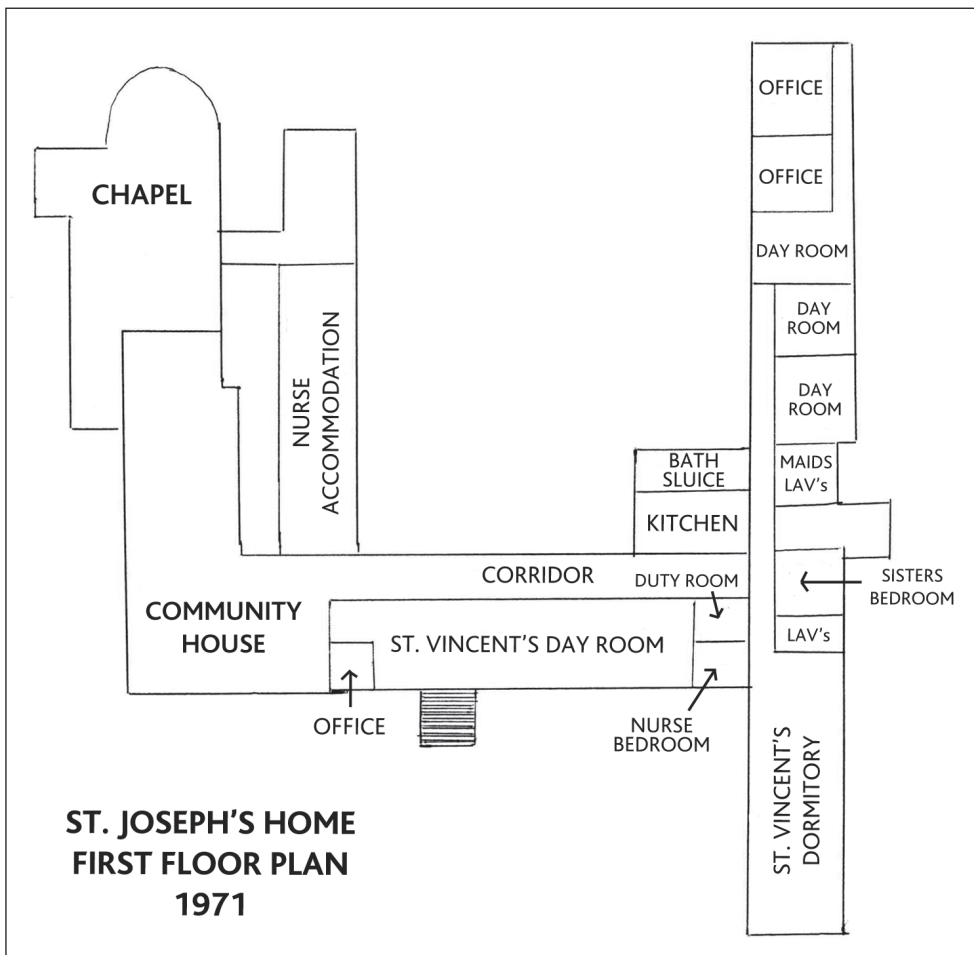
St Joseph's Hospital was handed over to the Sheffield Hospital Board on 1 April 1971 and it came under the general management of the Sheffield No. 2 Hospital Management Committee.

A Report commissioned at that time slightly contradicting the Report of 1970, said that there were eighty-nine female patients with an age range up to fifty-seven. Thirty patients were aged under sixteen and a further five were aged between sixteen and eighteen.

It was reported that consultant coverage was one session a week when required. A general practitioner clinical assistant was on call for emergencies and for routine physical care. There was no physiotherapy for which there was a great need and no psychology services.

With reference to nursing staff there were five Daughters of Charity working at the Hospital and living in the adjacent Home. One Sister was a qualified Registered Nurse of the Mentally Handicapped.

The Mother Superior was the designated administrative Sister and there were twenty-five nursing assistants of varying degrees of experience. The Sisters received a honorarium from the Health Authority and a review of nurses salaries and conditions was underway to bring pay and conditions in line with the National Council of Nursing guidelines.



In 1971 the St Joseph's League of Friends was established. Members of the League of Friends were involved in visiting the patients, 'adopting' a patient, fund-raising, running handicraft and occupational therapy sessions and taking patients swimming.

The League of Friends provided a colour television for the day room of the children's ward. The League of Friends ran the hospital shop and in 1971 held a garden party which raised one hundred and thirty-seven pounds.

Also involved in St Joseph's Hospital at this time was MENCAP. Originally founded in 1946 by Judy Fryd and called The National Association of Parents of Backward Children the name was changed to the National Society for Mentally Handicapped Children and then in 1969 changed to MENCAP. Offering sport and leisure opportunities for people with a learning disability MENCAP members arranged for some of the St Joseph's patients to go to the Gateway meetings at Norfolk Park Sheffield. MENCAP as well as running activities within the Hospital also took some patients swimming on a Saturday.

In 1972 the Management of St Joseph's Hospital was transferred to Middlewood Hospital. Two weekly G.P. sessions were to be held at St Joseph's and two occupational therapists and an additional cook were to be appointed. Minutes from a 1972 meeting state that an advertisement for a Speech Therapist should be published.

Before the passing of the Education (Handicapped Children) Act of 1970 some handicapped children were classed as unsuitable for education in school. This Act of 1970 stated that no further use should be made of the power conferred by Section 57 of the 1944 Education Act whereby children suffering from a disability of mind were deemed unsuitable for education in school.

Whereas children with a mental handicap had not attended school before 1970, from this date their education became the responsibility of the Local Education Authority. No child was to be categorised as being 'ineducable' and Junior Training Centres where many of these children attended ceased to exist.

The challenging task of organising educational provision for the children living at St Joseph's Hospital fell to the headteacher of Sheffield Children's Hospital School.

A leader in the field of special school education in Sheffield, Ann Crawford had set up education provision for sick children throughout the city and in 1971 she established a successful school in St Joseph's Hospital.

The teacher-in-charge in the early 1970s was Sylvia Phelps.

The school at St Joseph's Hospital was well staffed with qualified teachers and child care assistants. There were six or seven pupils in a class and the classes were held on the Hospital premises. The room under the Chapel and some of the day rooms became classrooms and the large room known as the multi-purpose room adjacent to St Teresa's ward became a teaching area.

The school operated for forty-eight weeks of the year and as well as providing full-time education for those aged five to sixteen classes were held for almost all the patients over the age of sixteen. Groups of students were taken on regular outings – swimming, to local places of interest and occasionally further afield.

A VISIT TO ST JOSEPH'S HOSPITAL SCHOOL

In the Spring of 1977 I was seconded to St Joseph's Hospital School as part of my teaching course. It was with some trepidation that I made my way to the Hospital – it was surrounded by a high stone wall and the drive from the road to the main entrance was dark and foreboding. I was met by Cathy Jefferey the teacher-in-charge. She made me very welcome and proceeded to show me round the Hospital.

Firstly to the classroom under the Chapel. Here there were a group of seven students aged about thirteen being taught by a teacher and child care assistant. The students were seated at tables and were working on very basic tasks such as would be seen in a nursery class.

Next to the Multi-purpose Room across the corridor from St Teresa's Ward. About twenty students aged ten to twenty-one, some with very severe physical disabilities, some were blind and all were brought to the class in wheelchairs. None of the students had speech and few responded to any stimulation. Most of the students were laid on bean bags. The room was well staffed with teachers and child care assistants. These students were from St Louise and St Teresa's Wards.

At the back of the Multi-purpose Room was an area where one teacher was working with two of the older patients from Sacred Heart Ward. One of these patients had recently been assessed as suitable for a move to a House in Derbyshire which catered for people with cerebral palsy.

On the first floor there were two classes. In one were about eight students from St Teresa's and St Louise Wards. These students could manage the stairs up to the first floor. On the morning of my visit these students were involved in painting and simple craft work.

In the other classroom was a group of about twelve students from St Vincent's Ward. All could walk, were aged over twenty-five, and were doing very basic numeracy and literacy tasks. Both classrooms upstairs were staffed by at least one teacher and one care assistant.

With the exception of Sacred Heart Ward where some of the patients were bedridden all the patients at St Joseph's attended education classes – almost all on a full-time basis. There were weekly trips to Sheffield centre and other places of interest, groups were taken swimming to Lodge Moor Hospital, Sheffield. Students would soon have regular hydrotherapy sessions in the on-site pool which was being constructed.

Working at St Joseph's made a deep impression. Neither before nor after my time at St Joseph's have I encountered a group of people with such severe mental and physical disabilities.

Lynne May.

* * *

The Senior Nurse at St Joseph's Hospital in the 1970's – early 80's was Doug Richardson whose line-manager was based at Middlewood Hospital.

Each of the four wards at St Joseph's – Sacred Heart, St Teresa's, St Louise and St Vincent was staffed by a charge nurse, qualified nurses and auxiliary staff.

Also employed by Sheffield Area Health Authority were play-leaders for the younger patients and trainers with the older patients.

A General Practitioner, Psychologist, Speech Therapist and Psychiatrist visited regularly.

In devising individual programmes for each patient a multidisciplinary approach was adopted – a member from each discipline attending day meeting convened to discuss future plans for any of the patients.

Education staff and Health Authority staff also worked together in organising and running outings and holidays for the patients.

* * *

On the 21 September 1973 the Daughters of Charity who had been at St Joseph's Home for over a hundred years and who had unselfishly and diligently cared for their charges with compassion had announced that they were withdrawing from St Joseph's.

In 1974 the Daughters of Charity moved to live in Ashdale Road, Broomhill, Sheffield.

The Mental Health Act of 1959 stated that there were only a very small number of mentally handicapped people who needed to be detained in hospital. This Act advocated the re-orientation of Mental Health Services away from institutional care towards care in the community. Twelve years later a White Paper said that the mentally handicapped should no longer be treated as a segregated group but should be increasingly drawn into the general provision of social educational and medical services which existed for the whole community. This shift from hospital to community care to be the responsibility of the Local Authority.

In 1980 a Government Report said that conditions at St Joseph's Hospital were so bad that it should be shut as soon as possible. Adult patients should be re-assessed and children removed immediately to the Rivermead Unit at the Northern General Hospital. Government experts were particularly critical of staff shortages in training departments and lack of attention to remedial exercises and use of the hydrotherapy pool. The Report's findings ran contrary to the feelings of the nurses and education staff who felt that there was an excellent family atmosphere at St Joseph's and strong links with the local community. There was a feeling amongst many of the staff that St Joseph's Hospital provided a safe environment for some very severely handicapped people. Tony Mapplebeck – General Administrator, Area Health Authority said it was inevitable that staff would object to closure because of the long and dedicated service they had given to the patients.

Despite the objections there was a gradual moving out of the patients. Some were moved to other hospitals and others to smaller purpose built units.

By 1983 St Joseph's Hospital was empty and the hospital block was demolished. The land where St Joseph's had stood was acquired by South Yorkshire Housing Association. Taking advantage of the natural slope of the land a modern, well-designed complex of flats and houses was built and opened in 1988.

The original Georgian house, one time house for the Daughters of Charity, along with St Joseph's Chapel became the Sheffield Buddhist Centre run by Triratna Buddhists Order.

Some of the Members live in the house and the Chapel is a Meditation Centre and a place where courses are run.

The Buddhist Centre was opened in 2002 by Urgyen Sangharakshita.

In 2001 the new St Vincent's Church on Pickmere Road, Crookes opened. This church replaced the old St Vincent's Church, Solly Street and it became the parish church for those who had worshipped at St Joseph's.

Many of those who died at St Joseph's are buried in St Michael's R.C. Cemetery, Rivelin, Sheffield in unmarked graves. There are over two hundred listed on the St. Michael's cemetery website.

To commemorate those who died in St Joseph's a headstone is erected in the cemetery adjacent to the burial plot of the Daughters of Charity close to the chapel.

The inscription as follows: –

**IN MEMORY OF THOSE WHO DIED
AT ST JOSEPH'S HOME
HOWARD HILL, SHEFFIELD
1863 – 1980
AND ARE BURIED
THROUGHOUT THIS CEMETERY
R.I.P.**

Contributors towards the cost of the headstone: –

Fr Patrick Walsh (Parish Priest), Howard Bayley, Sue Bright – *in memory of Alice Barrett who died 1894 age 15*, June Connell, Bryn David, Myra Garde, Cathy Jefferey, Karen Jubb, Alison Mackenzie, Val Maskrey, Eunice Miller, Ann Norris, Joy Richards, Sheffield Buddhists, S.Y.H.A.

The monumental mason was Daynes Memorials of Killamarsh and the arrangements undertaken by Martin Fenwick, St Michael's Cemetery.

Any proceeds from the sale of the booklet will go towards the cost of maintaining St. Michael's R.C. Cemetery, Rivelin, Sheffield.

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Gleanings from the first 50 years of St Joseph's, Howard Hill.

Parcher, Sister M – Given to God – The Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul.

This booklet will appeal to Sheffield historians and all those with compassion for the disabled and disadvantaged in our society. Dedicated to the Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul and to all who lived, worked and helped at St Joseph's Home and Hospital in Howard Hill, Sheffield.

Price: £3

(kindly subsidised by St. Vincent's R.C. Church, Sheffield)

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IN MEMORY
OF THOSE WHO DIED
AT ST. JOSEPHS HOME,
HOWARD HILL, SHEFFIELD
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AND ARE BURIED
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