

# LOST HOSPITALS OF LONDON

## Westminster Children's Hospital

Vincent Square, Westminster, SW1P 2NS

**Medical dates: 1903 - 1995**

**Medical character: Specialist**

**The St Francis Hospital for Infants was founded in a small house in Hampstead in 1903 by Helen Levis, wife of the industrial chemist and Director of Brunner Mond & Co, Sir Robert Mond (1867-1938), and Dr. Ralph Vincent. The Hospital was named after the St Francis Cripples' Home, whose premises it had taken over. However, a year later, its name was changed to The Infants Hospital to avoid confusion with another institution of the same name.**

**Following the death of his wife in 1905, Sir Robert Mond financed a purpose-built Hospital in Vincent Square as a memorial to her.**

**Building work began in 1906 and the new Infants Hospital opened in 1907. It had accommodation for 50 babies and specialised in the treatment and research of disorders of nutrition and causes of mortality in infants - the only institution of its kind at that time in Europe.**

**In 1914 the Duchess of Albany opened a new building, which contained an Out-Patients Department (tiled with green and white, and with an inlaid floor), a Nurses' Home and a modern research laboratory headed by Dr Vincent, the senior physician. Sir Robert Mond had financed this building and its equipment (the nurses' sitting room contained a grand piano).**

**In 1946 the Infants Hospital amalgamated with the nearby [Westminster Hospital](#) and was renamed the Westminster Children's Hospital. By 1955 it had 108 beds.**

**It closed in 1995 and services moved to the new**

**It closed in 1995 and services moved to the new Chelsea and Westminster Hospital, whose chapel contains stained glass windows from the Children's Hospital.**

### **Present status (January 2008)**

**The former Hospital in Vincent Square and Nurses' Home have been converted into apartment blocks.**



**No. 10 Denning Road was the site of St Francis Hospital for Infants, later renamed The Infants Hospital.**



**The main entrance with the name of the Hospital inscribed above and telltale *tondi* - the symbol of paediatrics - mounted on either side of the doorway.**





The former Hospital building at the corner of Udall Road and Vincent Square.



Each entrance has a *tondo* mounted above.



The former Nurses' Home on the east side of Udall Street.

The ceramic *tondi*, of a swaddled baby on a blue background, are based on the ten *bambini* of Andrea della Robbia (1425-1525) made in 1477 for the *Ospedale degli Innocenti* (Foundling Hospital) in Florence, Italy.



The [Anthony Nolan Trust](#), a registry for bone marrow tissue-typing for transplants was established here originally in a basement in 1974. It later moved to [St Mary Abbot's Hospital](#).

## References

<http://rcnarchive.rcn.org.uk> (1913)

<http://rcnarchive.rcn.org.uk> (1914)

<http://rcnarchive.rcn.org.uk> (1936)

[www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org)

[www.aim25.ac.uk](http://www.aim25.ac.uk)

[www.25yearclub.org.uk](http://www.25yearclub.org.uk)

[www.chelwest.nhs.uk](http://www.chelwest.nhs.uk)

[www.geograph.org.uk](http://www.geograph.org.uk)

[Return to alphabetical list](#)

[Return to home page](#)

