

## Chapter 20:

### Module 9 – Manor House Home, Lisburn

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## Introduction

- 1 The Inquiry devoted Module 9 to the examination of Manor House Home (Manor House), a children’s home in Lisburn, County Antrim. Manor House was run by The Society for the Irish Church Missions to the Roman Catholics, which was a mission agency associated with the Church of Ireland. It was founded in March 1849 with the aim of converting members of the Roman Catholic faith in Ireland to Protestantism. The headquarters of the organisation was in London and it was managed by a General Committee made up of clergy from the Church of Ireland and the Church of England, which at that time were one Church under the Act of Union of 1800. A Northern Committee composed of lay and clerical representatives of the Church of Ireland and the London Committee was based in Belfast. The organisation is now known as the Irish Church Missions (ICM) and the abbreviation of that title will be used in this chapter. The ICM is now a registered charity concerned with the encouragement of gospel growth in Ireland.
- 2 The Inquiry devoted four sitting days to this module commencing on 5 January 2016 and finishing on 8 January 2016. We received complaints about Manor House from six former residents. We heard evidence from two of these witnesses, HIA 346 and HIA 341 on 4 September 2014, as part of Module 2 of the Inquiry which dealt with child migrant schemes. During Module 9 we heard three witnesses, HIA 365, HIA 290 and HIA 366 and a summary of the statement of HIA 289 who was unable to attend in person for health reasons.
- 3 HIA 354, who gave evidence on 3 September 2014, during Module 2 of the Inquiry, referred to a brief stay he had in Manor House in November 1950 prior to being sent to Australia. HIA 354’s only memories of Manor House were of being taught hymns and being given a bath and new clothes prior to his departure to Australia. He had no complaints about how he was treated in the home.<sup>1</sup>
- 4 In addition to the evidence from witnesses, we considered information provided by the ICM about the establishment and operation of Manor House and its written responses to the statements provided by witnesses about the home. Reverend Edmund Coulter, the current Superintendent of ICM and Reverend Courtney, a retired Church of Ireland clergyman gave

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1 MNH 033/4.

evidence in person. Dr Hilary Harrison provided a written statement and gave evidence in person on behalf of the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS). Fionnuala McAndrew, Director of Social Care and Children’s Services, Health and Social Care Board provided a statement and exhibits on behalf of the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) and the HSCB also provided written responses to the statements from former resident witnesses. We also examined police material about investigations into allegations of peer sexual abuse in Manor House, sexual abuse of a resident by an adult visitor to the home and sexual abuse of another resident by a man unconnected to the home.

- 5 We spent some time considering the initial funding and inspection of the home by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA). This was because the MoHA’s engagement with Manor House provided the only example we are aware of where the MoHA contemplated removing registration granted to a voluntary children’s home under the Children and Young Persons Act (Northern Ireland) 1968.
- 6 We appreciated the contemporaneous records and documentation provided by ICM, DHSSPS, the HSCB and the police, which greatly assisted our understanding of Manor House.

## The Establishment of Manor House

- 7 In 1925, Miss Louisa Stannus, who was running a home for orphaned and disadvantaged children in her Manor House estate in Lisburn, made a proposal to the ICM that she would donate her home to the organisation if it would undertake to continue to run it as a children’s home.<sup>2</sup> Following negotiations between Miss Stannus and the ICM about the terms of the donation the ICM took over the property and formally opened it as a children’s home in November 1927.<sup>3</sup>
- 8 From the beginning, the funding of the home proved to be difficult for the ICM, and only seven months after it opened the General Committee of the ICM was considering closing the home.<sup>4</sup> However, it decided to allow time for a special appeal for the home to be launched in Northern Ireland and to use a legacy of £500 it had received to support the home. Despite these measures, the financial difficulties continued to the extent that by

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2 MNH 2323.

3 MNH 2324.

4 MNH 2324.

December 1929 the children in the home had been moved to Dublin and the home was temporarily closed.<sup>5</sup>

- 9 In January 1930, the General Committee received representations from a Dr Peate, deploring the closure of the home and indicating that he and others felt that sufficient funds could be raised locally to support the home and warrant it being re-opened. The Financial Secretary of the General Committee was instructed to respond to Dr Peate and explain that while his views were appreciated there were “many difficulties in the way of re-opening the home”.<sup>6</sup>
- 10 An important consideration for the ICM at this time was its obligations under the terms of the Trust it had agreed with Miss Stannus for the transfer of the property. It was also dealing with threats from Miss Stannus that she would sue ICM for compensation for monies she spent on repairs to the home after its closure.<sup>7</sup> The ICM sought advice from the Attorney General of Northern Ireland about the terms of the Trust, and legal advice about its position in relation to Miss Stannus’s claims. The minutes of the General Committee dated 27 November 1930 recorded that the Rev T.C. Hammond had been advised by Mr Hector Hughes KC that in the circumstances the best solution would be for the ICM’s Northern Committee to take over and re-open the home, which would mean the Trust would be fulfilled and in turn this would deprive Miss Stannus of any claim.<sup>8</sup> This advice was accepted and the General Committee agreed to provide the £200 required for repairs to Manor House, but only on the “understanding that the Northern Committee took over the entire liability of running the Home”.<sup>9</sup> Given the General Committee’s understanding of the financial difficulties experienced in maintaining and running the home we consider it was irresponsible of it to decide to re-open the home in order to avoid further legal action by Miss Stannus and then to allocate very limited funding for essential repairs and pass full responsibility for the home to its Northern Committee. **We consider this irresponsible approach amounted to a systemic failing by the General Committee of the ICM to ensure the home provided proper care.**

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5 MNH 2325.

6 MNH 2326.

7 MNH 2326/7.

8 MNH 2326.

9 MNH 2326.

- 11 The Northern Committee agreed to this arrangement and following a court case in Belfast about the terms of the Trust it was ruled that the ICM should establish a local Management Committee for Manor House. The Management Committee was duly established. It was elected by the Northern Committee and approved by the General Committee of the ICM which indicates that the General Committee continued to have a formal role in the governance of the home. The Management Committee was comprised of clergy and lay people from the Church of Ireland, some of whom were local to the Lisburn area.<sup>10</sup>
- 12 The home reopened in 1932, and it is clear from minutes of meetings at that time that the Management Committee was almost solely responsible for securing funding for the home. The General Committee of ICM limited its contribution to a sum of not more than £52 per annum to help with the costs of paying the salary of the matron of the home.<sup>11</sup> As the majority of children admitted to the home were private placements, generally on the application of a local clergyman,<sup>12</sup> their care was not funded by Welfare Authorities. Limited financial contributions were received from the families of some of the children resident in the home.<sup>13</sup>
- 13 In order to raise funds, the Management Committee organised a variety of appeals in local papers and flag days and rented out some of the land surrounding the home. It also employed two ladies to raise and collect funds for the home and this was an important source of income.<sup>14</sup>
- 14 These funding arrangements appear to have been adequate for a number of years. For example, the minutes of a Management Committee meeting held in February 1947 recorded that the finances of the home for the year ending 31 December 1946 were most satisfactory.<sup>15</sup> However, by October 1951 the financial situation had taken a significant downturn on account of the illness and consequent resignation of the principal collector due to ill health.
- 15 At its meeting on 13 November 1951 the Management Committee recorded that debts were outstanding and accounts had not been paid for two months, and agreed that a statement of its accounts should be sent to

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10 MNH 2328.

11 MNH 2327.

12 for example, MNH 3194.

13 MNH 2031.

14 MNH 2031.

15 MNH 3218.

the General Committee of the ICM. This decision suggests that although the General Committee was responsible for approving the appointment of the Management Committee it did not extend its governance to regular monitoring of the financial state of the homes. This was despite the financial difficulties it had experienced in funding the home. The Management Committee estimated that £2,000 was required annually to maintain the home, and recognised that in order to keep the finances of the home in a satisfactory state “a steady reliable and adequate income was necessary”.<sup>16</sup>

- 16 There is evidence of contact between the home and government departments in 1945 in relation to a proposal to build a crèche facility for children. The minutes of the Management Committee meeting held on 23 February 1945 refer to a meeting being arranged with the Prime Minister with a view to obtaining the necessary materials for the new building.<sup>17</sup> There is no evidence that inspections and visits to voluntary children’s homes which were provided for by Section 25 of the Children’s Act 1908<sup>18</sup> were made to Manor House. The DHSSPS has indicated that it is likely such visits were made to the home during the period 1927 to 1950 since the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) employed children’s inspectors from 1922,<sup>19</sup> but files that would have recorded such visits are no longer in existence.
- 17 However, whatever the position was prior to 1950, the passing of the Children and Young Persons Act (Northern Ireland) 1950, which required for the first time all voluntary children’s homes to be registered by the MoHA, meant that Manor House came to the attention of officials from that Ministry.

## Registration Process

- 18 The Management Committee first applied to have Manor House approved as an adoption agency and MoHA inspectors, Miss Forrest and Miss Harrison, visited the home in June 1950 in connection with that application. The inspectors met with Mrs Bannister of the Management Committee and the matron of the home, Miss Scott. Miss Forrest’s report of the visit, dated

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16 MNH 3309.

17 MNH 2481.

18 MNH 300.

19 MNH 15032.

8 June 1950,<sup>20</sup> record these ladies expressing some ambivalence about the application to become an adoption agency because the home did not have outreach workers and the matron already “had her hands full with her own work: 20 children (17 at school, 3 toddlers)”. The staffing was detailed as matron, assistant matron, a nursery assistant aged sixteen years and a cook who all lived in the home and an unspecified number of domestic staff who were not resident in the home.<sup>21</sup>

- 19 Miss Forrest recorded her concern that the Management Committee was not aware the home had to be registered as a voluntary children’s home, and appeared to think that such registration was linked to applications to the MoHA for funding. She described the home as very clean but shabby, noted decorating work was underway, and concluded that the home “seemed generally to be run on good lines, handicapped by lack of money”.<sup>22</sup> At the end of her report she noted that her colleague, Mr Wilde, told her after her visit to the home that the DMO, whom we take to be the Divisional Medical Officer, thought the health of the children from the home who attended school was “not up to scratch”.<sup>23</sup>
- 20 The MoHA received an application on 22 June 1950 for Manor House to be registered as a children’s home,<sup>24</sup> with a covering letter asking for information about how the home might apply for a grant. The application form stated that the home could accommodate up to twenty-two children and that the nineteen children resident in the home at that time were being cared for by five female staff.
- 21 A letter dated 29 June 1950 was sent from the MoHA to the Management Committee to confirm Manor House had been granted registration and that the Ministry would consider applications for funding to assist the improvement of premises or equipment and the securing of qualified staff. The letter also explained that the MoHA intended to issue regulations for the conduct of children’s homes, but that its powers to inspect children’s homes would be put in force straight away and that Inspectors would carry out their first inspections within the next few weeks.<sup>25</sup>

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20 MNH 2939-2941.

21 MNH 2939.

22 MNH 2940.

23 MNH 2941.

24 MNH 2933.

25 MNH 2927.

- 22 Despite this indication that an inspection was imminent no inspection took place and we found no record of any other visit by MoHA officials to the home until February 1953. The only indication of any contact between the home and MoHA from June 1950 to August 1952 is a reference in a letter dated 11 August 1952 from Mrs Bannister, who was by then the chairman of the Management Committee, to the then Minister of Home Affairs, Brian Maginess QC MP, which suggests the MoHA played a role in arranging for the Fire Authority to inspect Manor House.<sup>26</sup> However, it seems likely that this was a general arrangement put in place for all voluntary children's homes rather than a specific measure for Manor House.
- 23 Mrs Bannister wrote to Mr Maginess to ask for a grant to assist Manor House to implement the recommendations of the Fire Authority.<sup>27</sup> She explained that the home was in a financially embarrassed state because it had spent around £1,000 on repairs in the previous five years and its running costs had increased. A letter was sent by return under the name of the Minister indicating that it might not be possible to provide a grant as the Government was precluded from making contributions to any religious body.<sup>28</sup> However, this matter was quickly resolved, and the next day a further letter was sent stating that a grant might be possible and providing guidance about the conditions for grant aid.<sup>29</sup>
- 24 On 18 November 1952 the Management Committee submitted an application for funding for a grant of £1,000 towards the costs of meeting the Fire Authority's requirements and providing a new sewer and a playground.<sup>30</sup> In the supporting documentation sent with the letter, the chairman and the treasurer of the Management Committee confirmed that the home had a debt of over £600 due to the bank. Representatives from the Management Committee met with officials at Stormont on 7 January 1953 to discuss grant conditions. In a note of that meeting an unidentifiable official raised concern about whether the Management Committee would be able to fund the extensive repairs to the home that appeared necessary, and suggested that the opinion of an architect should be sought before a grant was made.<sup>31</sup>

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26 MNH 2925.

27 MNH 2925.

28 MNH 2924.

29 MNH 2923.

30 MNH 2919.

31 MNH 2910.

- 25 Six days after that meeting the MoHA received notification from Antrim Welfare Authority that it had received an adverse report on Manor House, and officials decided to delay a planned inspection of the home until the matter could be investigated.<sup>32</sup> Miss Forrest spoke to the relevant Welfare Officer, and recorded on 4 February 1953<sup>33</sup> that the adverse report was about a rumour that children were being beaten in the home, but the mother of the children concerned had clarified that her children's complaint had been that the food in the home was dull and insufficient and that she understood it had improved. Miss Forrest also recorded the Welfare Officer's concern about inadequate staffing in the home, and how on one visit he had found a senior girl in charge.
- 26 On 6 February 1953, Mr Jackson a MoHA official, Miss Forrest and Mr Gibbs, an architect from the Ministry of Health and Local Government, visited the home to assess its condition and consider whether the Ministry would be justified in making a grant.
- 27 Miss Forrest and Mr Jackson both produced reports of the visit<sup>34</sup> and recorded significant concerns about the conditions they found in the home. These included dirty, untidy and cold rooms in need of renovation, and inadequate and unsuitable toilet and bathing facilities for the children. On a positive note, Miss Forrest recorded that children who wet the bed, who had previously been sleeping "in an awful little room in the basement quite away from everyone", had been brought back to sleep with the other children following MoHA officials protesting to Mrs Bannister about the previous sleeping arrangements when she met with officials in Stormont.<sup>35</sup>
- 28 Mr Jackson noted, "The building and equipment conveyed a most depressing impression of dilapidation and dirt", and commented that given the state of the home "the staff is insufficient, incompetent or lazy".<sup>36</sup> Miss Forrest also commented on the insufficient, untrained and inexperienced staff and the poor relations between the matron and her assistant.<sup>37</sup>
- 29 The inspectors found the children supervised by a senior girl in a room heated by one stove which the children were seated some distance from. They found all the staff in the kitchen, which they commented was the one

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32 MNH 2908.

33 MNH 2908.

34 MNH 2904 and MNH 2894.

35 MNH 2905.

36 MNH 2894.

37 MNH 2904.

warm room in the house. Although Mr Jackson found the children to have pleasant manners and to be reasonably well nourished and clad, Miss Forrest recorded:

“...the Children, although not unhappy looking, seemed dull and I thought them unresponsive and not so much ill-mannered as unmannered. They are just untrained”.<sup>38</sup>

30 Mr Jackson recorded concerns about the ability and experience of Mrs Bannister and her Management Committee colleague, Mr McAdoo, and questioned whether they would be able to raise the funds that the home clearly needed. Miss Forrest commented that Mrs Bannister was unaware of the Regulations the MoHA had issued about the conduct of children’s homes and asked for a copy to be sent to her.

31 Mr Jackson concluded:

“So, far from recommending a Government grant in this case, I would suggest that we should seriously consider the transfer of the children to the care of the Welfare Authority if the Irish Church Missions cannot rise to the occasion within a reasonable time”.<sup>39</sup>

We noted that there is no record of the MoHA advising the Management Committee to ask the Welfare Authorities to fund the care of the children from their areas who had been placed in the home through private arrangements.

32 Mr Gibb, the architect, also reported on the visit<sup>40</sup> and echoed his colleagues’ concerns about the dilapidated state of the home. In particular, he pointed out that the wooden fire escape appeared very insecure and highly dangerous.

33 Although the letter confirming the registration of the home indicated that the Ministry’s power to inspect voluntary homes would be put in force straight away, and that Inspectors would carry out their first inspection visit within the next few weeks, there was a delay of two years and seven months before MoHA officials visited the home. We recognise that MoHA officials would have been busy at that time implementing a new registration process and developing statutory regulations for the conduct of children’s homes. However, this delay has to be considered within the context of Miss Forrest’s initial observations in June 1950 about the state of the home

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38 MNH 2904.

39 MNH 2907.

40 MNH 2897.

and her reference to the Divisional Medical Officer's view about the health of the children. Also, it is clear from internal MoHA documentation that officials had reservations about the content and tone of the information provided in the application for the homes to be registered, which a senior civil servant recorded "scarcely suggested a hard headed and businesslike committee running a well organised home".<sup>41</sup>

- 34 We consider that these concerns should have warranted an earlier inspection. By the time Miss Forrest returned to the home on 6 February 1953 the conditions for the children had deteriorated significantly. Earlier inspection visits could have enabled the poor conditions for the children in the home to be identified and addressed sooner. **Therefore, we find the lack of inspection of the home for a period of over two and a half years following initial registration to be a systemic failing by the MoHA to ensure the home provided proper care.**
- 35 **Although the reports of the MoHA inspectors described children who appear content and well nourished we consider the general state of dilapidation in the home, the inadequate sleeping, toilet and washing facilities for the children, the poor heating and the low staffing levels amount to a systemic failing by the Management Committee at that time to ensure the home provided proper care.**
- 36 Following a report in the *Northern Whig* newspaper on 10 February 1953 regarding the seeking of additional funds by the ICM that made reference to a visit by the ICM Superintendent, Reverend T H Horan, Miss Forrest contacted Mrs. Bannister to ask if she had alerted Reverend Horan to the situation in the home. Miss Forrest recorded that Mrs. Bannister told her she had some general conversation with the Superintendent, but did not tell him about the MoHA visit or the inspectors' criticisms. Mrs. Bannister informed Miss Forrest that the Management Committee had met, and that all the members were confident that they "can or should carry on the home and that they can bring it up to scratch". She also informed Miss Forrest that the matron was leaving the employment of the home the following day.<sup>42</sup>
- 37 Miss Forrest visited the home again on 12 February 1953, this time with Dr Simpson.<sup>43</sup> Dr Simpson recorded in his note of the visit that Miss

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41 MNH 2733.

42 MNH 2898.

43 MNH 2877.

Forrest found that the home had been cleaned since her last visit and new bed clothes had been purchased. Dr Simpson noted that the staffing had reduced to one assistant matron and a live-in domestic, and pointed out that this level of staffing was inadequate to care for fourteen children, some of whom were under five years. However, he was less pessimistic than his colleagues about the home, and suggested that given money and additional staff it would be possible to convert the premises into a satisfactory children's home.<sup>44</sup>

- 38 In a letter dated 10 February 1953, in support of the Management Committee's funding application, the Financial Secretary of the ICM, submitted the organisation's income and expenditure accounts for 1950/51 and 1951/52 to Mr Dunlop of the MoHA.<sup>45</sup> An unidentified MoHA official concluded the accounts showed that there was little prospect of financial assistance being made available to the home from ICM's headquarters.<sup>46</sup> He advised that the MoHA should:

“have a heart to heart talk with the Committee at an early date and endeavour to make the members realise that it's not a Government grant they need so much as a series of schemes which would secure the home a much larger income”.

We noted again that officials do not appear to have considered the possibility of advising the Management Committee to ask the welfare authorities to provide funding for the children from their areas that were resident in the home.

- 39 In March 1953 the Management Committee sent a report to the ICM Headquarters outlining the home's financial needs in respect of the premises, equipment, laundry, food, clothing and staff.<sup>47</sup> It concluded that it:

“...was absolutely impossible for the Committee to obtain from voluntary subscriptions or by its own efforts the money required to continue the work of the Manor House Home”.

- 40 In April 1953, the Management Committee wrote to MoHA enquiring about its grant application.<sup>48</sup> This resulted in a further meeting between

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44 MNH 2877.

45 MNH 2878.

46 MNH 2875.

47 MNH 2856-2859.

48 MNH 2871.

the Management Committee and officials on 17 April 1953.<sup>49</sup> The MoHA's note of the meeting recorded that the Management Committee was considering appointing an architect to prepare estimates with a view to making a renewed grant application, and that officials had emphasised that before making any grant, the Ministry would:

“...have to be satisfied that the finances of the organisation were such as would enable it to carry on its functions as regards general maintenance and management”.<sup>50</sup>

- 41 Following this meeting three members of the Management Committee asked for a private meeting with officials which took place on 22 May 1953.<sup>51</sup> It was clear to officials from that meeting that there was a split in the Management Committee about the future of the home. Each of the three members who met the officials indicated that they favoured a transfer of the home to Antrim Welfare Authority.
- 42 Further to this meeting, officials met on 22 May 1953. They decided to send extracts from the inspectors' reports on Manor House to the Management Committee with a letter warning that the registration of the home would have to be withdrawn if the conditions were not made right within a reasonable period.<sup>52</sup> They also decided to send a copy of the correspondence to the ICM headquarters and agreed that Miss Forrest should pay a further visit to the home to monitor the situation.
- 43 In her overview report on the state of voluntary children's homes in Northern Ireland dated 28 April 1953,<sup>53</sup> Miss Forrest provided the following critique of Manor House:
- “Has been both poverty stricken in money and ideas for some time past. Insufficient staff of poor quality in recent times. Equipment and maintenance very poor. Some improvement in recent weeks but needs a large amount of money spent on eg floor-coverings, heating, beds, tables, chairs and play equipment. Attend outside schools”.
- 44 Miss Forrest visited the home again on 22 May 1953 with a colleague, Mr Dunlop.<sup>54</sup> Although she found the house cleaner, and noted that some decorating had been done, her overall assessment was that “the state

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49 MNH 2865-2869.

50 MNH 2866.

51 MNH 2855.

52 MNH 2855.

53 HIA 1462.

54 MNH 2852-2854.

of disorder and untidiness was appalling”.<sup>55</sup> She noted that the children looked well and happy but that the sleeping, toilet and washing facilities for them remained unsatisfactory and their clothes were frayed and worn.

- 45 Mr. Dunlop also made a report of the visit and recorded his amazement at the conditions in the home. He concluded:

“...in my opinion the home should be closed until it is put in order by the present organisation or taken over by some responsible body”.<sup>56</sup>

- 46 A letter dated 8 June 1953 was sent from Mr O’Neill, Assistant Secretary, MoHA, to the Honorary Treasurer of the Manor House Committee,<sup>57</sup> and a copy was sent to the ICM headquarters.<sup>58</sup> Mr O’Neill recognised the efforts of the Management Committee, but pointed out that the Ministry could not maintain the registration of any home where the conditions were so unsatisfactory. He pointed out that as the registering authority the MoHA had the power to remove a voluntary home from the register where it appeared that the conduct of the home “was not in accordance with the regulations made or directions given...or is otherwise unsatisfactory.”<sup>59</sup> Mr O’Neill concluded by stating:

“Unless the Committee can assure the Ministry that immediate steps will be taken to bring the home up to the necessary standard, I am afraid the Ministry will have no alternative but to withdraw the home from the register”.<sup>60</sup>

- 47 It is clear from internal MoHA documentation that the first draft of this letter was amended to make it “a more lengthy and sympathetic letter”.<sup>61</sup> The initials on the note explaining the amendments are not clear but they appear to be WBM, which would suggest it was the then Minister of Home Affairs, William Brian Maginness QC MP, who wanted a more sympathetic approach to the Management Committee.
- 48 Mr Gurd, the Honorary Treasurer of the Management Committee sent a letter dated 10 June 1953, in response to Mr O’Neill’s letter, in which he stated the Management Committee was going to meet on 19 June

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55 MNH 2852.

56 MNH 2848.

57 MNH 2837/8.

58 MNH 2833.

59 Section 99(4) of the Children and Young Persons Act (Northern Ireland) 1950 (HIA 233).

60 MNH 2838.

61 MNH 2843.

1953 to consider the MoHA's concerns about the home.<sup>62</sup> The Financial Secretary of the ICM also responded on 10 June 1953 to inform the MoHA that the ICM could not offer any financial help to the local committee.<sup>63</sup> However, she followed this letter with a further letter to the MoHA dated 18 June 1953, in which she indicated that the ICM was “considering the possibility of reconstituting the Trust”.<sup>64</sup>

- 49 It is clear from hand written comments on the copy of this second letter that MoHA officials had different views about what response should be made to the ICM. Mr O'Neill responded to the Financial Secretary's letter on 22 June 1953.<sup>65</sup> He pointed out that the meeting of the Management Committee which was due to take place on 19 June 1953 had been cancelled, and that in the circumstances the Ministry's intention was to give notice to the Management Committee that the Certificate of Registration would be withdrawn from 1 August 1953. He stated however:

“If of course, subsequently the Committee is in a position to convince the Ministry that it is able to run the home satisfactorily and in accordance with the regulations, the Ministry will be only too pleased to renew the Certificate of Registration”.

- 50 Mr O'Neill also wrote to the Management Committee on 22 June 1953.<sup>66</sup> He referred to the Committee's cancellation of its planned meeting on 19 June 1953 and pointed out that the Ministry could not continue to permit children to be accommodated in a home under such unsatisfactory conditions. A copy of the letter sent to the ICM headquarters about the planned removal of registration from the home from 1 August 1953 was attached for information.

- 51 Subsequently, Mr Gurd confirmed in a telephone call to a MoHA official, which appears from the handwritten note of the conversation to be a Mr Dunlop,<sup>67</sup> that the Dublin branch had “agreed that the only thing to do was to close the home immediately but that the certificate should be retained”. Mr Dunlop recorded that he pointed out that it would be more satisfactory if the certificate was returned as this would avoid any chance of the home being reopened before they were in a position financially to

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62 MNH 2831.

63 MNH 2830.

64 MNH 2828.

65 MNH 2824/5.

66 MNH 2826/7.

67 MNH 2820.

do so. However, on a further file note dated 24 June 1953<sup>68</sup> Mr Dunlop recorded that he advised Mr Gurd:

“...that the Management Committee might like to consider asking the Ministry not to take any action in relation to its letter and that the committee would arrange to disperse the children, promise not to admit any more and to hold the Certificate until the Chairman returns when they could then consider what action they should take”.<sup>69</sup>

- 52 Subsequently Mr Gurd wrote to the MoHA on 29 June 1953<sup>70</sup> to confirm that the Management Committee had resolved to close the home as soon as satisfactory arrangements could be made to receive the children elsewhere, and that no further children would be admitted. He also requested that the MoHA:

“...take no further steps regarding withdrawal of registration as after these arrangements have been made, we will ask you to accept a voluntary surrender of our registration until such time as we are in a position to carry on again.”<sup>71</sup>

- 53 The Financial Secretary of the ICM wrote to the MoHA on 2 July 1953<sup>72</sup> to confirm the intention to have the children in Manor House transferred to Mrs Smyly’s Homes in Dublin. The ICM had a close association with these homes. She also stated:

“...my Committee hopes within the next few months that it may be found possible to reconstitute the Manor House Home on a basis satisfactory to your Ministry.”

- 54 In a handwritten annotation to this letter, a MoHA official commented, “... If our Children Act has done nothing else it has at least cleared out this dump!”<sup>73</sup>

- 55 By 9 July 1953, the ICM had appointed a new Management Committee for Manor House Home<sup>74</sup> and when Miss Forrest visited the home on 10 July 1953,<sup>75</sup> she found that all the children had been sent to homes in Dublin except one child who had been found an alternative placement by Fermanagh Welfare Authority.<sup>76</sup>

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68 MNH 2819.

69 MNH 2819.

70 MNH 2817.

71 MNH 2817.

72 MNH 2811.

73 MNH 2811.

74 MNH 2810.

75 MNH 2808.

76 MNH 2792.

- 56 Despite Mr Gurd's undertaking to surrender the Certificate of Registration the Management Committee did not do so and the MoHA took no action to require it to do so. Internal MoHA communications suggest that officials took this approach on the direction of the then Minister of Home Affairs, Mr Maginess. In a submission dated 1 September 1954<sup>77</sup> a MoHA official referred to the Minister's feeling at the time of the closure:
- “Our then Minister felt, however, that the local committee was a well-meaning and kindly body of persons (as, indeed, they certainly were) and that their failings were due to utter ineptitude rather than lack of good intentions; and he instructed the Division not to withdraw the Certificate in any way that would bring scandal upon them”.<sup>78</sup>
- 57 A further reference on a file dated 23 November 1956<sup>79</sup> referred to Mr Maginess feeling that:
- “...the Institution was much too close to his own doorstep to be denied an opportunity of putting its affairs in order and perhaps starting a lease of renewed and more perfect life”.
- 58 We noted a reference in a letter about Manor House sent from the MoHA to Welfare Committees in December 1957 that the MoHA had previously written to the Welfare Committees on 23 July 1953 to inform them that the use of Manor House had been discontinued temporarily as a voluntary home for children until further notice.<sup>80</sup>
- 59 In November 1953, MoHA received a letter from an architect acting on behalf of the Manor House Committee that enclosed plans and proposals for alterations and renovations to Manor House.<sup>81</sup> A MoHA architect, Mr Wright, inspected the home with Miss Forrest and Dr Simpson on 17 December 1953.<sup>82</sup>
- 60 This renewed engagement with the home prompted a series of discussions and correspondence within the MoHA about the approach that should be taken to the home and whether funding should be provided towards the costs of necessary renovations. It is clear that officials held different views. While some tended towards a sympathetic approach, others were of the view that as Manor House was no longer operating as a children's

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77 MNH 2730.

78 MNH 2730.

79 MNH 2661.

80 MNH 2576.

81 MNH 2800.

82 MNH 2798/9.

home it was not eligible for a grant, and that in any case no grant should be considered until the new Management Committee showed it was able to meet the normal running costs of a children's home.

- 61 It is clear from the minutes of the Management Committee held on 21 September 1954<sup>83</sup> that the committee members were aware of the divergent views held by officials and sought a meeting with the then Minister of Home Affairs, Mr Hanna QC MP, to get definitive advice about whether the MoHA would be willing to grant funding for improvements to Manor House. The minutes recorded that the Secretary of the Management Committee had a frank discussion with Mr Hanna who indicated that if the Management Committee could raise £7,000 of the £12,000 it estimated was required for renovations and could show evidence of augmenting the regular income for the home considerably, the MoHA would be likely to give a grant in the region of £5,000.
- 62 A memo from Mr Hanna to officials, dated 7 September 1954,<sup>84</sup> indicates that he settled on the position he communicated to the Secretary of the Management Committee despite his reservations about the MoHA's handling of Manor House. In the memo he was critical that the Ministry had taken no action to withdraw the Certificate of Registration when the Management Committee failed to voluntarily surrender it as it had undertaken to do. He also pointed out that the Government architect's involvement in considering the plans for renovation of the home suggested that the MoHA "condoned the whole business". He expressed regret that he could not recall the registration, but accepted, as he had communicated to the Secretary of the Committee, that the Management Committee should be given the opportunity to secure necessary financing for the home.
- 63 A series of negotiations and meetings between representatives of the Management Committee and MoHA officials followed and culminated in the funding application for Manor House being referred in June 1956 to the Maconachie Committee.<sup>85</sup>
- 64 By letter dated 30 October 1956, Miss Maconachie informed the then Minister of Home Affairs, Mr W W B Topping QC MP, that her Committee had visited the home and scrutinised its accounts for the three years

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83 MNH 3353.

84 MNH 2728.

85 The Maconachie Committee was established under the Children and Young Persons Act (Northern Ireland) 1950 to review grant applications from voluntary children's homes and training schools.

ending 31 December 1955 accounts and considered:

“...the premises are now quite suitable for the reception and accommodation of 19 or 20 children, plus staff, and that the Management Committee is a responsible and conscientious body of persons”.<sup>86</sup>

- 65 The Committee recommended that grant aid amounting to 70% of the approved expenditure over £10,000 incurred in the modernisation of the home should be awarded. Following further internal discussion in the MoHA about the terms of any grant and how and when it should be paid, given that Manor House was not currently operating as a children’s home, the Minister approved the grant application. On 15 January 1957 the MoHA was notified of the Ministry of Finance’s approval for a grant not to exceed £7,000 without the specific approval of the Ministry.<sup>87</sup>
- 66 On 15 October 1957 a letter from MoHA was sent to the Manor House Committee confirming this grant. We noted the reference in this letter to an advance grant of £2000 which had been paid to the home on 6 February 1957. The MoHA also sought information about the present position of the home in order that its inspectors could have an opportunity to inspect and report on the general suitability of the premises before the home was reopened. Inspectors visited the home in January 1957,<sup>88</sup> November 1957<sup>89</sup> and December 1957<sup>90</sup> to monitor progress. By 24 December 1957 the MoHA was in the position to write to the Secretary of the Management Committee to confirm that subject to adequate staffing arrangements being made the home was authorised to reopen for the reception of not more than twenty children.<sup>91</sup> The MoHA wrote to the Welfare Authorities on the same day to inform them that the home had been completely renovated and provided with appropriate staff and it was now reported by the Ministry’s inspectors to be suitable for the accommodation of children.<sup>92</sup> We noted that this letter indicated that satisfactory staffing was in place in the home, while the letter sent on the same day to the Management Committee indicated that the reopening of the home was subject to adequate staffing arrangements being put in place.

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86 MNH 2671.  
87 MNH 2653.  
88 MNH 2635.  
89 MNH 2602.  
90 MNH 2585.  
91 MNH 2584.  
92 MNH 2582/3.

## Operation and Governance of Manor House from 1958 to 1984

- 67 When the home reopened under the management of the new committee it appears to have progressed well. The only extant records about admissions to Manor House cover the period November 1957 to December 1978. These show that, in contrast to the earlier years, generally over half of admissions were through the welfare authorities and then social services.<sup>93</sup> The fees received for these placements and funding raised through donations and special appeals and flag days<sup>94</sup> meant that the financial challenges the home had faced in the 1950s had lessened to the extent that by November 1962, the Management Committee was in a position to make loans of over £4,000 to the ICM headquarters.<sup>95</sup>
- 68 The minutes of the Management Committee show that it met regularly. Although it dealt with practical matters to do with the funding and maintenance of the home, it always received and discussed a general report about the health and progress of the children in the home, and concerned itself with the detail of arrangements for holidays and outings for the children. Committee members approved admissions to the home, and developed and agreed policies for the care and welfare of the children. For example, at its meeting on 18 January 1965 it agreed amendments to its rules about children receiving hospitality outside the home including approval for overnight stays away from the home.<sup>96</sup>
- 69 A staff sub-committee interviewed applicants for jobs and the Management Committee approved the appointment of staff and received progress reports about new appointments. The minutes show that there was a high turn-over of staff, particularly in 1962 and 1963, which was in part due to girls as young as fifteen and sixteen years being appointed as live-in care staff and leaving after short periods in the home,<sup>97</sup> but also due to poor relations between the matron, Miss Watson and some of her staff. The Management Committee recorded at its meeting on 15 October 1962 that it had to get to the root of the cause of the “major crisis” in staffing.<sup>98</sup> They subsequently interviewed staff who had resigned to find out their

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93 MNH 159.

94 MNH 3521/2.

95 MNH 3514.

96 MNH 3630.

97 MNH 3535 and MNH 3538.

98 MNH 3511.

reasons for doing so and questioned Miss Watson about staff relations. The minutes of the meeting do not record any discussion of the effect the high turn-over of staff might be having on the children, but did record concern that supporters of the home and the general public would be wondering about the “almost continuous advertising for staff”.<sup>99</sup> The tone of the minutes of subsequent meetings suggest that tensions developed between committee members and Miss Watson about staffing matters, and these culminated in Miss Watson’s resignation in May 1963.

## Administering Authority

- 70 The Management Committee was the Administering Authority of the home as defined in the Children and Young Persons (Voluntary Homes) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1952 (the Regulations). We will now consider the Management Committee’s performance in this regard in relation to two key responsibilities it held as the Administering Authority: the appointment of an officer in charge and the appointment of a monthly visitor to the home.
- 71 Section 101 (1) of the Children and Young Persons Act 1950 dealt with regulations as to the conduct of voluntary homes and included provisions for the MoHA to be consulted about applicants for appointment to the post of person in charge of a home; prohibit the appointment of a particular person to such a post; and, receive required notice about any change of the person in charge of a home.<sup>100</sup> The Children and Young Persons (Voluntary Homes) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1952 (the Regulations) placed responsibility on the Administering Authority to appoint “a person to be in charge of the home” (Regulation 5(1)), and placed specific responsibilities on that post holder in relation to the maintenance of records such as the medical records of each child and records about the application of corporal punishment.<sup>101</sup> The Regulations specified that the person in charge of the home should ensure generally that order is maintained by his personal influence and understanding and that of his staff and that resort to corporal punishment should be avoided as far as possible. The detailed conditions for the application of corporal punishment included that it should only be administered by the person in charge of the home

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99 MNH 3512.

100 HIA 236.

101 HIA 288.

or in his absence his duly authorised deputy.<sup>102</sup> In Manor House the title 'matron' was used for the person in charge of the home.

- 72 It was recorded in the minutes of the meeting of the Management Committee of 16 September 1963 that a letter dated 5 September 1963 had been received from the MoHA stating that inspectors were not content with the staffing position as neither matron nor her deputy were on duty when they visited.<sup>103</sup> The Management Committee decided that one of its members, Mrs Burns, would contact the MoHA and explain the situation had come about due to staff sickness and that a Miss Spencer had been in charge. There is no record of the outcome of Mrs Burns' discussions with the MoHA about the staffing situation.
- 73 The Management Committee also decided to contact MH 71 who was due to take up the post of Assistant Matron in October 1963, to let her know that she would be "in full charge for the time being".<sup>104</sup> The minutes of the next Management Committee meeting, which was held on 21 October 1963, recorded that MH 71 was in post and that since no suitable applicants had been found for the post of matron she had agreed to carry on in full charge for a longer period.<sup>105</sup>
- 74 At its next meeting on 18 November 1963 the Management Committee decided not to advertise for a matron at that time because of the cost of the unsuccessful advertising of the vacancy over the previous months and concern that frequent advertising of the vacancy would have "adverse effects".<sup>106</sup> At its meeting in February 1964 the Management Committee agreed that MH 71 should be given the title Acting Matron, "when referred to in the press or in public".<sup>107</sup> The minutes of the March 1964 meeting record that Miss Hill of the MoHA had telephoned about the vacant matron post, and that the Chairman had informed her of the difficulties experienced in filling the post and that the Committee had confidence in MH 71. There is no record of Miss Hill's response to this information or any further contact with her about this matter.
- 75 MH 71 continued in the post of Acting Matron, but in June 1964 informed the Management Committee that she would be resigning and leaving in

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102 HIA 290.

103 MNH 3549.

104 MNH 3548.

105 MNH 3554.

106 MNH 3557.

107 MNH 3591.

December 1964 to commence child care training.<sup>108</sup> The Management Committee appointed MH 3 to the post of Assistant Matron in October 1964 and decided in June 1965 to appoint her as Matron of the home.<sup>109</sup>

76 We consider the delay of almost two years in appointing a matron was unacceptable, given that post holder's general responsibility for the day to day management of the home and specific responsibilities to ensure order was maintained in the home, that resort to corporal punishment was avoided as far as possible and where corporal punishment was deemed necessary to ensure it was administered in accordance the conditions set down in the Regulations.

77 It is also clear that the Management Committee did not ensure that the statutory regulation about monthly visiting was fully met. Regulation 4 (2) required:

“The administering authority shall make arrangements for the home to be visited at least once in every month by a person who shall satisfy himself whether the home is conducted in the interests of the well-being of the children, and shall report to the administering authority upon his visit and shall enter in the record book referred to in the Schedule hereto his name and the date of his visit.”<sup>110</sup>

78 The ICM told us that Rev Thompson, who was the Honorary Secretary of the Management Committee in the 1960s, visited the home regularly and met with the children and encouraged them to discuss any problems with him. However, there is no signed record of the dates of his visits and no record of Rev Thompson making a formal report on them to the Management Committee.

79 Mr Johnston, who was the Honorary Secretary to the Management Committee prior to the home's closure, gave evidence to The Committee of Inquiry into Children's Homes and Hostels (the Hughes Inquiry), and said he visited the home regularly, including for an hour and a half before each Committee meeting. He described spending time with the children, how he would investigate any complaints made by them and report substantiated complaints to the Management Committee<sup>111</sup> Mr Johnston stated to the Hughes Inquiry that he understood that through his visits to

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108 MNH 3626.

109 MNH 3645.

110 HIA 288.

111 MNH 10148.

the home he was undertaking a statutory duty on behalf of the Committee but he accepted that his reporting of his visits was more informal than it should have been and that with hindsight it might have been better to provide a written report to the Committee.

- 80 We accept that arrangements were in place for the Honorary Secretary of the Management Committee to visit the home regularly, and meet with the children, but consider that these arrangements were not sufficiently formal to meet the statutory requirement for monthly visiting as set down in the Regulations. The DHSSPS accepted that MoHA should have checked that the monthly visiting requirement was being discharged.
- 81 **We consider that the Management Committee’s delay in appointing an officer in charge during the period August 1963 to June 1965 and its failure to appoint a monthly visitor amounted to a systemic failing to meet statutory requirements and ensure the home provided proper care.**
- 82 **We consider the MoHA’s failure to ensure that the Administering Authority met its statutory responsibilities to appoint a person in charge of the home during the period August 1963 to June 1965 and to make arrangements for monthly visiting amounted to a systemic failing to implement statutory requirements and ensure the home provided proper care.**

## Inspections by the MoHA and the DHSS

- 83 There are references in the Manor House diary and Management Committee minutes to Miss Hill of the MoHA inspecting the home in September 1966 and September 1970. No further detail is available as the DHSSPS was unable to locate copies of Miss Hill’s reports of these inspections. There also is evidence that Miss Forrest of the MoHA visited the home after 1969. Mr Johnston, the former Honorary Secretary of the Management Committee, told the Hughes Inquiry that Miss Forrest of the MoHA would have been a regular visitor to the home but that she would have met with the matron, MH 9, not with Committee members. MH 9 succeeded MH 3 as matron in October 1969.
- 84 Mr Johnston said he received feedback from MH 9 about these visits and MH 9 indicated that Miss Forrest “criticised quite a lot of the time”.<sup>112</sup>

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112 MNH 10162.

This lack of direct contact with the Management Committee meant that the MoHA was not in the position to check whether it was meeting its responsibilities as the Administering Authority for the home. **Given the history of Manor House, and the indication that Miss Forrest continued to be critical of the home, we consider the lack of more formal inspections at this time, and the MoHA's failure to raise Miss Forrest's criticisms with the Management Committee amounted to a systemic failing by the MoHA to ensure the home was providing proper care.**

85 **Equally we consider the Management Committee's failure to engage directly with Miss Forrest to find out more about her criticisms of the home amounted to a systemic failing on its part to ensure the home provided proper care.**

86 The lack of formal independent scrutiny of the home continued when the DHSS took over responsibility for the regulation of voluntary children's homes. The only indication we had of the DHSS's attitude to the home in the 1970s was that it was prepared to provide funding towards the costs of building new staff accommodation which would increase the accommodation available for children in the home. Minutes of a Management Committee meeting held at the start of 1978 (date not included)<sup>113</sup> record that the cost of the building work was £36,327, and £17,286 had been paid as a grant by the DHSS.

87 The use of the home by the Welfare Authorities in the 1960s and 1970s provides some indication that it was considered to be providing a satisfactory level of care. There was evidence of social workers regularly visiting children in the home, and, as we will consider later in this chapter, evidence of a senior social worker investigating complaints from a mother about the care her children were receiving in the home. However, as the HSCB pointed out in the statement it submitted for this Module, the primary purpose of social workers' visits was to monitor the individual needs of the children in the home that they were responsible for, and they would not, as a matter of course, have formed part of any overall quality assurance of the home.<sup>114</sup>

88 The DHSSPS was able to confirm from information provided to the Hughes Inquiry and other documentation available to it that the Social Work Advisory

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113 MNH 10088.

114 MNH 333.

Group (SWAG) inspected the home in July 1978 and September 1981, that a follow-up visit to the 1981 inspection was made in December 1982, and that a social work adviser visited the home in January and August 1978, July 1979, probably July 1982 and definitely in September 1982.<sup>115</sup> Only the report of the 1981 inspection was available to the Inquiry. An internal memo from an inspector (Mr Walker) to Dr McCoy indicates that in addition to the formal inspection in 1981 he also “inspected” the home using a format for earlier inspections as a guide: four times in 1982; three times in 1983; and, four times in 1984.<sup>116</sup> There are no reports available of these visits or any action recommended by Mr Walker or taken by the home in the light of them. **We consider the continuing lack of formal inspections up until 1978 was unacceptable, particularly given the history of the home, and amounted to a systemic failing by the DHSS to ensure the home was providing proper care.**

- 89 The report of the inspection of the home carried out by SWAG on 28, 29 and 30 September 1981 provided us with a helpful analysis of the care regime in the home at that time.<sup>117</sup> The inspectors found seventeen children in residence whose ages ranged from three to sixteen years. Three of the children were in the care of the Health and Social Services Boards on a voluntary basis, and thirteen children were the subjects of Fit Persons Orders. There were five siblings groups, which accounted for fourteen of the children. The EHSSB was responsible for twelve of the children and the SHSSB for four of the children. There was only one resident who had been placed privately, and his admission had been arranged thirteen years before in 1968. Inspectors found that ten of the children had been resident in the home for from six to ten years, and expressed concern that greater efforts were not being made to return children to their families or their local communities.<sup>118</sup>
- 90 Inspectors commented on the absence of male care staff, the youthfulness of some care staff and that contact with outside agencies, including field social workers, was made only through the matron, MH 9. They expressed concern that individual files were not kept for each child, that junior staff did not have access to the files that were maintained and that the home did not receive up to date information about the regular reviews carried out on the children and their families by the Boards.

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115 MNH 300.

116 MNH 2250-2251.

117 MNH 10194-10232.

118 MNH 10015.

- 91 Inspectors were critical of the use of a whistle to summon children to assemble outside the dining room before meals and, to assist the serving of meals, children being seated according to the portion size they ate. They also commented on meetings between children and their parents being confined to the hallway of the home, and children being woken to go to the toilet to prevent bed-wetting.
- 92 The inspectors found that staff were sensitive to the children's needs and sought to maintain a warm comfortable living environment and noted a mutual trust between the children and the staff. However, they observed staff spending time on domestic chores rather than interacting with the children and recommended that care staff should be given a clearly defined role which would enable them to work to address children's developmental needs.<sup>119</sup>
- 93 Mr Johnston told the Hughes Inquiry that as a result of this recommendation a maximum amount of time for care staff to spend on domestic chores was introduced, and that staff were pleased with the new arrangements as it meant they could spend more time with the children. He explained that some members of the Management Committee were surprised at this matter being raised by Inspectors, and queried what else staff would be doing if they were not engaged in domestic tasks. Mr Johnston accepted this indicated that some members of the Management Committee were not sufficiently modern in their approach to child care.<sup>120</sup>
- 94 The inspectors recorded their surprise at finding that the matron had not been consulted about, or given sight of, policy documents provided to SWAG by the Management Committee prior to the inspection, including the statement of the aims and objectives of the home. They pointed out that there was a need for a clearer distinction between the roles of the matron and the Management Committee, and more recognition of the matron's responsibility for professional work of the home.<sup>121</sup>
- 95 Inspectors commented on the drop in admissions to the home and suggested that, given the trend towards older children with more difficult behaviour being admitted to care, the home would have to be re-organised and the attitudes and assumptions of staff adjusted so that their capacity to cope with more disturbed children could be improved.

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119 MNH 10036.

120 MNH 10155.

121 MNH 10224.

They also suggested that there needed to be more emphasis on working effectively in the short term on behalf of children with a view towards their rehabilitation into the community.<sup>122</sup> Inspectors expressed the hope that early changes along these lines would encourage Boards to make greater use of the home.

- 96 The description of the home in the SWAG inspection report suggests that it provided a caring and ordered regime focused on meeting the practical needs of children who were in need of long-term care. The emphasis from the mid-1970s on enabling children as far as possible to remain within their families and using residential care as a short-term measure meant that the type of long-term care provided by Manor House was increasingly seen as less appropriate and therefore less necessary. The Management Committee and the staff got little opportunity to find out if they had the will and ability to adapt to these changing circumstances as the impact of the falling numbers on the home's finances became increasingly pressing.
- 97 By 1982, the number of children in the home had reduced to thirteen and the treasurer reported to the Management Committee on 20 September 1982 that the Bank had been in touch because the home's current account was overdrawn. The Management Committee agreed to accept the Bank's offer of overdraft facilities and to withdraw savings in order to pay accounts.<sup>123</sup> Mr Johnston told the Hughes Inquiry that in the years before the home was closed the low number of children in the home and the related loss of per capita fees meant that the home was running at an annual loss of £30,000.<sup>124</sup> This situation led the Management Committee to conclude that, in view of the reduction in the number of children requiring long-term residential care, the home was no longer financially viable and it arranged for the home to close in November 1984.<sup>125</sup>
- 98 We will now consider the evidence we received about physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, neglect and unacceptable practices in Manor House.

## Physical Abuse

- 99 Three of the witnesses we heard from said they were physically abused in the home. HIA 341 was placed in the home as a baby in 1941 and

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122 MNH 10222.

123 MNH 10004.

124 MNH 10144.

125 MNH 10068.

remained there until he was ten years old. He told us he was frequently assaulted by staff and he attributed the hearing loss he suffers from to the smacks he received from staff.<sup>126</sup> He said he was caned by staff and hit with a whip with long strings attached and was told by staff, “Don’t cry and don’t tell, you cry, you get more.”<sup>127</sup>

- 100 The ICM said in its response to HIA 341’s evidence that they found it impossible to reconcile his account to the Inquiry of his time in Manor House with earlier accounts he has given to newspapers in Australia in which he stated that he had no memory of his life prior to being migrated to Australia. HIA 341 explained when he gave evidence in person to the Inquiry that he had not talked about his experiences in Manor House before because he did not want to jeopardise a possible reunion with his mother.<sup>128</sup>
- 101 HIA 346 was also a resident in the home in the 1940s. He was admitted to the home in 1946 when he was four years old and remained there until he was eight years old. HIA 346 told us he was beaten by staff, and he said in his written statement that he was put in a cold bath after being beaten which he thought was an attempt to stop bruising.<sup>129</sup> When he gave evidence in person he said that he was only guessing that the use of the cold bath was to reduce bruising and that it may have been part of the punishment.<sup>130</sup>
- 102 The ICM accepted in its statement to the Inquiry that corporal punishment was used in the home in the 1940s, but pointed out that corporal punishment was permitted in children’s homes at that time. It stated that the Management Committee took seriously any complaints or allegations about abuse received from the children in the home and gave examples of such responses by the Committee in 1946 and 1947, two of the years in which HIA 341 and HIA 346 were in the home.
- 103 The first example, from 1946, was of the Management Committee investigating a complaint that two boys had been excessively punished by an assistant matron. As well as interviewing the assistant matron the Management Committee arranged for the boys to be examined by a doctor.

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126 MNH 022.

127 MNH 023.

128 Day 45, p.29.

129 MNH 014.

130 Day 45, p.43.

- 104 The second example from 1947 was of the matron MH 1 reporting to the Management Committee that she had to administer corporal punishment to one boy and some other boys questioned her about it. The Management Committee met with the boys to discuss the matter.<sup>131</sup>
- 105 The ICM also provided the example of the Management Committee being informed in September 1962 that the behaviour of a member of staff who had been a former resident in the home had been found to be unsatisfactory because it had come to light that when she was a resident she had hit two children in the home. The member of staff in question resigned on the day of the Committee meeting.<sup>132</sup>
- 106 HIA 365 and his twin brother HIA 290 were admitted to Manor House in February 1964 when they were aged 9 years and remained there until January 1968. They then spent a year living with their father before returning to Manor House for a brief stay from January 1969 to June 1969. HIA 365 said he saw the strap being used on other children, but he was never strapped because he had chronic asthma as a child and was often unwell. HIA 290 told us he did not complain about sexual abuse by a visitor to the home because he was scared he would get strapped or slapped.
- 107 In contrast HIA 289 was in the home between June 1965 and March 1968, the same time as HIA 365 and HIA 290. He told us that the home was regimented but not harsh. He remembered the matron, MH 3, as firm but fair.<sup>133</sup> He recalled children who misbehaved having privileges taken away or being sent to bed early.<sup>134</sup> He said that if the misbehaviour was particularly serious the child would be taken to MH 3, and she would decide whether the behaviour merited the child being hit on the hand with a ruler. He commented, “I don’t remember any of the children being terrified of her”.<sup>135</sup>
- 108 HIA 366 was admitted to the home on 8 December 1972 aged nine years and was discharged just over a year later on 12 December 1973 aged ten years. She told us she was frequently physically abused by the matron, MH 9,<sup>136</sup> and she recounted a particular incident when MH 9 treated her

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131 MNH 12001.

132 MNH 161.

133 MNH 085.

134 MNH 088.

135 MNH 088.

136 MNH 078.

roughly because a celebrity who was visiting the home was paying her attention. HIA 366 also said that she was bullied by older children in the home and that she felt they behaved in that way because they were bullied by MH 9.

- 109 The ICM pointed out that HIA 366 has given a range of dates and lengths of time for her stay in the home in the accounts she had given to the media. HIA 366 accepted when giving evidence in person that she had been confused about the dates of her stay in the home. However, it is the case that MH 9 was the matron when HIA 366 was resident in the home.<sup>137</sup>
- 110 The ICM told us that there are no records of complaint from children or others about MH 9, nor any record of her being subject to disciplinary proceedings. They gave examples of positive references about MH 9's relationships with children in reports from social workers, and referred to the observation of SWAG inspectors that she was quite protective of the children.<sup>138</sup>
- 111 HIA 366 also told us that MH 19, who was the Rector of the nearby Christ Church, inspected the appearance of the children before they went across to the Sunday service, and that on one occasion he "clipped" her around the ear because she was wearing the wrong colour of socks for attending church. She said she saw MH 19 hit a male resident (MH 12) in a similar manner because he was wearing the wrong trousers.<sup>139</sup> Rev Coulter, who attended Christ Church as a child and was in his teens when MH 19 came as Rector to the church, spoke on behalf of MH 19, who is now deceased. He said MH 19 was a serious man and he could understand how he could have appeared austere to a child but that he could not imagine him "clipping" a child on the ear.<sup>140</sup>
- 112 MH 26, the mother of four children in the home, MH 23, MH 24, MH 25 and MH 27, complained to the SHSSB in December 1978 that her children were being "victimised" in Manor House, and that a child had tried to drown MH 25 in the bath.<sup>141</sup> Her complaint was referred to MH 9 who investigated it and reported back to the SHSSB that when she talked in an informal manner to the children involved in the incident MH

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137 MNH 078.

138 MNH 134.

139 Day 175, p.18.

140 Day 175, p.64.

141 MNH 343.

25 talked about the fun they had “ducking” each other during bath time. MH 26 was satisfied with this explanation.

- 113 In August 1980, MH 26 complained that her son MH 23 had been hit with a stick by a member of staff, MH 28, which had left marks on his legs. She also complained that MH 23 had told her that staff pulled his hair and that both her sons MH 23 and MH 24 told her they were beaten if they refused to eat food they did not like. MH 26 stated that the boys had pleaded with her not to report these matters as they were scared that “staff would retaliate on them when MH 9 would be away from the home.”<sup>142</sup>
- 114 MH 73, Assistant Principal Social Worker, investigated this complaint and found that MH 28 had hit MH 23 with one of the sticks he and other boys had brought in from outside and were “skinning” i.e. peeling off the bark, in the kitchen of the home. MH 73 spoke to MH 9, MH 28 and MH 23’s brother MH 24, who observed the incident. MH 24 told MH 73 that MH 23 and he had been “cheeky” to MH 28 and unwilling to tidy up the mess they had created in the kitchen, and when MH 23 then rang the fire bell MH 28 had hit him twice with one of the sticks the boys had brought into the kitchen. MH 73 arranged to have MH 23 medically examined and the doctor found a faint bruise on his thigh.<sup>143</sup>
- 115 MH 73 recorded in the note of his investigation:

“After some further discussion regarding disciplinary procedures within the Home, I satisfied myself that a stick is not the usual form of disciplining and that any severe disciplining which has to be undertaken has to be done by [MH 9] with a member of staff present”.<sup>144</sup>

He also recorded that MH 9 and he had agreed this was an isolated incident that did not merit dismissal, but that MH 9 “would certainly be informing her management committee”.<sup>145</sup> We have no evidence of whether this referral was made but when giving evidence to the Hughes Inquiry MH 73 said there were occasions that MH 9 would mention staff performance to the Management Committee.<sup>146</sup> MH 73 met MH 26 and reassured her that it had been emphasised to staff in Manor House that MH 9 was responsible for disciplining children. There is no record of a

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142 MNH 350.

143 MNH 346.

144 MNH 346.

145 MNH 347.

146 MNH 10145.

response to the complaints that MH 23's hair was pulled by staff, or that the brothers were being forced to eat food. However, MH 73 concluded in his report of his investigation that he was quite satisfied that "the children are in the best possible place for care at this moment in time".<sup>147</sup>

116 This informal approach to a member of staff striking a child with a stick suggests a lack of formal disciplinary processes. We are of the view that by 1980 such processes should have been in place in the home and should have been used to deal with this incident. We are also of the view that as an **Assistant Principal Social Worker, MH 73 should have expected the use of formal disciplinary processes in a home in which the SHSSB was placing children. We consider that this informal means of dealing with a member of staff who hit a child with a stick amounts to systemic failing by Manor House to ensure the home provided proper care.**

117 During the SWAG inspection of the home in 1981, MH 9 told inspectors that a reprimand or withdrawal of privileges was the usual means of punishment and that children had to contribute to the cost of putting right any damage to property.<sup>148</sup> From their observations of the interactions between staff and children the inspectors concluded that:

"The staff influence is such in the best sense that organisational controls are seldom required."<sup>149</sup>

However, they noted that a recorded corporal punishment was the application of "three smacks with an open hand on [the] "tail end"" and reminded the home of the requirement to strictly observe the stipulations about the administration of corporal punishment laid down in the Voluntary Home Regulations.

118 We consider that a warm, firm, but not harsh regime operated in the home and that it was underpinned by an established culture in which the children were clear about how they were expected to behave and about the authority of staff. It is evident that, particularly in the early days, misbehaviour would not have been tolerated. Corporal punishment was permissible, and it was used but it is clear that complaints about excessive punishment were taken seriously and investigated by the Management Committee. We heard evidence about physical punishment which was excessive and

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147 MNH 348.

148 MNH 10027.

149 MNH 10210.

not administered in accordance with the statutory regulations governing the use of corporal punishment in children's homes. However, given the level of evidence and the particular, rather than general, nature of the allegations we do not consider that there was systemic physical abuse of children in Manor House.

## Sexual Abuse

- 119 HIA 366 told us that MH 9 took her to her bedroom and sexually abused her and made her masturbate her. This is the only allegation we have received about sexual abuse by MH 9 or any other member of Manor House staff. We do not consider that there is evidence of systemic sexual abuse of children by staff in Manor House.
- 120 Four of the six witnesses we heard from told us they were sexually abused in Manor House by adult visitors to the home. We also learnt through police material of another resident being sexually abused by a visitor to the home and of a resident being abused outside the home by a man who then came to the home to see him.
- 121 HIA 341 who was in the home in the 1940s told us that a minister, whose name he could not remember, dressed him in girl's clothing and sat him on his knee. He said that although there was no skin to skin contact he could feel the minister's erection through the silk fabric of the clothing.<sup>150</sup> HIA 341 said he was brought to see the minister by an older boy, MH 2 and that the abuse would happen quite often. When HIA 341 gave evidence in person he said that he also felt through the clothing what he thought was the Minister's finger in his anus.<sup>151</sup>
- 122 The ICM pointed out that this was the first time that HIA 341 had made claims of this sort about his time in Manor House and that he did not name the minister he said had assaulted him. HIA 341 explained that it was only as an adult that he recalled these events. There is no record of HIA 341 complaining to staff at the time, and we would accept that staff would have regarded a minister as a trustworthy and safe person to have access to children. Therefore, we do not find any systemic failing by the staff of Manor House in relation to this allegation.

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150 MNH 023.

151 Day 45, p.10.

- 123 HIA 365 and HIA 290 are twin brothers, who were in the home in the 1960s. They told us that they were sexually abused in the home by a male visitor who came from the local Army barracks. They gave similar descriptions of the man and described him grooming and sexually abusing them. HIA 365 described how the visitor would sit him on his knee in a darkened television room, put his coat around him and then take his hand and make him masturbate him. He said the man would also abuse him in an upstairs bedroom and would use sweets and gifts such as a mouth organ as bribes. He said that he saw his brother HIA 290 sitting on the man's knee and that he believed other children in the home may have been abused in the same way.<sup>152</sup>
- 124 HIA 290 described a man sexually abusing him in a similar manner and he remembered the man wearing a trench coat in the television room to hide what he was doing.<sup>153</sup> He recalled the man bribing him with sweets and the promise of a pen knife and telling him not to tell anyone about what he was doing or he would not visit again. He also said that he was aware of other children in the home being abused in a similar manner by the man.
- 125 It is clear from the accounts given by HIA 365 and HIA 290 that this man effectively manipulated them to ensure their silence and compliance. HIA 290 explained that, although he felt he could talk to the staff at the home about problems, he had been brought up by his father, whose attitude was that children should be seen and not heard, so he did not feel able to report the man's behaviour to staff.<sup>154</sup>
- 126 HIA 289 was in the home at the same time as HIA 365 and HIA 290 and also described a man abusing him in a similar manner. He said he thought the children called the man "Uncle Bob".<sup>155</sup> He also referred in his statement to an "Uncle Tom" visiting but said that he did not abuse him and he was not aware of rumours amongst the children about him.<sup>156</sup> As HIA 289 was unable to give evidence in person the identity of the man that abused him could not be pursued further with him.
- 127 HIA 289 described the man fondling him and making him masturbate him in a darkened television room. He described trying to pull his hand away but the man being insistent and using his hand to keep HIA 289's hand

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152 MNH 008.

153 Day 174, p.27.

154 Day 174, p.30.

155 MNH 086.

156 MNH 087.

on his penis. HIA 289 said he saw other boys being abused in the same way and described the children's awareness of the abuse:

"The other children knew what was happening. They would just stare ahead at the television. All the children would dread this man calling their name and asking them to come out and sit on his knee. They would even push and shove each other on the bench so that they would be towards the end of it and he might not pick them. Sometimes, if you had been on his knee, the other children would ask if he had touched you. You might have answered 'yes' or 'no' but no-one would say much more than that. It was never talked about generally. He never bothered with the girls."<sup>157</sup>

- 128 HIA 289 described the same man playing football and chases with boys from the home in the field at the back of the house, and using the physical contact in such games to fondle their genitals and rub his unshaven face across their cheeks.
- 129 HIA 365 said in his statement that he believed staff knew about the abuse and indicated they were friendly with the man. At the hearing he described staff sitting in the television room while the man abused children. HIA 290 said that although staff may have been in the television room they would not have necessarily known what was happening as the man always put the light off in the room. HIA 289 said he remembered one child informing the staff of this man's behaviour but he thought the child was just told they were wicked for "making up such stories".<sup>158</sup>
- 130 In its written statement the ICM explained that no "Uncle" system operated in the home, and that the only record it could find of a soldier visiting the home was a reference in the minutes of the Management Committee meeting held on 20 March 1967 to visits from MH 49, who had been a resident in the home in 1953. The minute recorded that MH 49 was based in Singapore, had been in correspondence with the home since 1962, and that "[MH 49] had visited the Manor House when in Ireland on leave".<sup>159</sup> This reference to MH 49's communications with, and visits to, the home was recorded in 1967 at which time HIA 365, HIA 290 and HIA 289 were resident in the home.

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157 MNH 087.

158 MNH 087.

159 MNH 087.

- 131 The ICM found no other references to MH 49 in minutes or other documentation. Reverend Coulter confirmed when he gave evidence in person that the ICM did not have documentation in relation to MH 49's time as a resident in the home.
- 132 Coincidentally MH 49 contacted the headquarters of the ICM after the public hearings in relation to Manor House had finished. The ICM directed MH 49 to the Inquiry and he co-operated with our investigations and provided a statement about his very limited contact as an adult with Manor House. We were satisfied on the basis of the detailed statement provided by MH 49 that he was not the person who abused children in Manor House.
- 133 The ICM explained in its written statement that there was controlled access to the home, children were not allowed to answer the door and any visitors had to be approved by the matron or a member of the Management Committee. It also explained that the policy of supervision within the home was that staff should be seen around and be with the children as duties permitted and that whilst these arrangements were enough to regularly safeguard children most of the time, they were:
- “...unfortunately not enough to prevent an opportunistic, determined and devious abuser in this case.”<sup>160</sup>
- 134 ICM also stated that if a member of staff had responded to a report from a child about this man's behaviour in the way recalled by HIA 289, that would have been totally contrary to the expectations and actions of the Management Committee in relation to the management of sexual abuse at that time.<sup>161</sup>
- 135 We accept ICM's account of the efforts the Management Committee and staff made to keep children safe. We noted a number of references in the minutes of Management Committee meetings to requests for visits to the home and proposed outings being refused because the members did not think they would be appropriate for the children. Also, as commented on in the SWAG inspection report as late as 1981, parents visiting their children were confined to meeting them in the front hall of the home.
- 136 We recognise that watching television in a darkened room would have been common practice in the late 1960s and we would not expect staff to have seen such behaviour as suspicious. However, we consider that the

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160 MNH 053.

161 MNH 095.

behaviour of the man in question in the television room as described by the witnesses should have raised questions about why he had nine-year-old boys on his lap, and the discomfort amongst the children described by HIA 289 should have been noticed. Also the special interest he took in some boys, such as buying HIA 365 a mouth organ and being upstairs with him, should have raised some suspicions. We noted that in 1966 the Management Committee dealt with a case of peer sexual abuse and instructed MH 3 “to keep a strict watch” on the boy, to which MH 3 responded that it was already being done.<sup>162</sup> So the matron and some of the staff were aware of the potential of sexual abuse of children at the time HIA 365, HIA 290 and HIA 289 were being abused in the home. Given that context we consider the behaviour of the man and the children’s reactions to him should have been noticed. **Therefore, in relation to these cases of sexual abuse we consider that there was a systemic failing on the part of the staff of the home to take proper steps to prevent, detect and disclose abuse.**

- 137 We received files from the police about the investigation of another case of alleged sexual abuse of a child resident in Manor House in the 1970s. In 2000 police investigated allegations of abuse at Macedon children’s home and identified MH 20 as an alleged abuser. Police found that MH 20<sup>163</sup> had been a serving soldier and had become a voluntary helper at Manor House prior to his discharge from the regular Army. He subsequently volunteered with Barnardo’s.
- 138 The police carried out further inquiries to try to identify other children who might have been abused by this man and interviewed MH 41, whose sister had been fostered by MH 20 and his wife. MH 41 told police that he had been sexually abused by MH 20 at Manor House over a period of five or six years. He told police that the abuse, which included masturbation and oral sex, took place in a bedroom, greenhouse and football pitch in the home and also happened when he spent weekends at MH 20’s home. He said the abuse started when he was 10 years of age, and when he was approximately 14 years of age MH 20 involved his wife MH 21 in the abuse and that all three of them engaged in sexual intercourse together. MH 41 explained that the frequency of the abuse reduced when he reached his mid-teens and began to see less of MH 20 and MH 21. He said he never felt able to tell anyone about the abuse.<sup>164</sup>

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162 MNH 104.

163 MH 20 is referred to as BAR 4 in the chapter dealing with Barnardo’s homes.

164 MNH 6379–6381.

- 139 MH 20 was interviewed by police on 12 December 2002.<sup>165</sup> He told them that he came to Northern Ireland in 1969 as a soldier and in 1977 he joined the UDR. He explained that his first contact with Manor House was when his Army regiment organised trips for the children and gave them gifts.<sup>166</sup> When he was living in Northern Ireland after being medically discharged from the Army he went back to visit Manor House, spent time with the children in the home, and took them on day trips and to his home.<sup>167</sup> MH 20 admitted he had feelings for MH 41 and that they had sexual relations in Manor House and at his home. He said that he had not forced MH 41 to do anything against his will, and indicated that he did not accept all that MH 41 alleged happened.<sup>168</sup>
- 140 MH 21 was interviewed and said she remembered MH 41 being in her home and, although she was not certain, there was a possibility she had sex with him since she did have sex with adolescents because her husband wanted her to do so.<sup>169</sup>
- 141 On 22 December 2004 the DPP directed no prosecution of MH 20 and MH 21 because there was no reasonable prospect of a conviction based on the available evidence.<sup>170</sup>
- 142 It is clear that MH 20 was viewed by staff at Manor House as a person who could be trusted, and that he was therefore allowed considerable access to the children, including taking them out on trips and taking children to his home. The HSCB provided extracts from social work records which show that during a visit to Manor House, MH 41's social worker, who was employed by the EHSSB, learnt about plans for him to stay with MH 20 and MH 21 from 27-30 December 1975 with another boy from the home.<sup>171</sup> The social worker recorded:
- “MH 9 confirmed this and was reassuring about the couple's interest in the children as they have been regular visitors over a number of years.”
- 143 The HSCB commented that this extract shows that MH 9 made arrangements for a child to spend a weekend out with a family without securing prior consent from the child's social worker. However, it also

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165 MNH 6401.

166 MNH 6408.

167 MNH 6408.

168 MNH 6419–MNH 6420.

169 MNH 6502.

170 MNH 6334.

171 MNH 15016.

accepted that it shows that the social worker took MH 9's personal view of the couple to be sufficient information as to their suitability.<sup>172</sup> The HSCB pointed out that the social worker's response was not in keeping with the approach Mr Bunting told the Inquiry he took in July 1972 when he informed voluntary children's homes and EHSSB staff that couples who wished to befriend children resident in voluntary homes had to be approved by the Welfare Department prior to the children going out with them, even for a day.<sup>173</sup>

- 144 The HSCB also pointed out that subsequent to MH 41 being allowed to stay with MH 20 and MH 21 the couple successfully completed a rigorous assessment process to become foster parents, and that there was clearly no identification of any "mal intent" towards children on their part at that time. They submitted that it was likely, therefore, that any assessment of the couple's suitability to befriend MH 41 would, in all likelihood, have resulted in approval of the arrangements.<sup>174</sup>
- 145 From MH 41's account, MH 20 clearly groomed him and secured his compliance in sexual activity. It may have been that more questioning of MH 41 about the time he spent with MH 20, particularly at the start of the sexual abuse, might have identified what was happening. However, it is clear that MH 20 acted in a covert and manipulative manner, and, as the HSCB pointed out, suspicions were not raised about him during an extensive assessment process to be approved as a foster parent. Therefore, we do not consider that staff in Manor House should be criticised for not identifying the risk that a plausible man, who was introduced to them through the Army and was a member of the UDR, could present to children.
- 146 Another known incident of sexual abuse related to the indecent assault of a child MH 23 who was resident in Manor House. This assault was committed in May 1982 by David Jarvis. At that time Mr Jarvis was on bail in relation to a similar assault against a male child who was resident in Barnardo's, which he was subsequently convicted of in December 1982.
- 147 MH 23 was at a camp with the Boys Christian Missionary Society in Portrush in the summer of 1981. During that holiday he attended a stock car race and met Mr Jarvis who allowed him to use his camera. About a year later MH 23 was leaving a youth club in Lisburn and met Mr Jarvis

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172 MNH 15017.

173 RUB 5569.

174 MNH 15020.

again. He agreed to go to Mr Jarvis's house, where Mr Jarvis sexually abused him. Around a month after this, on 18 June 1982, Mr Jarvis came to the outside of Manor House and tried to persuade MH 23 to go to his home, and he said he would pay him for sexual favours. MH 23 refused to go with him and went back into the home.

- 148 Mr Jarvis left but returned a short time later and MH 23 became upset and told members of staff that he did not want to see Mr Jarvis. A member of staff MH 34 told a colleague to take down a description of Mr Jarvis's car and its registration number and then went out and told him to leave, which he did. MH 23 then told staff about his previous encounters with Mr Jarvis.<sup>175</sup> The police were subsequently contacted and MH 23 and the relevant members of staff were interviewed. Mr Jarvis was identified by the police and convicted on 18 March 1983 of indecent assault of MH 23. We consider that the staff in Manor House acted promptly to protect MH 23, and that MH 34's quick thinking was commendable and assisted the police in apprehending Mr Jarvis.
- 149 On 4 February 1985 Mrs Brown of the Child Care Branch of the DHSS wrote to Chief Superintendent Pollock of the RUC to express concern that although staff in Manor House and Barnardo's had each co-operated with relevant police investigations they had not been informed about the outcomes of the investigations and the subsequent convictions. Mrs Brown explained that the Department was anxious to ensure that in future any home involved in this way would be informed about the outcome of police investigations.<sup>176</sup> On 5 April 1985 the RUC confirmed that arrangements had been put in place to ensure that would happen.<sup>177</sup> We consider it appropriate and helpful that the DHSS followed up this matter in this way.

## Peer Sexual Abuse

- 150 Although only one witness told us about being abused by a peer in Manor House we learnt from police material that peer sexual abuse was a significant problem in the home in the 1970 and 1980s. The witness who told us about peer sexual abuse was HIA 289 who was in the home from 1965 to 1968. He told us that he was sexually abused by an older resident called MH 18, who would go into a rage if HIA 289 resisted him administering oral sex.<sup>178</sup>

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175 MNH 6277/8.

176 MNH 6239-6240.

177 MNH 6230.

178 MNH 087.

- 151 HIA 289 said this sexual abuse happened in the fields behind the home and that although he remembered staff supervising the playground they did not supervise all periods of play time.<sup>179</sup> The ICM told us that they had no record of complaints about MH 18's behaviour, and that if HIA 289 had reported the abuse it would have been dealt with promptly. They provided documentation to support this view, which detailed how the Management Committee dealt with a case of peer sexual abuse that was referred to them in 1966, which was during the time that HIA 289 was resident in the home.<sup>180</sup>
- 152 Peer sexual abuse in the home between 1975 and 1980 came to the attention of the police in June 1985, the year after the home closed.<sup>181</sup> On Thursday 20 June 1985, a former resident of Manor House, MH 31, then aged 17, broke into the home of another former resident MH 12 and assaulted him with a poker. MH 12 overpowered MH 31, who then went on to spend the night in MH 12's home. MH 12 was concerned about MH 31 and the next morning, Friday 21 June 1985, he asked his own social worker Helen Taylor to visit to speak to MH 31. Helen Taylor visited and after speaking to MH 31 about what was concerning him brought him to see his own social worker Alan Morrison.<sup>182</sup>
- 153 MH 31 told Mr Morrison that MH 12 had sexually abused him in Manor House and that he had broken into MH 12's home on two occasions and attacked him on the second of these occasions because he was so distressed about the abuse. He further said that on the previous night when he had stayed in MH 12's home they had shared a single bed and MH 12 had sexually molested him twice during the night.<sup>183</sup> Alan Morrison agreed with MH 31 that they would go to the police on the following Monday, 24 June 1985, so that MH 31 could admit to the burglaries and assault and explain why he had committed the offences.
- 154 On Saturday 22 June 1985, MH12 visited his grandmother and told her and his brother who was also visiting about MH 31 breaking into his house and attacking him. He told them that he did not want to involve the police. As MH 12 was leaving his grandmother's house he collapsed and was admitted to hospital where he remained in a critical condition for a

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179 MNH 087.

180 MNH 095.

181 MNH 6001-6182.

182 MNH 6027-6028.

183 MNH 6028.

number of days. His father was told about the burglary and the attack and he reported them to the police.

- 155 MH 31 was interviewed by the police on Sunday 23 June 1985; he admitted the crimes but explained that they were acts of revenge because MH 12 had repeatedly sexually assaulted him when they were both residents in Manor House between 1975 and 1980. The police subsequently interviewed MH 12 who admitted to sexual activity with MH 31 when they were in Manor House and on two occasions in his flat. He also explained that when he was a child in Manor House, just before he started primary school, older boys initiated sexual activity with him and although he did not want to take part they persisted and he did what they wanted.<sup>184</sup> He named other male residents of Manor House that he had sexual relations with during the eleven years he spent in the home.<sup>185</sup> He explained that he moved from Manor House to Kincora, and it was when he was abused in that hostel by a member of staff, William McGrath, that he began to realise his behaviour in Manor House was wrong. As a result of the statements of both men, and the possibility that the allegations might impinge on the Kincora Inquiry, the police decided to undertake a full investigation.<sup>186</sup>
- 156 The police traced and interviewed five other males who were former residents of Manor House during the period 1975 to 1980, MH 33, MH 24, MH 23, MH 39 and MH 32. Allegations were made about another former resident MH 30 but the police were not able to trace him.
- 157 From these interviews the police determined that the claims of sexual misbehaviour at the home between residents were substantiated, that the sexual activity had initially taken the form of experimentation but on some occasions progressed as far as buggery. During the interviews the former residents described consensual behaviour but also in some instances coercive behaviour. They all confirmed that they had not told staff in the home about the sexual activity. The police concluded from their interviews:
- “There is evidence to suggest that it began at a very early age, perhaps as young as 5 years and new boys would be introduced to sexual acts almost upon their arrival at the Home.”<sup>187</sup>

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184 MHN 6081.

185 MHN 6081.

186 MNH 6031-6043.

187 MNH 6010.

- 158 This conclusion is supported by disclosures MH 23 made to social workers on 31 July 1985 about his time in Manor House. MH 23 described older male residents in Manor House threatening him to make him engage in sexual activity and explained that he had not told anyone about it because he was afraid of being beaten up.<sup>188</sup> MH 23 was admitted to Manor House when he was approximately four years old and he disclosed that the peer abuse commenced when he was five to six years old.<sup>189</sup>
- 159 The police decided that four of the five former residents they interviewed would be weak and/or uncooperative witnesses. However, given the admissions by MH 12 and MH 33 and the evidence given against them, particularly that of MH 31, the police decided to arrest them on suspicion of committing an indecent assault on MH 31 by virtue of Section 2 of the Criminal Law Act (Northern Ireland) 1967.<sup>190</sup>
- 160 The matter was referred to the DPP who directed that no-one should be prosecuted in respect of what had happened in Manor House or in respect of the aggravated burglary, due to the lapse of time, the interconnection between the aggravated burglary and the allegations of abuse and the reluctance of anyone involved to pursue the allegations.<sup>191</sup>
- 161 In February 2013, MH 31 contacted police to report the abuse he suffered in Manor House from 1975 to 1980. Police tried unsuccessfully to speak to him and then discovered in June 2013 that he, sadly, had taken his own life in March of that year.<sup>192</sup>
- 162 It is clear from the police investigations that during the period 1975 to 1980 there was sustained peer abuse in Manor House and from 1975 to 1977 there were at least eight boys involved in this abuse. While the three main instigators were in their teens, one of the boys they abused was six years old and another was seven years old. The activity is described as regular and the evidence suggests that on at least one occasion four boys engaged in oral sex together. This indicated to us that the level of supervision of the children particularly at night time was inadequate. **Given this level of activity and the fact that at that time it involved at least over a third of the children resident in the home we consider that there was a systemic failure by the staff to take all proper steps to prevent, detect and disclose peer sexual abuse in the home.**

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188 MHN 375.

189 MNH 375.

190 MNH 6022.

191 MNH 6020.

192 MNH 6183.

- 163 Another case of peer sexual abuse came to the attention of staff in Manor House on 14 September 1982<sup>193</sup> when a child in the home MH 38 told a member of staff MH 28 about behaviour between her brother MH 39 and another resident MH 25 which was sexual in nature. She said she saw the children in a room with their underwear down and heard MH 25 say “stop it [MH 39] its sore”.<sup>194</sup> This conversation happened on a Saturday morning. In the absence of the matron MH 9 who was on holiday, MH 28 and her colleagues decided to do nothing further until they could contact MH 39’s social worker on the following Monday.
- 164 MH 39’s social worker, MH 57, was informed on Monday morning and came to see MH 39 in the home that morning, but he refused to stay in the meeting with her even before she could raise the matter with him. MH 28 interviewed MH 25 on Monday afternoon, who told her that the incident as described by MH 38 had happened, and that MH 39 had forced her to be involved, she had told him to stop, and had tried to push him off. She said that MH 39 had made a previous attempt to have intercourse with her about a year before, and had behaved in a similar way with another female resident. We have seen no evidence that the allegation that MH 39 behaved in a similar manner with another girl in the home was investigated further by Manor House or that her social worker and/or the police were informed about it. We consider that this **allegation should have been investigated further and that the failure to do so was a systemic failing by Manor House staff to take all proper steps to prevent, detect and disclose abuse.**
- 165 MH 28 left a telephone message for MH 25’s social worker asking her to contact her and when she had not heard back from her by 9.45pm that evening she contacted the social worker’s senior, Mr Forbes. Dr McCann, the Chairman of the Management Committee, and Mr Johnston, the Honorary Secretary were also told on the Monday evening about the incident. Dr McCann expressed his concern to staff that MH 25 had not been medically examined. MH 39 was interviewed by his social worker the next day and admitted to the behaviour and was subsequently interviewed by police. MH 25 was also interviewed by police and medically examined by a police doctor who found that her hymen was stretched but still intact. Mr Forbes pressed for MH 39 to be removed from the home and said that if that did not happen he would remove MH 25 and her sister MH 27 from

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193 MNH 390–394.

194 MNH 390.

the home. It was agreed that MH 39 would be removed but only after he had completed a planned interview and tests for admission to the Army that were taking place on the Thursday of that week. MH 28 recorded that MH 57, MH 39's social worker, felt that the Army should not be told about the incident until such times when it would be necessary, and that "We assured MH 39 about this and he seemed happier."<sup>195</sup>

- 166 We have received no information about the nature of the police investigations or its conclusions, but when MH 39 was interviewed by police in 1985 about allegations of peer sexual abuse in Manor House<sup>196</sup> there was no reference in the record of that interview to any previous police action in relation to his time in the home. We therefore conclude that no formal action was taken beyond the police interviewing MH 39 and his removal from the home.
- 167 Mr Forbes' manager, MH 73, Assistant Principal Social Worker, SHSSB, recorded his concerns about how Manor House staff had handled the matter and put on record that on MH 9's return from holiday he intended to raise with her why there was a delay in informing his department about the matter, why MH 39's social worker was informed before MH 25's and "the attitude that the boy would appear to have been the injured party and that we might be spoiling his chance to gain admission to the Army."<sup>197</sup> We have seen no documentation about whether these matters were raised with MH 9 and if so what her response was.
- 168 The SHSSB informed the DHSS about matters relating to MH 26's family because of the potential of MH 26 going public with her complaints about the care her children were receiving. Chris Walker of the DHSS visited the home on 22 September 1982 and met with MH 9 who gave him a summary of the events in relation to MH 39 and MH 25 and how they were managed. Mr Walker produced a note of this meeting<sup>198</sup> but there is no record of any further involvement by the DHSS.
- 169 When MH 28 spoke to MH 25 about the incident with MH 39 she asked if he had behaved in a similar way with MH 25's sister, MH 27. MH 25 said he had not but that his brother MH 72 had behaved in a similar manner with MH 27 two years previously. We have received no evidence to suggest that this allegation was investigated further by Manor House staff at that time.

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195 MNH 10122.

196 MNH 6043.

197 MNH 396.

198 MNH 2551-2552.

- 170 However, three years later, when MH 27 was in another children’s home she told staff she had been raped in Manor House. At that time she was referred to a child psychiatrist who concluded from the detail MH 27 provided that a sexual incident with MH 72 had occurred<sup>199</sup> and “action was taken at the time”.<sup>200</sup> If the psychiatrist was correct that action was taken at the time the incident occurred, this may explain why Manor House staff did not record any reaction to MH 25’s disclosure about MH 27 and MH 72 as the information was not new to them.
- 171 The SHSSB referred another alleged incident of peer sexual activity in Manor House to the police in August 1985 following MH 23’s disclosure to social workers that while he was resident in Manor House he had sexual intercourse with his sister MH 25 who was also a resident in the home.<sup>201</sup> MH 23 told the social workers that he had sex with MH 25 “lots of times” in different places in Manor House including his bedroom, behind the house and in the yard. He said that a member of staff MH 34 had caught them acting in this way. He also said that he had sexual intercourse once with a female resident in Manor House MH 36 and more than once with another female resident, MH 38. The social workers also interviewed MH 25 and she confirmed that she had engaged in sexual activity with MH 23 in Manor House but stated that it only happened twice and that staff had only caught them on the first occasion.
- 172 In her record of the interview with MH 25, the social worker Miss Logan recorded reminding MH 25 of an incident in 1982 when staff at Manor House found MH 23 and her together in his room and their admission to “tickling each other”. MH 25 agreed that had happened but stated that they had not had sex on that occasion.<sup>202</sup> The awareness of Manor House staff about the sexual contact between MH 25 and her brother MH 23 was also confirmed when Mr Walker met with MH 9 to discuss the incident between MH 39 and MH 25. At that meeting MH 9 told Mr Walker that MH 25 had been involved in incidents of sexual exploration with her older brother MH 23 and had been warned of the dangers involved, and told how to avoid such incidents in the future. There is no evidence to indicate if extra monitoring and supervision of the siblings were put in place to try to prevent a repeat of this behaviour.

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199 MNH 360.

200 MNH 363.

201 MNH 6567.

202 MNH 379.

- 173 Police interviewed MH 25 in October 1985. She confirmed that her brother MH 23 had sex with her when they were both resident in Manor House. However, police reached the view through questioning her that she was describing sexual touching rather than intercourse. MH 23 was also interviewed by the police and although he said he had sex once with MH 25 in Manor House, the police reached the view from his description of what had occurred that the activity amounted to touching of genitalia rather than full sexual intercourse.
- 174 The accounts the young people gave to police were inconsistent with the ones they gave to social workers in which they each said more than just touching took place in a bedroom of Manor House. However, on the basis of what the children told them, the police concluded that what occurred amounted to sexual exploration and the DPP directed no prosecution on 9 January 1986.<sup>203</sup> However, the Detective Inspector who submitted the recommendation of no prosecution expressed the view that there was a case for “somewhat more supervision” of MH 23 and MH 25 to try and prevent a reoccurrence of similar type behaviour. He suggested that this view could be relayed to the Department in a letter when the result of the investigation was being forwarded to them for their information.<sup>204</sup> We have no evidence about whether this happened but we noted the inference that as a matter of routine the Department was informed of the outcome of police investigations of this sort. We consider that the EHSSB responded appropriately to these allegations and promptly referred them to the police for investigation.
- 175 MH 23 was admitted to Manor House in December 1973 when he was three and a half years old and he stayed there for almost ten years. He told social workers and the police that from an early age in Manor House he was initiated into sexual activity and then went on to initiate such activity with other children. His behaviour as described by him and his sister MH 25 went beyond sexual exploration to attempted sexual intercourse. **We consider the extent to which MH 23 was sexually active from an early age with girls and boys in Manor House indicates a lack of supervision that amounted to a systemic failing by staff to prevent, detect and disclose abuse in the home.**

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203 MNH 6553.

204 MNH 6559.

## Unacceptable Practices

### Treatment of Enuresis

- 176 As previously referred to, we know from MoHA documentation that in 1953 officials protested to the Chairman of the Management Committee about the home's practice of making children who wet the bed sleep in "an awful little room in the basement".<sup>205</sup> We heard evidence from only one witness about being punished for wetting the bed. HIA 341 described being put in a room where coal was kept which was called the dungeon as a punishment for wetting the bed.<sup>206</sup> HIA 366 also told us that she and her brother were put in a cold, dark, wet cellar in the home as a punishment.<sup>207</sup>
- 177 HIA 341 said he wet the bed daily and that staff strapped him to his bed and left him lying on wet sheets sometimes for as long as 24 hours and that he was put head first into a cold bath and held down while he was being washed as a punishment for wetting the bed.<sup>208</sup> He said he remembered another boy in the home being treated in a similar manner.<sup>209</sup>
- 178 HIA 341 also described staff using enemas and a buzzer system to prevent him wetting the bed. We know from the report of the 1981 SWAG inspection of the home that at that time staff woke children at night to go to the toilet to prevent them wetting their beds. Although the SWAG inspectors recommended this practice should cease the Management Committee, guided by the two medical doctors in its membership, justifiably decided that it should continue as the children were generally unaware that they had been taken to the toilet.<sup>210</sup>
- 179 **It would appear that in the 1940s and 1950s there was a harsh response by staff to children who suffered from enuresis, including the segregation of children who wet their beds and making them sleep in unacceptable conditions. We consider that this unacceptable practice amounted to a systemic failing to ensure the home provided proper care.** However, we also recognise that even at that time attempts were made by staff to prevent bed-wetting occurring rather than just using punishment of it as a deterrent.

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205 MNH 2905.

206 MNH 022.

207 Day 175, p.14.

208 Day 45, p.7.

209 MNH 022.

210 MNH 10079.

- 180 HIA 341 said that an older boy called MH 2 was involved in helping staff to put him in the “dungeon”. This is a reference to the same boy that HIA 341 said brought him to a minister who sexually abused him. HIA 341 indicated that the boy might have been an altar boy. ICM pointed out in its response to HIA 341’s statement that the Church of Ireland did not have altar boys. When HIA 341 gave evidence in person he clarified that he thought the boy had some kind of clerical connection.<sup>211</sup>
- 181 HIA 346 who was in the home in the 1940s described being attached by a rope to a brick to stop him running away and being hit by staff for dropping the brick on his toes. He also said he was tied to his bed at night.<sup>212</sup> We consider such practices to be unacceptable.
- 182 HIA 366 complained about the children from the home being marched to Christ Church each Sunday morning and “being sneaked round the side of the Church” and made to enter the church through a side door rather than the main entrance.<sup>213</sup> She said she tried to complain to MH 19 who was the Rector of Christ Church about being marched to church but that he ignored her.<sup>214</sup>
- 183 Rev Courtney explained that seating was reserved for the children from the home and that the door they entered through was the one nearest to the reserved seating. He explained that this arrangement was similar to one used in a church in which he was the rector, where seating was reserved for children from a local residential grammar school. We accepted Rev Coulter’s explanation and found it satisfactory. He also indicated that he thought that if MH 19 had heard a complaint of a serious nature from a child he would have responded to it.<sup>215</sup>
- 184 HIA 289 described being made to go to church and Sunday school and how on one occasion, when he tried to resist attending by holding on to railings, his fingers were prised off the railings and he was dragged into church.<sup>216</sup>
- 185 The ICM explained in its written responses to HIA 366 and HIA 289’s statements that the home was set up with the purpose of providing a stable home in a Christian atmosphere for orphans or children from broken homes to help them to develop spiritually, physically and intellectually to

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211 Day 45, p.9.

212 MNH 014.

213 MNH 079.

214 Day 175, p.31.

215 Day 175, p.65.

216 MNH 085.

their full potential.<sup>217</sup> Therefore, the children attending the local church and availing of church activities and organisations for children was a normal and regular part of the way the home met its goals<sup>218</sup> and a key component of its care.<sup>219</sup>

186 HIA 366 told us she was put into a bath with a nineteen-year-old boy; she did not indicate that there was a sexual element to this incident.<sup>220</sup> This is the only allegation of this sort that we heard.

187 We carefully considered the accounts of unacceptable practices within the home. With the exception of the treatment of enuresis we did not discern patterns of behaviour by staff that would indicate systemic abuse.

### **Emotional Abuse**

188 HIA 346 told us that staff threatened him that his mother would not visit if he misbehaved,<sup>221</sup> and HIA 341 told us that staff threatened to send him home to his mother if he did not behave, which he said he found confusing and distressing.<sup>222</sup> HIA 366 said that on occasion when her mother visited the home she was not allowed to see her.<sup>223</sup>

189 HIA 366 also said that she and her brother who was admitted to the home at the same time as her were kept separate.<sup>224</sup> When she gave evidence in person she clarified that she saw her brother at meal times but not at play time. ICM explained in its response to HIA 366's evidence that Manor House did not have a policy of separating siblings and that at times they made up the majority proportion of the residents. It also pointed out that in any case the home was small and it would not have been possible to keep siblings separate.<sup>225</sup>

190 We consider that making threats to children about removing access to their parents was very poor practice. However, we did not consider that the evidence we heard about isolated incidents of this nature amounted to systemic abuse.

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217 MNH 10023.

218 MNH 093.

219 MNH 136.

220 MNH 078.

221 MNH 014.

222 MNH 021.

223 MNH 078.

224 MNH 078.

225 MNH 135.

## Neglect

- 191 As we have previously indicated we consider the physical conditions in the home in the 1950s amounted to a systemic failing by the ICM General Committee and the Management Committee to ensure the home provided proper care.
- 192 HIA 366 remembered the canteen of the home being full of cockroaches<sup>226</sup> and the ICM accepted that there was an infestation of cockroaches in September 1970 but that it was in the basement not the canteen and that the Public Health Services were informed and immediate action was taken to eradicate them.<sup>227</sup>
- 193 HIA 366 explained that she had been diagnosed with Coeliac disease when she was resident in Lissue and that she was given the wrong type of food in Manor House, which made her unwell.<sup>228</sup> The ICM in its response explained that at the time of HIA 366's admission to the home a letter from Antrim Welfare Authority made clear that they had not yet obtained her medical cards and there are no records to show the home subsequently receiving them. The HSCB accepted in its response to HIA 366's statement that there was some involvement of Country Antrim Welfare Committee at the time of her admission to Manor House, but explained that the level of that involvement could not be assessed as a relevant social work file had not been located. However, it pointed out that as HIA 366 was placed in Manor House on a voluntary basis Antrim Welfare Authority would have relied on information about her health being provided by her parents.
- 194 We asked HIA 366 if she remembered having a medical examination when she entered the home and she said she did not.<sup>229</sup> We consider it poor practice that relevant information about HIA 366's general health was not pursued by the home and that Antrim Welfare Committee did not persist in getting medical cards and birth certificates for HIA 366 and her brother as they indicated to the home they would.<sup>230</sup>
- 195 HIA 366's complaint about being given inappropriate food was the only complaint that we received about the food provided in Manor House. We

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226 MNH 077.

227 MNH 133.

228 MNH 077.

229 Day 175, p.33.

230 MNH 139.

noted the references to a mother saying in 1953 that her children were complaining that the food in the home was dull and inadequate, and a mother complaining in 1980 that her sons were forced to eat food they did not like. However, we also noted the comment from HIA 289 that the food in the home was probably better than he and his brother had eaten before and that if they wanted more food they could have it.<sup>231</sup>

- 196 Apart from our finding in relation to the conditions for children in the home in the 1950s we do not consider that the evidence we received indicates that there was neglect in the home that amounted to systemic abuse.
- 197 The early years of the ICM's funding, management and running of Manor House as a children's home were severely hampered by lack of funds and resulted in unacceptable conditions for children resident in the home. This situation was allowed to continue for many years and it indicates that the Management Committee at the time were incapable of ensuring that proper facilities were provided for the children. It is also the case that the Management Committee received only very limited assistance and support from the General Committee of the ICM although that organisation was ultimately responsible for meeting the conditions of the Trust it entered into with Miss Stannus. However, the new Management Committee, which was appointed in June 1953, succeeded in creating and maintaining better conditions greatly assisted by the funding it received from welfare authorities.
- 198 It is clear from the documentary evidence we have considered that the Management Committee and the staff showed a keen interest in the care and wellbeing of the children and endeavoured to provide a safe and secure home for them. We noted that even in the periods when the physical aspects of care were unsatisfactory the MoHA recorded that the children appeared happy. Also, although inspectors in 1981 found Manor House to be a somewhat out-dated children's home they were positive about the care the children were receiving and the trusting relationships that were apparent between children and staff.
- 199 In this chapter we have identified areas of poor practice in Manor House and we have also made the following findings in relation to systemic abuse.

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231 MNH 085.

## Conclusions and Findings

### The ICM

- 200 **We consider the irresponsible approach by the General Committee of the ICM to re-open Manor House as a children’s home amounted to a systemic failing to ensure the home provided proper care.**
- 201 **The general state of dilapidation of Manor House in 1953, the inadequate sleeping, toilet and washing facilities for the children, the poor heating and the low staffing levels amounted to a systemic failing by the Management Committee to ensure the home provided proper care.**
- 202 **The Management Committee’s delay in appointing an officer in charge during the period August 1963 to June 1965 and its failure to appoint a monthly visitor amounted to a systemic failing to meet statutory requirements and ensure the home provided proper care.**
- 203 **The Management Committee’s failure in the early 1970s to engage directly with the MoHA to find out more about and address Miss Forrest’s criticisms of the home amounted to a systemic failing on its part to ensure the home provided proper care.**
- 204 **MH 9’s decision with Assistant Principal Social Worker MH 73 in 1980 that an informal approach should be used to deal with a member of staff hitting a child with a stick amounted to a systemic failing to ensure the home provided proper care.**
- 205 **In relation to the sexual abuse of HIA 365, HIA 290 and HIA 289 by a male visitor to the home there was a systemic failing on the part of the staff to take proper steps to prevent, detect and disclose abuse.**
- 206 **The extent of sexual activity between boys in the home in the period 1975 to 1977 indicates a lack of supervision of children particularly at night time which amounted to a systemic failure by staff to take all proper steps to prevent, detect and disclose peer sexual abuse in the home.**
- 207 **The lack of investigation of the claim by MH 25 that MH 39 had sexually interfered with another girl in the home as well as her amounted to a systemic failing by staff to take all proper steps to prevent, detect and disclose abuse.**

- 208 **The lack of supervision that allowed MH 23 to be sexually active from an early age with girls and boys in Manor House amounted to a systemic failing by staff to prevent, detect and disclose abuse in the home.**
- 209 **The harsh response by staff in the 1940s and 1950s to children who suffered from enuresis, including segregating these children and making them sleep in unacceptable conditions amounted to a systemic failing to ensure the home provided proper care.**

#### **The MoHA and the DHSS**

- 210 **The lack of inspection of Manor House for a period of over two and a half years following the initial registration of it as a children’s home amounted to a systemic failing to ensure the home provided proper care.**
- 211 **We consider the MoHA’s failure to ensure that the Administering Authority met its statutory responsibilities to appoint a person in charge of the home during the period August 1963 to June 1965 and to make arrangements for monthly visiting amounted to a systemic failing to implement statutory requirements and ensure the home provided proper care.**
- 212 **The low level of formal inspections of the home in the 1960s, and the MoHA’s failure to raise Miss Forrest’s criticisms of the home in the early 1970s with the Management Committee amounted to a systemic failing by the MoHA to ensure the home was providing proper care.**
- 213 **We consider the continuing lack of formal inspections up until 1978 was unacceptable, particularly given the history of the home, and amounted to a systemic failing by the DHSS to ensure the home was providing proper care.**

#### **SHSSB**

- 214 **Assistant Principal Social Worker MH 73’s agreement with MH 9 in 1980 that an informal approach should be used to deal with a member of staff who hit a child in the care of the SHSSB with a stick amounted to a systemic failing by the SHSSB to ensure the home provided proper care.**

