

## Chapter 21:

### Module 12 – Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd

	<b>Para</b>
Introduction.. . . . .	1
The Good Shepherd Sisters. . . . .	6
The Structure of the Congregation . . . . .	11
The Objectives of the Good Shepherd Sisters . . . . .	20
Ages of Girls in Good Shepherd Institutions . . . . .	22
Siblings.. . . . .	26
Changing Names . . . . .	27
Laundries.. . . . .	28
Corporal Punishment. . . . .	30
Not Turning Anyone Away. . . . .	34
The Good Shepherd Sisters in Belfast . . . . .	35
St Mary’s . . . . .	44
The Sacred Heart Children’s Home . . . . .	45
The position between 1962 and 1970 . . . . .	50
Conditions in the early 1960s . . . . .	52
Roseville Hostel . . . . .	72
The Adolescent Centre.. . . . .	77
The Good Shepherd in Newry . . . . .	85
The Good Shepherd in Londonderry . . . . .	111
Buildings . . . . .	112
Numbers . . . . .	114
The Decision to send HIA 107 to the Good Shepherd in Londonderry . . . . .	119
Education in the 1960s . . . . .	124
The Laundry in the 1960s . . . . .	131
Food in the 1960s. . . . .	133
Penances and the Black Book . . . . .	134
Silence at Meal Times . . . . .	137
Changing Names . . . . .	138
Other Punishments . . . . .	139
The 1970s . . . . .	140
Positive Accounts . . . . .	147
Admission of Young Children . . . . .	148
Inspections . . . . .	151
Administering Authority. . . . .	153
Apology by The Good Shepherd Sisters . . . . .	154
Conclusion . . . . .	155

## Introduction

- 1 As the Chairman explained on 4 November 2015, and again in his opening remarks at the start of this module on 7 March 2016, in this module the Inquiry investigated only those allegations made to it in relation to institutions in Northern Ireland run by the Roman Catholic female religious order The Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd (also known as the Good Shepherd Sisters) by those witnesses who were under the age of eighteen when they were placed in one of these institutions. This was because only children in residential care who were under the age of eighteen are within our Terms of Reference. For convenience in this chapter we refer to the Congregation as the Good Shepherd or the Good Shepherd Sisters.
- 2 The Inquiry investigated allegations relating to Good Shepherd institutions at three locations in Belfast, Derry and Newry. Because of the small number of applicants to the Inquiry who were in each institution, and because some of them were in more than one of the institutions, we decided to investigate all three in the same module. Module 12 started on Monday 7 March, 2016 and the public hearings extended over seven working days, finishing on Tuesday 15 March, 2016.
- 3 Although there were a number of references by witnesses to their experiences, or the experiences of others, when working in laundries in the three institutions we have investigated, the Inquiry has not engaged in a wider investigation into what are commonly called Magdalene homes or laundries, or mother and baby homes. Because such institutions contained adults over the age of eighteen, and as our Terms of Reference confine us to examining residential homes or institutions for children under eighteen, the experiences of people in such institutions who were over eighteen are outside our Terms of Reference. Whether their experiences should be investigated is a matter for the Northern Ireland Executive and the Northern Ireland Assembly.
- 4 During Module 12 we heard from nine applicants, seven in person and two whose written statements were read out because they were unable to attend due to poor health. We also received two statements from individuals who came forward to offer favourable accounts of their time as children when they were looked after by the Good Shepherd Sisters in these three institutions.

- 5 We heard evidence from five Good Shepherd sisters who served in one or more of the three homes at various times, and from Sr Ethna McDermott on behalf of the Congregation. We received witness statements and substantial quantities of material from the Good Shepherd Sisters, from the HSCB, and a small amount of material from the PSNI. We also received a witness statement from Dr Hilary Harrison on behalf of the Department of Health Social Services & Public Safety.

## The Good Shepherd Sisters

- 6 The Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd was formed in June 2014 by the amalgamation of the Order of Our Lady of Charity and the Order of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd founded by Sr Mary Euphrasia Pelletier in 1835 in Angers, France. On 27 June 2014, the Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd canonically reunified with the Congregation of Our Lady of Charity. The two Congregations shared a common origin namely as the Order of Our Lady of Charity, which was founded in Normandy in France in 1641 by the then Father John Eudes, later St John Eudes. The Order had the stated goal of caring for girls and women. The re-unified Congregation has in excess of 4,000 members working in approximately 75 countries.
- 7 For the sake of completeness we should explain that within the Good Shepherd Sisters there was (and still is) a separate group of sisters who devote themselves solely to prayer and to the contemplative life (Contemplative Sisters). Although in some instances they resided in separate accommodation neighbouring the Apostolic Sisters' site, as in Belfast, to all intents and purposes the Contemplative Sisters were and are entirely separate from their fellow sisters who were and are engaged in apostolic work with the community (Apostolic Sisters).<sup>1</sup> The Inquiry is solely concerned with the work of the Apostolic Sisters.
- 8 In 1825, Sr Mary Euphrasia Pelletier was appointed superior of the community of the Order in Tours in France. In 1829 she was asked by the Bishop of Angers to set up a home for girls and women in that town. Sr Mary did that in 1829 and the home was called 'Good Shepherd'.<sup>2</sup>
- 9 Because each Convent within the Order of Our Lady of Charity was autonomous, the structure of the Order did not lend itself to the expansion of Convents/communities of Sisters that followed Sr Mary Euphrasia

---

1 GSC 1210.

2 GSC 580.

Pelletier's foundation of the first Good Shepherd community in Angers. She therefore sought and was given permission by the Vatican in 1835 to form a new congregation known as the Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd. Convents/communities of Sisters were established to respond to needs and to provide services to women and girls.

- 10 By the time of Sr Mary Euphrasia Pelletier's death in 1868 she had founded 110 communities across the globe. She was canonised in 1940 as Saint Euphrasia Pelletier. This module was solely concerned with those institutions run by the Order of Charity of the Good Shepherd before the amalgamation. That Order was commonly referred to as the Good Shepherd Sisters.

## **The Structure of the Congregation**

- 11 The Good Shepherd Sisters are an institute of Pontifical Right directly accountable to the Vatican, with its own Superior General, and a General Chapter that meet every six years. Its Congregation was divided into a series of provinces, each with a Provincial Superior assisted by a Provincial Council.
- 12 The Superior General and provincial superiors would make regular visits to the various communities. The Superior General would visit each province every six years, and a Provincial Superior would make regular visits to the various communities within her province.
- 13 A separate Irish Province covered the whole island of Ireland. It contained a number of communities and services operating in Limerick, Dublin, Cork, Waterford and the three communities in Northern Ireland which we consider in this chapter. Each local community had a local leader known as the Mother Superior who was assisted by Council of Sisters from her community.
- 14 As in the case of other Roman Catholic religious orders investigated by this Inquiry, namely the Sisters of Nazareth, the Sisters of St Louis, the De La Salle Order and the Norbertines, the Good Shepherd Sisters were entirely separate in their management and financial structure from any diocese in which their communities were physically located, although they required the permission of a diocesan bishop to open a house in his diocese.
- 15 The Good Shepherd Sisters first came to Ireland around 1848. They came to Belfast in May 1867 at the invitation of the then Roman Catholic Bishop of Down and Connor who wrote to the Provincial in Limerick asking the

Congregation to send sisters to Belfast to operate a home for women and girls at Bankmore House adjacent to the River Lagan. This had been set up in 1860 by the Sisters of Mercy. They were primarily a teaching order and found they were unable to devote sufficient time to the Bankmore operation.

- 16 In October 1869 the Good Shepherd Sisters acquired new premises at Ballynafeigh at the top of the Ormeau Road in Belfast. The new premises, which we describe in greater detail later in this chapter, included laundry facilities.<sup>3</sup> The purpose of the laundry was said to provide income for the running of the facilities, and a way of offering work training to those in the care of the Congregation, as even after the introduction of the Welfare State they received little financial assistance, so the majority of admissions were private.<sup>4</sup>
- 17 In 1919 some sisters from Belfast moved to Londonderry to form a community in the city. A large mansion known as Bellevue House on the Dungiven Road in the Waterside area of the city, together with nineteen acres of land, was acquired following discussions with the then Bishop of Derry.<sup>5</sup> At the time of this purchase, plans were already underway to build a hostel and a laundry on the Dungiven Road site.<sup>6</sup> The Convent and home was opened in early 1921.
- 18 The Good Shepherd Sisters came to Newry, Co Down in 1944 following the purchase of Moorevale House on the Armagh Road. The building became habitable from 1945 and a new laundry was constructed and opened on the site in 1947.<sup>7</sup>
- 19 It will become apparent later in this chapter that the Good Shepherd communities in Northern Ireland operated a number of different services and facilities on each of their three sites at different periods, and we will describe these as necessary under the heading of each house in due course. We will describe the allegations made in relation to each of these three locations when we deal with each location. However, there are several themes which are common to each of the three houses, and we will deal with these first.

---

3 GSC 5013.  
4 GSC 5026.  
5 GSC 5029.  
6 GSC 5030.  
7 GSC 453.

## The Objectives of the Good Shepherd Sisters

- 20 Because the Order was semi-enclosed before the changes brought about by the Second Vatican Council, and as such only permitted to undertake work outside the convent if the consent of the local bishop had been obtained, until the time of the Council those sisters who engaged in social work did so within a residential setting.<sup>8</sup>
- 21 From the arrival of the Good Shepherd Sisters in Ireland in 1848 the primary objective of their institutions was caring for women and children who had fallen into social or financial difficulty.<sup>9</sup> This was achieved in various ways, not all of which involved the provision of residential accommodation. As we shall see when we consider each of the three homes investigated in this module, in Northern Ireland this took a number of forms, not all of which were provided by each community in each location. Some of these are listed below.
- Residential centres for women and girls.
  - Mother and baby homes for unmarried mothers.
  - Laundries.
  - An emergency night shelter for women and girls.
  - Residential homes for teenage girls.
  - Hostels for teenage girls moving from Good Shepherd care services.
  - Youth clubs.

## Ages of Girls in Good Shepherd Institutions

- 22 The references to “women and girls” require some clarification. While the Good Shepherd Sisters have informed the Inquiry that approximately 4,287 women and girls (excluding members of the Order) were cared for in their communities in Northern Ireland between 1922 and 1995,<sup>10</sup> it is clear that the majority were women over eighteen, and as such outside the Inquiry’s Terms of Reference. Many of the Order’s records and documents simply refer to women of all ages as “girls”, and this has to be borne in mind when considering how many females under the age of eighteen (and so within our Terms of Reference) were resident within a particular institution at any given time.

---

8 GSC 582.

9 GSC 583.

10 GSC 529.

- 23 Because the surviving records do not always distinguish between females who were over or under eighteen at a given time, it has not always proved possible to establish the exact number of girls who were under eighteen residing in each institution at any one time, or how many of those under eighteen were under school leaving age. However, it does appear that the number of girls under eighteen were a small proportion of the total number of females resident in each institution, although the numbers varied from time to time. The number of girls below school-leaving age (which was fifteen for most of the period with which the Inquiry is primarily concerned) was smaller still, often only four or five in a house at any one time, although again the numbers fluctuated.
- 24 In this context it is important to bear in mind that the girls in these institutions fell into two groups. During the period when the applicants who engaged with the Inquiry were in these institutions the school-leaving age was fifteen. Girls in these institutions who contacted the Inquiry and were over that age sometimes, though not always, worked in the laundries or in other positions within the Good Shepherd community. Had they not worked in the laundries or other posts they would in the normal way have had to seek employment elsewhere or, in some cases, continue in education.
- 25 Girls who were under fifteen and had not reached school-leaving age were in a completely different position. Had they not been in a Good Shepherd institution then they would normally have been in a children's home of the type provided by the Sisters of Nazareth or, in some instances, in a children's home in the statutory sector. If placed in a children's home they would have lived in a completely different environment, which should have been completely child-centred. There were Good Shepherd Institutions which were completely child-centred such as the Sacred Heart Home in Belfast, and later the Adolescent Centre in Belfast. One of the issues for the Inquiry in this module is why children under school-leaving age (fifteen years old) were in Good Shepherd institutions which were not completely child-centred.

## Siblings

- 26 The Good Shepherd Sisters emphasised in their written and oral evidence to the Inquiry that they were very aware of the desirability to avoid sisters being separated from each other, and so there were occasions when they accepted a significantly younger child in order that sisters would not be separated.

## Changing Names

- 27 The Good Shepherd Sisters accept that at one stage it was their policy to change the names of women and girls upon their admission to one of their homes. The Sisters advised that the practice fell into abeyance in the early 1960s. They explained that they did not pry into the past of anyone, and no judgement was made as to what they had done before, or why they had ended up with the Order. The reason for changing the person's name was to protect their privacy and provide them with some degree of protection and confidentiality.<sup>11</sup> This practice appears to have applied equally to women over eighteen and to girls under eighteen and we understand may have been a widespread practice in mother and baby homes, although these are outside our terms of Reference. Although well-intended, this practice caused considerable distress and confusion to those affected. We considered that the practice continued longer than it should have done, and represented poor practice on the part of the Sisters.

## Laundries

- 28 For many years, laundries were a very significant aspect of the work of the Good Shepherd Sisters in each of the three locations considered in this chapter. Those laundries generated a reliable source of income to pay the costs of care in the absence of state maintenance payments prior to the development of the Welfare State, or inadequate maintenance payments following the development of the Welfare State.<sup>12</sup> In their heyday these were substantial enterprises, taking in laundry from commercial and domestic customers, as well as dealing with the laundry needs of each community within the Order. For example, during the Second World War the Good Shepherd laundry in Londonderry secured the contract for all the military laundry in Northern Ireland, including that of the Americans at the local naval base.<sup>13</sup> A very large proportion of the females who lived in each community consisted of women over the age of eighteen, some of whom worked in the laundries for many years.
- 29 As will appear when we consider each location in turn, the Inquiry has sought to establish how many girls under eighteen worked in these laundries, and why.

---

11 GSC 341.

12 GSC 5809 and 5841.

13 GSC 5032 and 5492.

## Corporal Punishment

- 30 It was a fundamental tenet of the Good Shepherd Sisters that they were never to strike children. While the Congregation accepted in their closing submissions that people do not always adhere to the high standards expected of them, from as early as 1897 it was the written policy of the Congregation that no corporal punishment should be administered by a Good Shepherd Sister against any person in their care, regardless of whether or not that was permitted by the law or statutory regulations in any jurisdiction within which the Congregation was operating.
- 31 In 1943 the Congregation's instruction manual entitled *Practical Rules for the use of the Religious of the Good Shepherd for the Direction of the Classes*, (the Practical Rules) emphasised that:
- It was forbidden to strike children.
  - Children should never be deprived of food.
  - If it was necessary to separate a child from her companions the child should never be shut up alone.<sup>14</sup>
- 32 The 1943 Practical Rules also emphasised that:
- Children should rarely be fatigued by any form of penance that they were required to undergo.
  - Long penances were unprofitable.
  - Penances should not be prolonged excessively.
  - Penances should not be given too frequently.
- 33 The Congregation has said with some justification that the Practical Rules of that time could be legitimately described as enlightened and child focused at a time when corporal punishment was lawful, authorised in Northern Ireland by statutory regulations, and very frequently used in schools and families.

## Not Turning Anyone Away

- 34 Sr Ethna McDermott emphasised that it was a fundamental tenet of the Good Shepherd Sisters that they would never turn anyone away who came, or was brought, to them in need of their help. On occasions this meant that they accepted children who were brought to them by social

---

14 GSC 555.

services or the police, even though the Sisters may not have been able to make satisfactory provision for the individual in question, at least in the short term.<sup>15</sup> The Inquiry has been provided with a handwritten note from a departmental file with a list of those in the Good Shepherd Home in Londonderry between 1960 and 1973, which appears to have been prepared by an official in the Ministry of Home Affairs and bears out what Sr Ethna said. The author noted that “Stranded young girls who come to their door, or who are brought by police are accommodated.”<sup>16</sup> In 1973 Mr Kirkpatrick of the DHSS noted that:

“Good Shepherd (as has happened in the past) have a policy whereby they will not refuse people in need no matter what their religion is”.<sup>17</sup>

## The Good Shepherd Sisters in Belfast

- 35 The Inquiry heard evidence from three applicants in person, and received a statement from a fourth who was ill and unable to attend in person, relating to their time in Belfast. We also received statements from two women who came forward to the Good Shepherd Sisters to describe their happy memories of their time in the care of the sisters in Belfast. As well as the evidence of Sr Ethna McDermott on behalf of the Congregation, we heard from a number of sisters who lived and worked in the Belfast community at various times.
- 36 Before considering the evidence of all of these witnesses, it is convenient to describe the various facilities on the Belfast site and their history, as some buildings were put to different uses during the period with which the Inquiry was concerned.
- 37 At various times from 1922 onwards the Good Shepherd Sisters had several different facilities located on a large eight-acre site at the top of the Ormeau Road in South Belfast. This was opposite the large Nazareth House complex of the Sisters of Nazareth located at the junction of the Ormeau and Ravenhill Roads which we have considered in Chapters 8 and 9.
- 38 At various times within the Good Shepherd complex there were eight different facilities. Some of these changed over the years or were in different buildings. Three of these are not directly relevant to this chapter.

---

15 Day 194, pp.45, 55 and 56.

16 GSC 5327.

17 GSC 5326.

These are the convent occupied by the Contemplative Sisters, the chapel and the Marianville Mother and Baby Home. Marianville operated between 1950 and 1990.

- 39 A facility that is relevant, although it was not a residential facility, is the St Mary Euphrasia Youth Club. This was set up by the Good Shepherd Sisters in 1951 and was located beside the Adolescent Centre, and is relevant because it is one of the practical ways the sisters sought to provide for the young people in their care. It is clear from what we have heard that the youth club was a very popular facility where girls from the Good Shepherd and young people from the neighbourhood could meet and socialise on a number of nights each week. The youth club was fondly remembered by many, and such was its popularity that not being allowed to attend it was regarded as a severe punishment.
- 40 Tragically, like so many organisations and facilities in Northern Ireland it was severely affected by the violence in the 1970s. A seventeen year-old Protestant boy who was a member of the youth club was murdered, presumably because of his association with a Catholic organisation. A history of the Belfast community described the Mass offered for the repose of his soul as “one of the most moving celebrations ever to take place in our chapel”.<sup>18</sup>
- 41 On another occasion a car bomb was left outside the club one night, but fortunately caused little damage, and the club was able to open the following night.
- 42 In 1974 Michael Brennan, a youth leader in the club, was shot in the club while he was coaching table tennis by a terrorist group calling itself the Protestant Action Force. He died in hospital from his wounds. As a result, the youth club closed for almost a year, but it later reopened. However, by 1980 it had been transferred to a new building nearby and was managed by a committee of the Holy Rosary Parish.<sup>19</sup>
- 43 The terrible events described above that affected the youth club illustrate the violence from which the Good Shepherd Sisters sought to protect the children and young people in their care in each of their locations, and not just in Belfast, a concern which may have been wrongly interpreted by some of the children and young people as an example of a repressive and confining attitude on the part of the sisters.

---

18 GSC 5020.

19 GSC 1081 and 1082.

## St Mary's

- 44 St Mary's was located in a large block situated beside the church and the convent. From the opening of the Convent in 1867 the Sisters provided residential accommodation for women and girls. A laundry was opened on the St Mary's site and operated until 1977 providing work for women. Although the great majority of those who lived and worked in St Mary's were over eighteen, it is clear that some teenage children also lived and worked there. The Inquiry heard from three applicants who did so between 1962 and 1966 (HIA 387, HIA 175 and HIA 124). We also received a statement from HIA 377 who was too ill to attend in person.

## The Sacred Heart Children's Home

- 45 The Sacred Heart Children's Home operated between 1922 and 1962 and was located in a large building immediately beside St Mary's. The Sacred Heart provided residential care for children between the ages of two and sixteen, and was registered as a voluntary children's home by the Ministry of Home Affairs under the Children and Young Person's Act (Northern Ireland) 1950 on 29 June 1950.<sup>20</sup>
- 46 During the 1950s the Sacred Heart Home was registered for 33 girls of all ages.<sup>21</sup> In 1956 the Ministry of Home Affairs divided the certificate for the voluntary children's home into three parts.<sup>22</sup> This recognised that the Sacred Heart was different to St Mary's and to the Marianville Mother and Baby Home, both of which had also been included in the original registration certificate.<sup>23</sup>
- 47 The Sacred Heart Home was inspected by Miss Kathleen Forrest of the Ministry of Home affairs in 1953, and she described it in favourable terms:
- “Good material conditions. Could perhaps do with more play equipment, but would, I think, buy anything suggested to them. Have singing, elocution, dancing classes and girls go out to ordinary schools and to do shopping for Home. Not short of money I think.”<sup>24</sup>

---

20 GSC 5009.

21 GSC 5005.

22 GSC 5009.

23 GSC 6876-78.

24 HIA 1463.

- 48 While it was registered to accommodate 33 girls of all ages,<sup>25</sup> in the mid-1950s the annual returns to the Ministry of Home Affairs recorded fewer girls in the Sacred Heart than that,<sup>26</sup> and the numbers gradually declined from 30 girls in 1953 to 23 in 1956, and 24 in 1957.<sup>27</sup> Unfortunately the limited statistics available for this period do not reveal what were the numbers of children under the school-leaving age (which was increased from fourteen to fifteen in 1957), and those who were over the school leaving age but under eighteen.
- 49 SR 283, who worked in the Sacred Heart Home from 1960 until it closed in 1962, remembered that the home took children between the ages of two and sixteen. She told the Inquiry that the sisters knew the importance of keeping sisters together, and recalled two incidences where this occurred during her time in the home. One girl was about seven or eight and her sister ten. In the other instance the younger sister was maybe thirteen and went to St Monica's Secondary School nearby. She thought her elder sister was perhaps thirteen to fifteen and went to St Dominic's Grammar School, which was in a different part of the city.<sup>28</sup>

## **The position between 1962 and 1970**

- 50 The Sacred Heart Home closed in 1962, and in due course was replaced by the Adolescent Centre which opened in the same premises in 1970. Between the closure of the Sacred Heart Home and the opening of the Adolescent Centre the sisters told the Inquiry that they believe the older children who were ready to move into independent living arrangements moved out of care. They believe that those who were not ready for such a move, and this would inevitably have included those children who were still under the school-leaving age of fifteen, became the responsibility of the sister in charge of St Mary's. Whilst it is unclear where the younger children slept after the Sacred Heart Home closed, it seems likely that for part of the time at least they were accommodated in the St Mary's building. It had been extensively refurbished over a six-year period between 1957 and 1963, and the dormitories there had been sub-divided into cubicles.<sup>29</sup>

---

25 GSC 5005.

26 GSC 7052.

27 GSC 7049.

28 Day 193, p.58.

29 GSC 1177.

- 51 The sisters have described how from 1968 onwards those teenagers who were regarded as being part of the “St Mary’s class” lived in the building that had previously been the Sacred Heart Home. That confirms the inference that between 1962 and 1968 those children lived in St Mary’s with the older women who lived there. The St Mary’s class was regarded as a separate and distinctive group. As there was not a separate kitchen in the Sacred Heart building, those girls were served their food in the St Mary’s canteen kitchen and then carried their food along an internal corridor to the dining room or refectory in the Sacred Heart building where they ate their meals together.<sup>30</sup>

### Conditions in the early 1960s

- 52 Two applicants to the Inquiry were in the care of the sisters in Belfast during the period between the closure of the Sacred Heart Home in 1962 and the return of children to that building in 1968 or 1969. They were therefore within the group described by the sisters as being part of the St Mary’s class. HIA 387 was thirteen when she arrived in June 1962 and left fifteen months later in September 1963 aged fourteen and a half. She was unique among the applicants in this module in having been in all three of the homes considered by the Inquiry in this chapter, and we will consider her experiences in the homes in Londonderry and Newry later when we consider the evidence relating to those homes.
- 53 Before she came to the Good Shepherd Sisters in Belfast, HIA 387 had been in the care of the Sisters of Nazareth in Belfast, and she gave evidence about her time with the Sisters of Nazareth on Day 92 of the Inquiry. Her recollection is that she came straight to the Good Shepherd Sisters from the Sisters of Nazareth across the road in 1962. Whilst the Sisters of Nazareth records show her as leaving their care in July 1961 to return to her family, HIA 387 has no recollection of being at home, or elsewhere, between her time with the Sister’s of Nazareth and when she arrived with the Good Shepherd Sisters in Belfast in June 1962. Be that as it may, she says that when she was with the Good Shepherd Sisters in Belfast she did not continue to attend St Monica’s Secondary School as she had before, and she says she was placed in the laundry to work.
- 54 As she was under the school-leaving age of fifteen throughout her time in the Good Shepherd Sisters at Belfast she should have been attending

---

30 GSC 1178.

school. Returns by the Good Shepherd Sisters to the Ministry of Home Affairs showing the number of children in their care on 31 March 1963 record that there were four girls in the home who were between the ages of five and fourteen,<sup>31</sup> all of whom were of compulsory school age (that is five to fifteen) and were attending school. These figures suggest that as HIA 387 was in the care of the sisters in Belfast at that time it is highly likely that she was attending school. We believe that she is mistaken in her recollection that she did not attend school whilst in the care of the Good Shepherd Sisters in Belfast.

- 55 She described to the Inquiry how she was made to work unpaid in the laundry, although the Good Shepherd Sisters say that no one as young as thirteen would have been allowed to do so. No one else who was in the Good Shepherd Sister's complex in Belfast and who was as young as HIA 387 has come forward to the Inquiry to say that they worked in the laundry there when they were under school-leaving age. HIA 377 came to Good Shepherd School in April 1963, a month after her fifteenth birthday. Because of illness she was unable to give evidence in person, but in her witness statement she described being told to help another girl fold laundry.<sup>32</sup>
- 56 SR 283, who worked in the Sacred Heart Home from 1960 until it closed in 1962, told the Inquiry that she had no recollection of children who were about twelve to fourteen working in the laundry.
- 57 Because we are satisfied that HIA 387 attended school during her time in the Good Shepherd in Belfast, as a school girl she could only have worked in the laundry after school hours during term time and before the work in the laundry stopped for the day, also at weekends or in the holidays. There is a possibility that she has conflated her experiences in Belfast with her experiences in the laundry in Londonderry and in Newry, where she also spent some time.
- 58 She has described an incident she says occurred when she was aged fourteen and in the Good Shepherd in Belfast. She says she climbed over a wall into an orchard in the nun's garden. She was caught there by a priest who took her to the sacristy, told her she was wicked and then raped her. This happened on a Saturday, and the next day being Sunday she refused to go forward to take Holy Communion. When asked by a nun why

---

31 GSC 5844.

32 GSC 081

she would not go forward she explained that she would not eat “anybody’s body from soiled hands”. When the nun asked her what she meant she told the nun what the priest had done to her, whereupon the nun slapped her and told her she was a little liar. She was then put to work in the worst part of the laundry where all the soiled clothes were. Within a week of telling the nun what had happened she said she was moved to another Good Shepherd Home in the country, where there was a railway track at the back, which she now believes to have been the Good Shepherd in Newry. The Good Shepherd Sisters pointed out that in fact she went from Belfast to their home in Londonderry for eight months between 30 September 1963 and 1 June 1964, and from Londonderry she went to their home in Newry.

- 59 Although the Good Shepherd Sisters initially told the Inquiry there was no orchard in Belfast, on further investigation it was recalled that the Contemplative Sisters had a small orchard and vegetable garden bounded by a high wall on one side and by high hedges on another. According to a former caretaker, this was accessed through an arched opening in the hedge.<sup>33</sup> A map prepared by the Good Shepherd Sisters for the Inquiry shows this area as being some distance from the chapel where the sacristy was. A possible inference from this layout is that the description of the place where HIA 387 says she climbed over a wall is not easy to reconcile with the layout of the Good Shepherd Sisters’ orchard. In addition, as the sacristy was some distance away it is somewhat unlikely that a priest would have been in the Contemplative Sisters’ orchard or would have been able to take her to the sacristy unobserved.
- 60 We have also taken into account that the layout described by HIA 387 much more closely resembles the orchard attached to the presbytery of the former Holy Rosary Church, which adjoined the Sister of Nazareth premises on the opposite side of the Ormeau Road where she had been before.
- 61 We carefully considered all these matters, and whilst we accept that such an incident may have occurred, we have been unable to determine whether it occurred whilst HIA 387 was in the care of the Good Shepherd Sisters or in the care of the Sisters of Nazareth.
- 62 There are very few figures available which show the actual number of teenagers who were in the Good Shepherd in Belfast at the same time

---

33 GSC 1211.

as HIA 377. In January 1964 out of 123 females, only ten were “welfare cases”, ie children placed by local authority welfare departments and who were therefore under the age of eighteen. Of the ten, only four were under fourteen and all were said to be attending school. In March 1965, of 26 girls recorded as living in St Mary’s, 23 were between fifteen and eighteen and three were fourteen and under. Whilst we know that in March 1966 there were sixteen welfare authority children in St Mary’s and in March 1967 there were thirteen, it is not possible to establish in each year how many were under fifteen, or between fifteen and eighteen. Nor is it possible to establish whether these figures represent the total number of girls in St Mary’s who came into either age group in those years, because there may well have been other girls in both age groups who had been placed privately. All that can be said with confidence is that for most of the time when HIA 377 was in the St Mary’s class there were several other girls of a broadly similar age there at the same time. This is because we know there were twenty girls in 1965 in the fifteen to eighteen age group, and it is probable that there were girls at the same age in both 1966 and 1967.

- 63 HIA 377 was the only other person who was in the Good Shepherd in Belfast during the 1960s who has contacted the Inquiry. She arrived in April 1963 shortly after she passed her fifteenth birthday, and remained there until she left in April 1968 aged eighteen. As such she overlapped with HIA 387 and so would have been one of the teenagers who formed the St Mary’s class.
- 64 HIA 377 was moved to the Good Shepherd in Belfast by Tyrone County Welfare Committee after she ran away from Coneywarren Children’s Home outside Omagh, Co Tyrone. She described asking SR 285 and Mrs McFadden (the social worker who brought her to Belfast) how long she would be staying, and was told by them until she was eighteen. SR 285 told her she would not be allowed out, but her brothers could visit her. Her brothers took it in turn to visit her every week and brought her toiletries. They also brought her grandmother to see her. After about eighteen months, her brothers were allowed to take her out for a few hours on Saturdays.
- 65 While we accept that family visits were facilitated, we are satisfied that at this time the Good Shepherd Sisters discouraged the girls in their care from leaving their premises, and that in the earlier years there was a practice of containment of girls, although as HIA 377’s experiences

demonstrated, older girls were not prevented from going out if they were accompanied. As we shall see when we consider the Adolescent Centre, the practice appears to have become more relaxed by the early 1970s. However, in 1963 when HIA 377 arrived we accept that a more restrictive attitude prevailed, no doubt because at that time the order was still semi-enclosed, and changes in attitude that flowed from the Second Vatican Council were still to come.

- 66 HIA 377 complains that the nuns did not care for, or show any interest in, her education, but it has to be remembered that she was past school-leaving age when she arrived in Belfast. As we have already described, there is evidence that shows that at this time the Good Shepherd Sisters in Belfast ensured that children below school-leaving age attended schools.
- 67 Although HIA 377 says she suffered from poor health during her time with the Good Shepherd Sisters in Belfast, it would seem from her account that she received medical treatment at Belfast's Mater Hospital.
- 68 She describes the food as very poor, but hers is the only complaint about the food.
- 69 The descriptions of the laundry given by both HIA 387 and HIA 377 portray the work as hot, physically demanding and tiring. Both say they were not paid. We accept that was the case at that time. Irrespective of whether they were above or below fifteen, we considered it was unacceptable for such young girls to be **expected to do industrial work of this type. We considered this amounted to systemic abuse.**
- 70 HIA 377 describes how she was slapped by the nuns on two or three occasions, and was once slapped hard on the hands with a ruler. However, she describes hitting back on each of these occasions. We accept that such occasions were not widespread, systemic or condoned, and we do not regard them as sufficient to constitute systemic abuse.
- 71 HIA 377 also describes how on two occasions older women who she thinks lived in the convent made sexual advances to her in the boiler house. Whilst these amounted to sexual abuse by the individuals concerned, they were not reported by HIA 377 to anyone in authority, and as they appear to have been opportunistic and only occurred twice, we do not consider that they can be regarded as amounting to systemic abuse.

## Roseville Hostel

- 72 In 1967 the Good Shepherd Sisters opened Roseville as a hostel to provide transitional living arrangements for those girls starting their first jobs, or who were leaving full-time care and starting to move into independent living. Roseville was located in a separate building on the Carolan Road side of the complex between the Sacred Heart Home on one side and the Marianville building on the other.<sup>34</sup> As the title “hostel” implies, Roseville was designed to cater for those who did not require strict supervision, which would in any event not be practical as many of those were starting their first jobs and went to employment outside the hostel.<sup>35</sup> Residents paid for their bed and board. The hostel had two bedrooms with a sister living in each, and two bedrooms of a larger dormitory type, each with separate individual cubicles for four girls.<sup>36</sup> Roseville closed in 1975.
- 73 HIA 175 was the only applicant to the Inquiry who had been in the hostel. When she had the opportunity to go through some social services and other records obtained by the Inquiry with Mr Aiken, Junior Counsel to the Inquiry, she accepted that her memory of dates and events was not accurate. She came to live in the hostel in November 1971 aged fifteen and a half, although she continued to work as a residential nursery assistant in St Josephs Baby’s Home run by the Sister’s of Nazareth across the road. During the succeeding months she did not return to the hostel on a number of occasions. By the end of February 1972 she was working in the laundry and by now was aged fifteen and nine months.
- 74 She did not like the laundry work, and her social worker, who saw her frequently, tried to arrange alternative accommodation for her in lodgings. HIA 175 did not like the suggested accommodation, so she was allowed to stay on in the hostel. However, a week later she refused to return to the hostel and was removed under a Place of Safety Order to St Joseph’s Training School at Middletown, Co. Armagh. The application for a Place of Safety Order was refused and after a month at St Joseph’s she was returned to Roseville. It seems that throughout this unsettled period she was very anxious to live at home with her mother, although home conditions were not satisfactory.<sup>37</sup> She did not settle in the hostel and was returned to Middletown under another Place of Safety Order in August 1972, and

---

34 GSC 379

35 GSC 389.

36 GSC 399.

37 GSC 224.

a Training School Order was made three weeks later committing her to St Josephs' where she was very happy.

- 75 Having seen the records, she only had two recollections about her time in the Good Shepherd in Belfast which were of concern to the Inquiry. The first was that she recalled being painted all over with a stinging substance by SR 196. When the records were explained to her she accepted that this may have been done because of a medical condition for which she received treatment at the time. The documentation from the records of the Health and Social Care Board<sup>38</sup> refer to her having had a medical condition “for which she attended the doctor”. The Sisters did not accept that SR 196 would have engaged in administering or applying any medical treatment to any resident in Roseville. However, HIA 175 believed it was applied by SR 196, but she was anxious to emphasise that, whatever the substance was, it had not been applied for a sexual reason or as a punishment.<sup>39</sup> We are satisfied that there was nothing improper or abusive in this episode.
- 76 The other matter related to an occasion when she recalled all of the girls of her age being taken one at a time into a room by SR 196 where a priest then asked each of them whether they were a virgin. Such an exploration of the sexual history of HIA 175, or any other girl, by a priest in such circumstances was entirely inappropriate, and we regard such a question in those circumstances as unacceptable and abusive. However, whilst it is clear from her evidence that HIA 175 does not regard the Good Shepherd Sisters as being responsible for the question, or for the way it was asked, HIA 175 stated that SR 196 was present during the questioning. In their response to the Inquiry Warning Letter the Sisters did not accept that such an incident could have happened, or if it did, that they were responsible for it. **However we are satisfied there was such an episode and the failure of SR 196 to intervene and stop the questioning was a systemic failing.**

## The Adolescent Centre

- 77 In 1969 the building previously containing the Sacred Heart Home was renovated and opened in 1970 as the Adolescent Centre. It operated until June 1982, when it closed because of a fall in the number of admissions.<sup>40</sup>

---

38 GSC 223.

39 Day 190, pp.34 to 36.

40 GSC 6342.

It was a residential centre with accommodation for up to 21 teenagers in twelve individual rooms, and there were also three small dormitories, each with up to three beds. It was intended to accept children who were twelve to seventeen, although one resident said that the congregation made an exception and kept her nine-year-old sister so they could remain together. GSC 21 was the sister in charge throughout its existence. It was sometimes known as “The Teenage Unit”.

- 78 All the girls in the Adolescent Centre were placed there by social services. Those who were of compulsory school age went out to school, either to St Monica’s Secondary School, which was a ten minute walk away, or by bus to St Dominic’s Grammar School on the Falls Road. Although no records have survived, one of the sisters who worked there recalls files being kept on the progress of each child, and that regular reviews of each child were held with social services. Regular contact took place with members of their families, contacts which were encouraged and facilitated on a supervisory basis if necessary, where this was recommended and supported by the teenager’s social worker.<sup>41</sup>
- 79 From the mid-1970s a sister was appointed to the Centre to prepare all the meals for the teenagers, although the girls were encouraged to help her with shopping and with the preparation of evening meals, they were also shown how to cook some dishes. All of this was to show them how to budget, select fresh vegetables and cook for themselves when they left care.
- 80 Those who had homework were sent to do it after school. If they had no homework they could play outside or relax in the sitting room where there was a TV and a record player. Reading of novels was encouraged.<sup>42</sup>
- 81 HIA 124 was in the Adolescent Centre from 1971 when she was thirteen and nine months until 1974 when she was sixteen and a half. She was placed there by social services. As in the case of HIA 175, Mr Aiken took her through the various records relating to her which had been obtained by the Inquiry. This process helped her to be aware of, and to understand, various matters relating to her time in the Adolescent Centre. She told the Inquiry that she did not have any bad memories of her treatment at the hands of the Good Shepherd Sisters,<sup>43</sup> something that was in marked

---

41 GSC 404.

42 GSC 397.

43 Day 190, pp.10-11.

contrast to her recollection of her time with the Sisters of Nazareth, which she described when she gave evidence on Day 96.

- 82 She quickly became very attached to GSC 21. When she made her witness statement she had been critical of the way her enuresis had been dealt with, but she now understood that the sisters saw to it that she received medical help from the specialist and that the sisters dealt with the problem in a more sympathetic way than she had appreciated. She also now understood why the Good Shepherd Sisters did not take her back after she had been admitted to a psychiatric hospital after taking a second overdose. She explained that seeing her records had cleared up a lot for her, and she saw the Good Shepherd Sisters had done a lot for her.<sup>44</sup>
- 83 The favourable views of their times in the Adolescent Centre to which HIA 175 and HIA 124 came after seeing their records was in keeping with the views expressed in witness statements by GSC 42, who was in the Centre from 1976 to 1980 and GSC 41, who was there for five years from the end of 1973 or the beginning of 1974. Two points stand out from their statements. The first was that GSC 21 insisted that girls from the Adolescent Centre were given money to buy lunch tickets at St Monica’s so that they would not stand out from other girls by having free school meals or packed lunches. The other was that the youth club to which we have already referred was the focus of their lives, and if they misbehaved and were not allowed to go to the youth club “it was like the end of the world!”<sup>45</sup>
- 84 Looking at the Sacred Heart Home, the St Mary’s class, the Roseville Hostel and the Adolescent Centre as a whole, it is clear that there was a very considerable change in the way the Good Shepherd Sisters approached residential care for the children in their care by the late 1960s. Not only were there greatly improved material facilities, but the Roseville Hostel and the Adolescent Centre were well run and provided a good standard of child care. These were examples of the Sisters’ willingness to be flexible and innovative to respond to changing needs, and we commend them for doing so.

## The Good Shepherd in Newry

- 85 The Inquiry heard evidence in person from two applicants. HIA 387 had previously been in the Good Shepherd in Belfast and we have already

---

44 Day 190, p.22.

45 GSC 294- 295.

referred to her evidence about her time there. She also spent some time in the Good Shepherd in Londonderry and we shall consider her evidence about that time later. HIA 202 also spent time in Londonderry after she had been in the Good Shepherd in Newry and we shall consider her time in Derry later. The third applicant was HIA 359 who was unable to give evidence in person due to ill health and we received her written statement.

- 86 Before considering their evidence, we describe the site and the facilities upon it at the Good Shepherd in Newry. The Newry site was the smallest of the three facilities run by the Good Shepherd in Northern Ireland with which we are concerned, and like them contained a number of separate facilities on the same site. There was a small farm of a few acres, a church and a convent for the sisters. A new laundry was built and opened in 1947. There were residential dormitories for women, that is ladies over eighteen, and teenage girls known as St Mary's Newry. Marianvale Mother and Baby Home opened in the 1950s and was co-located on the same site. Marianvale Mother and Baby Home provided accommodation for pregnant women, mothers and their babies.<sup>46</sup>
- 87 When considering the ages of the children under eighteen, as we have already explained it is necessary to distinguish between those under school-leaving age, and those above school-leaving age but below eighteen, for the reasons we have set out earlier. Originally there were four pre-fabricated buildings, two of which were dormitories, one was a kitchen and the fourth a dining room/refectory.
- 88 Distinct from St Mary's there was an entirely separate Marianvale Mother and Baby Home which closed in 1984. From 1973 a short-term Emergency Hostel was opened close to Marianvale. The hostel consisted of two bedrooms and shared kitchen, living, bathroom and toilet facilities. The hostel was for mothers and children in domestic violence situations, and the Sisters recall that it was run in conjunction with the local social services.
- 89 In later years the residential accommodation for the women and teenagers consisted of a dining hall, a recreation room, a room described as a community room, a common room, a kitchen, a TV lounge, bedrooms and dormitories. The convent as a whole was registered as a voluntary children's home on 16 February 1951, but was re-registered on 25 April 1956 to include the Marianvale Mother and Baby Home.

---

46 GSC 6892 and 6893.

- 90 Due to the very limited records that have been found it is difficult to establish how many girls under eighteen who are within our Terms of Reference were in St Mary's at any time, and how many of those were under school-leaving age. Prior to completion of the registration process, a letter of 7 September 1950 from the Northern Ireland Council for Social Services said only five or six girls in the fifteen to eighteen group resided in the home, and they were working in the laundry. The recollection of the sisters is that there were usually between three and six teenagers at any time, although the numbers fluctuated. In addition there were older women over eighteen. Whilst the home had accommodation for up to 36 girls of all ages (which included women over eighteen) in the 1950s the total was usually between 20 and 30 (including the teenagers) but the overall numbers declined significantly in later years.<sup>47</sup>
- 91 Statistical returns to the Ministry of Home Affairs for the four years 1953 to 1956 show one child in 1953, none in 1954, and two in 1956. An inspection by the Ministry of Home Affairs in June 1958 said there were two girls under eighteen, and a letter from the Ministry of 16 December 1959 said that there had been two girls under eighteen the week before.
- 92 Annual returns for a number of years in the 1960s show a slightly higher number of girls under eighteen in some years.
- 1963 – four (all over fifteen)
  - 1964 – four
  - 1965 – four
  - 1966 – two
  - 1967 – three
  - 1968 – two

However, apart from 1963, it is not possible to establish if any of the girls were under school-leaving age.

- 93 The figures for the 1970s are limited to two occasions. An inspection on 22 June 1973 by Miss Hill recorded five girls, all between fifteen and eighteen. On 12 February 1976 Miss Forrest recorded that of 30 females “only five were in the younger age group”. Whilst this does not expressly distinguish between those under and those over school-leaving age, it is probable that all five were between the ages of fifteen and eighteen, because Miss Forrest stated that the sisters:

---

47 GSC 460.

“...would not normally take in school age girls because of travel difficulties, but have one fifteen year old girl in special circumstances.”

The ‘special circumstances’ were not explained.

- 94 From the available, albeit limited, information it would therefore seem that in the 1950s there were often only two girls, and in the 1960s there were usually between two and four girls, and in the 1970s there were usually five girls. Although it may well be the case that during these decades all of the girls were above school-leaving age and under the age of eighteen, the absence of detailed information makes it impossible for us to be satisfied that in every instance there were no children under school-leaving age in the Good Shepherd in Newry.
- 95 In her “*Brief Impressions*” of the different Voluntary Children’s Homes in Northern Ireland, which she prepared on 28 April 1953 and to which reference has already been made in this chapter, Miss Forrest described the Good Shepherd Convent Newry in the following terms:
- “Material conditions and equipment very good. Girls and women work in laundry, have all amusements laid on inside Home. Quite happy atmosphere in both places.”
- 96 In her report on her visit to both the convent (that is the residential home) and the Marianvale Home on 22 June 1973, Miss Hill of the Ministry of Home Affairs described the arrangements for the girls in the residential home in terms which make it clear that some of those in the fifteen to eighteen year range were attending school.
- “Five girls were in the fifteen – eighteen years range, one of whom was in Special Care, while four were the responsibility of Welfare Authorities. One girl attends the Grammar School and another the Technical School in Newry. They are full-time students, but some other girls attend various classes in the Technical School.”<sup>48</sup>
- 97 The three applicants who described their experiences in the Good Shepherd in Newry were there in different decades, HIA 359 being the earliest. She is now 79, and did not give evidence in person due to ill health. In her statement to the Inquiry she described how she came to the Good Shepherd in Newry from their convent in Limerick when she was about fourteen as she had suffered poor health, and she said she was told she was being sent to Newry because the air was fresher and healthier. She

---

48 GSC 6893.

recalled being sent to work in a hospital in Clonmel, Co Tipperary when she was seventeen or eighteen.

- 98 However the Good Shepherd Sisters records state that she arrived in Newry in January 1955, when she was seventeen and a half, and went to Clonmel in April 1961 when she was 23. The Good Shepherd Sisters point to three other matters which it was suggested indicated that HIA 359 may have confused her recollections of life in Newry with those in Limerick. The first is that although she referred to working in a bakery in Newry, there was no bakery there but there was in the Good Shepherd in Limerick.<sup>49</sup> The second is a recollection that there were “about 80 girls in the Good Shepherd in Newry”. The Good Shepherd Sisters say that there were never as many females as that in Newry, but the laundry in Limerick was larger. It is correct that the Ministry of Home Affairs records referred to earlier show much smaller numbers in Newry in the 1950s, such as “36 girls of all ages” in 1953,<sup>50</sup> and “girls of all ages” would include women over eighteen. The third is a reference to Mother Good Shepherd teaching in the classroom, and SR 281 said that Mother Good Shepherd taught in Limerick, never in Newry.<sup>51</sup>
- 99 HIA 359 described being in a classroom for a while, but as she was over school-leaving age when she arrived in Newry this may be somewhat unlikely. She said the food was poor and she was always hungry. She described working in the laundry from the age of sixteen, being punished for mixing up orders in the packing room, being given a bad beating on the back of her legs by a nun and being slapped on the hands many times.
- 100 She described working on the small holding attached to the convent and picking potatoes, but that would have been a common practice at the time of the potato harvest in rural families.
- 101 She said she was paid £2.50 when she left Newry, although it is not clear whether this was money due to her for her work, or perhaps was to cover her journey until she arrived at St Joseph’s Hospital in Clonmel.
- 102 Whilst not all of HIA 359’s recollections of the way she was treated during her time in Newry were negative, for example there was an annual trip to the seaside. She also described going to hospital to have her appendix out. There were some complaints that were corroborated to some degree

---

49 GSC 336.

50 GSC 5006.

51 GSC 336.

by the evidence of SR 281 who was in Newry between 1957 and 1969, and again in 1970 to 1971.

- 103 The first of these was the practice of silence at meal times, relieved only by a nun reading from a book or newspaper. SR 281 accepted that silence during meals was something that was carried over from the sisters' own practice at meal times, although she said she tried to lighten the atmosphere by reading from a humorous book or from a newspaper. She said that whilst the sister in charge would sometimes say that the women could talk, this was her decision. She recalled the practice of silence at meal times stopping late in her time, which would suggest that the practice continued at least until the late 1960s.
- 104 The second related to the practice of changing names, something we have already seen was a practice in Belfast. SR 281 reiterated that this was to protect the privacy of the girls so that no one could pry into their backgrounds.
- 105 HIA 387 came to Newry in March 1964 aged fourteen and eleven months, and left six months later at the end of September 1964. She is the only applicant who describes her experiences there in the 1960s. She came to Newry from the Good Shepherd in Londonderry. She says that she was made to work in the laundry in Newry. She said she was not hit by the nuns when she was in Newry, but did not remember receiving any pay or pocket money while working in the laundry. Her principal concern was that when she left she was put on a train to Belfast without any preparation for life after living in care.
- 106 However, the Good Shepherd Sisters suggested that her reason for leaving was because she had a row with another woman, and that although her recollection was that she was put on a train to Belfast and ended up in East Belfast living on the streets, the Sisters say that she left at her own request and went to a job in the Mater Hospital in Belfast. HIA 387 said that she vaguely remembered staying in a hostel and working in the Mater Hospital.
- 107 The third applicant who described her experiences in Newry was HIA 202, who arrived in August 1973 a week before her sixteenth birthday and left five months later in January 1974 when she went to the Good Shepherd Sisters in Londonderry. She also recalled working in the laundry with older women, and did not recall being paid. She described the atmosphere in Newry as being more relaxed than that in the Good Shepherd in

Londonderry, although she did not recall being allowed out. She said that the food was all right, she was never physically abused, and while there she learnt the guitar.

- 108 She described how she became friendly with a nineteen-year-old boy who was the delivery boy for the laundry. Later he told her that the nuns would not let him see her, and in January she was told by the Mother Superior that he had died. She was so upset by this news that she ran away to England with two other girls. They were traced by the police and were brought back to the Good Shepherd in Newry. She described how she was given the option of returning to her home in Newry, but she felt that by placing her in the Good Shepherd her mother had deserted her so she went to the Good Shepherd in Londonderry and we will consider her experience there later. It is clear that this experience made a profound impact upon her and she describes how it has affected her throughout her life.
- 109 In the Good Shepherd in Newry amenities were provided for the teenage girls in the home, particularly in later years. There was a television, music lessons in their free time and at weekends, and they were encouraged to learn what were seen as useful skills such as embroidery and dress making. A house in Cranfield, Co Down was rented for holidays. SR 281 said that it was smaller than Belfast and she saw it as a family home where nuns interacted very simply and caringly with the girls.
- 110 Although we were satisfied that the practice of silence at meals, relieved only by a nun reading to them, and occasions when they were able to speak on days when that was permitted by the sister in charge, was a poor and outdated practice, we did not feel that the adverse effect was sufficient to amount to systemic abuse.

## **The Good Shepherd in Londonderry**

- 111 Five applicants described their experiences whilst in the Good Shepherd in Londonderry. HIA 107 and HIA 211 were both there in the first half of the 1960s, although HIA 211 continued to live there until 1975. However, her experiences after she reached the age of eighteen in September 1963 are outside our Terms of Reference. HIA 387 was there in the same period. She came from the Good Shepherd in Belfast and spent five months in Londonderry before she went to the Good Shepherd in Newry. HIA 202 and HIA 7 were there in the 1970s. HIA 202 came from the

Good Shepherd in Newry, and we have already referred to her experiences there, and to the experiences of HIA 387 in Belfast and Newry.

## Buildings

- 112 The laundry to which we referred in paragraph 28 was mechanised in the early 1960s.<sup>52</sup> A new chapel was opened in 1958. A new wing was built in the 1930s and was used as the Sacred Heart home for young teenagers until it was closed in 1952.
- 113 In the early 1970s part of this wing was adapted to provide modern hostel facilities for sixteen teenage girls aged fifteen to eighteen. This contained sixteen single rooms, four sitting rooms, a dining room, an office, bathrooms and a kitchenette for the preparation of snacks.<sup>53</sup> The work was completed in 1975 and the hostel became known as the “Bellevue Hostel”. A report by Miss Hill of the Ministry of Home Affairs of her visit to the hostel in July 1975 described the unit as “functional, attractive and well-equipped”.<sup>54</sup> The hostel appears to have been an initiative similar to the Roseville Hostel, which operated in the Good Shepherd in Belfast from 1967 to 1975.

## Numbers

- 114 Although there was accommodation for up to 100 girls aged between fourteen and seventeen, in her, “*Brief Impressions*” report of 28 April 1953 Miss Forrest commented that the convent contained, “only a few teen-aged girls, the rest are older women”.<sup>55</sup> Throughout the 1950s the number of girls under the age of eighteen fluctuated, as can be seen from the statistical returns for 1953 to 1957.
- 1953 – Thirteen over sixteen.
  - 1954 – Ten over sixteen.
  - 1955 – Two over sixteen.
  - 1956 – Five over sixteen.
  - 1957 – Four girls are recorded.
- 115 The number of girls below eighteen in the 1960s appears to have been broadly similar.

---

52 GSC 312.

53 GSC 5330.

54 GSC 5304.

55 HIA 1463.

- May 1962 – Twelve between fifteen and eighteen.
- March 1963 – Eight between fifteen and eighteen and two aged fourteen or under.
- March 1964 – Ten under eighteen.
- March 1965 – Five between three and eighteen, and three aged fourteen or under.
- March 1966 – Three under eighteen.

116 Of those listed in the returns of the 1960s some are described as “welfare cases” and were therefore placed by local authorities, so must have been under eighteen. In the late 1960s such figures as are available refer to “welfare” cases.

- March 1967 – Seven under eighteen.
- March 1969 – Eight welfare children.

117 The few figures available for the 1970s suggests that the number of girls under eighteen was falling, despite the opening of the Bellevue Hostel by 1975. In September 1973, Miss Hill of the Ministry of Home Affairs found only two girls under eighteen, and in July 1975 she only found three girls. The small number of girls in the hostel may explain the willingness of the sisters to consider (and the DHSS to sanction) letting four of the rooms in the hostel to the nearby Altnagelvin Hospital to accommodate nurses.<sup>56</sup> By December 1982 there were only two girls resident in the hostel.<sup>57</sup> The small number of girls in Bellevue Hostel throughout its existence may explain why, like the Roseville Hostel in Belfast, it had a relatively brief existence. It was deregistered as a children’s home on 27 February 1984.<sup>58</sup>

118 Over the three decades covered by the evidence of the applicants to the Inquiry it would seem that those under eighteen made up less than ten percent of the females resident in the Good Shepherd in Londonderry, (excluding of course the Good Shepherd Sisters themselves). Before the opening of the Bellevue Hostel it appears to have been the practice, as in other Good Shepherd institutions, to describe the accommodation for the teenage girls and adult women who lived in the convent as St Mary’s.

---

56 GSC 5304.

57 GSC 6700.

58 GSC 5009.

## The Decision to send HIA 107 to the Good Shepherd in Londonderry

- 119 HIA 107 was just three days short of her twelfth birthday when she was admitted to the Good Shepherd in Londonderry by a Fit Person Order made by Strabane Juvenile Court under Section 13 of the Children and Young Persons Act (Northern Ireland) 1950. She and two other children of similar ages were sent by the Juvenile Court to the Good Shepherd in Derry at the end of 1960. GSC 17 was already there when HIA 107 and GSC 16 were sent there. In HIA 107's case the court order states that she was committed to the care of the Good Shepherd Convent in Londonderry until she was eighteen on the basis that she was in need of care and protection because she was a child "who having a parent not exercising proper care and guardianship is exposed to moral danger".<sup>59</sup>
- 120 It would seem from her account, and from the few court documents now available, that HIA 107 and her two companions came to the notice of the RUC in Strabane, Co Tyrone, because a number of men had taken advantage of their youth to give them money in return for various sexual acts. Although HIA 107 says social services were involved, there are no contemporary records to confirm that Tyrone County Welfare Committee, which was the local welfare authority for Strabane at that time, was involved when HIA 107 and her companions were sent to the Good Shepherd (although there are records that show they were involved some years later). We can only infer that the RUC brought the applications because their investigations led them to believe that the home circumstances of all three children were such that they would not be properly looked after, and prevented from being involved in such matters again, if they were to remain in the care of their parents.
- 121 The Juvenile Court must have been satisfied that was the case when it sent HIA 107 (and presumably the two other girls also) to the Good Shepherd in Londonderry. We appreciate that to place three young girls who, through no fault of their own, had been involved in sexual behaviour in the same children's home might have created difficulty for the home. There is no evidence to explain why the Juvenile Court did not take what we believe to have been the only sensible course in those circumstances and split up the children by sending them to different children's homes. Coneywarren Children's Home in Omagh, Co Tyrone, and the Sisters of

---

59 GSC 3015.

Nazareth Home in Bishop Street, Londonderry, would have been obvious choices for at least two of the children.

- 122 As the Good Shepherd Convent was named in the court order in the case of HIA 107, and because the other two children appear to have been sent there as well at approximately the same time, we can only infer that either the police or the court approached the Good Shepherd Sisters in Londonderry to take the children because they knew that the Good Shepherd Sisters looked after teenagers and unmarried mothers, and therefore that was the appropriate place to send children who had been exposed to some form of sexual behaviour. We also infer that because the practice of the Good Shepherd Sisters was not to refuse anyone they agreed to take HIA 107, GSC 16 and GSC 17. We consider this later.
- 123 In our opinion the only proper places for HIA 107 and the other two children to have been sent would have been childcare centred children's homes such as Coneywarren or Bishop Street. They should not have been sent to a place which was an adjunct of an adult establishment. The decision of the Juvenile Court is not within our Terms of Reference, and so we cannot characterise its order as amounting to systemic abuse within our Terms of Reference. Nevertheless, we must record our regret that the Juvenile Court thought it was appropriate to send at least one child who was a few days short of her twelfth birthday, and apparently two other children of approximately the same age, to a place where they would spend much of their upbringing in an environment dominated by large numbers of adult women working in an industrial laundry.

## Education in the 1960s

- 124 HIA 107 says that she was put to work straight away in the sewing room and SR 49 remembers her working there. HIA 107 recalled that GSC 16 stayed in the sewing room, but she thought GSC 17's mother came for her at some stage and they then went to England.
- 125 HIA 107 said she was not sent to school, as she should have been as she was several years under the school-leaving age, which at that time was fifteen, and when she gave her evidence on Day 189, p.58 she was emphatic that she did not go to school after she arrived in the Good Shepherd in Londonderry. The March 1963 returns to which we earlier referred show that of ten girls under eighteen, two were fourteen or under<sup>60</sup>

---

60 GSC 5844.

and this would be consistent with HIA 107 and GSC 16 still being in the Good Shepherd at that time, when HIA 107 would have been fourteen.

- 126 The same returns list two girls in the column for girls aged five to fifteen as being at school full-time.<sup>61</sup> The returns also state that the complement of seventeen childcare staff in post “includes 3 teachers”.<sup>62</sup> The equivalent entry for 31 March 1965 records three girls aged five to fifteen attending school “full-time”, and notes that they “are educated within the precincts of the Home”.<sup>63</sup> Although by March 1965 HIA 107 was no longer of compulsory school age, she was in March 1964, and it seems likely that she was one of the girls recorded as attending school in 1963 in the Good Shepherd. It therefore appears to be the case that HIA 107 did not leave the premises to go to a nearby school, but was taught in the Good Shepherd by extern teachers and by the Sisters themselves. That may be why she was mistaken in her recollection that she did not receive formal schooling while she was in the Good Shepherd in Londonderry.
- 127 HIA 387 spent five months in the Good Shepherd in Londonderry, arriving on 30 September 1963. She ran away from Londonderry to the Sisters in Belfast on 1 March, and moved to Newry on 2 March 1964. During the five months she spent in the Good Shepherd in Londonderry she was fourteen, and should have attended school because she was still of compulsory school age. The records for the period she was in Londonderry do not throw any light on whether she attended school during her five months there. The 1964 returns do not appear to have survived, but a handwritten Ministry of Home Affairs note covering the ten years from 1963 to 1973 simply records that in 1964 there were six girls under eighteen, none of whom were of school age.<sup>64</sup> As HIA 387 was under school age throughout her time in Londonderry that would suggest that if the 1964 figures are accurate, they were compiled after HIA 387 left Londonderry on 1 March 1964. That is quite possible, because both the 1963 and 1965 returns gave the figures at 31 March in each year.
- 128 HIA 211 was seventeen when she came to the Good Shepherd in Londonderry in June 1963, and as such was well over compulsory school age.

---

61 GSC 5847.

62 GSC 5840.

63 GSC 5828.

64 GSC 5327.

- 129 Such evidence as has survived, albeit limited, is consistent with girls under school-leaving age who were in the Good Shepherd in Londonderry in the early 1960s being taught on the premises, rather than going out to attend local schools. In the written submissions made on behalf of the Congregation following this module the Congregation said that it “regrets this failure to ensure that these three girls were not sent out to external schools”.<sup>65</sup>
- 130 In our opinion it would have been much preferable for the children to have been sent to an external school because they would thereby have had the opportunity to interact with other children of their age, something that is an extremely important part of the process of adolescence. Nevertheless, we are satisfied that they were properly educated, and in those circumstances we do not consider that the failure of the children to attend external schools amounts to a systemic failing to provide proper childcare.

## The Laundry in the 1960s

- 131 All three applicants who were in the Good Shepherd in Londonderry in the 1960s describe working in the laundry in some capacity. HIA 387’s only memory of her time there is of working in the laundry. As she was of compulsory school age throughout her five months in Londonderry, and if she did attend school, she could only have worked in the laundry when she was not at school, such as during school holidays. The same would have applied to HIA 107 until she left school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age in November 1963. As she was sixteen when the Juvenile Court approved an application for her to be released into her brother’s care in Germany, where he was serving with the British Army,<sup>66</sup> she would have worked full-time for about eighteen months before she left in February 1965. HIA 211 was seventeen when she arrived in June 1963 and she recalled working in the laundry during her time in Londonderry. As indicated earlier, she reached the age of eighteen three months after her arrival and so her experiences thereafter fall outside our Terms of Reference.
- 132 We accept that all three applicants worked in the laundry on occasions when they were under the age of eighteen. While HIA 211 was of an age when it would be appropriate for her to work in some capacity, such

---

65 GSC 24017.

66 GSC 3018.

as working in a laundry, we consider that it was wholly inappropriate for HIA 107 or HIA 387 to do so while they were still of school age, even at weekends or on school holidays. **We considered it was unacceptable for such young girls to be expected to do industrial work of this type even if the machinery had been recently modernised. This should not have been permitted by the Good Shepherd Sisters, and we considered this amounted to systemic abuse.**

## Food in the 1960s

- 133 Of the three applicants who were in the Good Shepherd in Londonderry in the 1960s, only HIA 107 and HIA 211 referred to the food. HIA 107 referred to the food in her written statement as “slops”, but when she gave evidence on Day 189, p.82, she said that was a bit of an exaggeration, but the food wasn’t nice. She accepted that they never went hungry, whereas HIA 211 said in her statement that there was never enough food, and she was always hungry at breakfast. The Good Shepherd Sisters said that there was ample food which was simple and nutritious, and we are satisfied that there was no neglect in this respect.

## Penances and the Black Book

- 134 HIA 107 and HIA 211 both recalled how any infringement of rules, or misdemeanours, were noted in a “Black Book”, and at the weekend when the entire community was assembled together the entries in the Black Book were read out, and the offender had to kneel and apologise. The Good Shepherd Sisters accept that this was the practice from the 1950s until the mid-1970s when it was discontinued.<sup>67</sup> It is noteworthy that SR 49, who was in the Good Shepherd in Londonderry during these years, felt that the book “may wound a child’s feelings”,<sup>68</sup> and HIA 107 told the Inquiry that this was “a horrible thing to go through”.<sup>69</sup>
- 135 Another form of punishment described by HIA 107 and HIA 211 was being made to eat a meal standing up; HIA 211 said that this could last for up to a week. SR 49 accepted that this may have happened, but said that it was generally only for one meal, and she felt that it was unlikely that it went on for a full week.

---

67 GSC 316-317.

68 GSC 317-318.

69 Day 189, p.80.

- 136 **We considered the practices of reading out misdemeanours in front of others and making the offender kneel, or making an offender stand to eat her meal, were a form of deliberate humiliation and amounted to emotional abuse.**

## Silence at Meal Times

- 137 HIA 107 and HIA 211 recalled that there was silence at meal times, broken only by a nun reading. We have already described a similar practice in the Good Shepherd in Newry, and the Good Shepherd Sisters accept that it was the practice in Londonderry in the 1950s. We are satisfied that the same practice continued during the 1960s in Londonderry. Although we considered it was a poor and outdated practice, we did not feel that the adverse effect was sufficient to amount to systemic abuse.

## Changing Names

- 138 As in the other Good Shepherd homes we have considered the Good Shepherd Sisters accept that names were changed on admission to the Good Shepherd in Londonderry in order to protect the privacy of the girls, so that others could not become aware of, or pry into, their background before they came to the Good Shepherd Sisters. As we have already explained this practice appears to have applied equally to women over eighteen and to girls under eighteen, and we understand may have been a widespread practice in mother and baby homes, although these are outside our terms of Reference. Although well-intended, this practice caused considerable distress and confusion to those affected. We considered that the practice continued longer in Londonderry than it should have done, and represented poor practice on the part of the Sisters.

## Other Punishments

- 139 HIA 211 said that she was slapped on the face by nuns if she did not eat her meals, and that SR 47 who was the sister in charge of the girls, slapped her on the face for not being able to correctly identify the new decimal coins, and on another occasion because she did not know the words of a song. HIA 107 said that she was never physically abused by SR 47 and did not recall seeing a girl or lady being hit by any nun.<sup>70</sup> SR 49 accepted that SR 47 was "...quite strict. She was firm", but said that in

---

<sup>70</sup> Day 189, p.72.

her time in St Mary's she did not see corporal punishment being inflicted on anyone.<sup>71</sup> Whilst we accept this may have happened, because only six months of HIA 211's time with the Good Shepherd Sisters in Londonderry comes within our Terms of Reference we cannot be satisfied that any such behaviour occurred during that six month period.

## The 1970s

- 140 Two applicants describe their time in the Good Shepherd in Londonderry in the 1970s. HIA 202 came to Londonderry in January 1974 after her time in the Good Shepherd in Newry, which we have already described. She remained in Londonderry for fifteen months until she left in August 1975 when she reached the age of eighteen. As she was over sixteen when she arrived, she was over compulsory school age. She worked in the laundry for which she received pocket money.
- 141 It does not seem that she lived in Bellevue Hostel which opened in 1975, but whether she lived there or in the St Mary's accommodation, she described a much more relaxed atmosphere than that which appears to have existed in the early 1960s. She was allowed home on a number of occasions and she and other girls were allowed to go into town, although she was unsure whether they were actually encouraged to do so. She recalled one night when she and another girl went across the city into the Creggan Estate, and when she returned and was in bed SR 49 came in and struck her on the face.
- 142 She accepted that this was out of character for SR 49 and was a "one-off" incident, and she never saw anyone else slapped. At that time the Creggan Estate was one of the most dangerous places in Londonderry. It was the scene of rioting, explosions and numerous incidents where there were shootings at soldiers by terrorists and soldiers shooting at terrorists. There was therefore a grave risk of anyone in that area being caught up in a violent and potentially fatal incident. To get to the Creggan Estate from the Good Shepherd convent she had to cross from the Waterside area to the opposite bank of the river, and then make her way to the Creggan, a return journey of some miles.
- 143 It is not surprising that SR 49 was extremely upset and frightened by the danger to which HIA 211 had exposed herself by making this journey, and so over-reacted in a way which HIA 211 accepts was out of character. We

---

71 GSC 315.

accept this happened but do not consider that in these circumstances SR 49's behaviour amounted to systemic abuse.

- 144 HIA 7 was the only other applicant who was in the Good Shepherd in Londonderry. Her circumstances were somewhat unusual. Her mother arranged for her to be placed in the Good Shepherd for two short periods. The first was for five weeks from December 1976 until late January 1977, and the second was for three weeks in November 1978, by which time HIA 7 was sixteen.
- 145 HIA 7 says that before she was admitted to the Good Shepherd her mother took her to see the family GP and asked him to check HIA 7's virginity. The doctor was not appointed by, or acting at the request of, the Good Shepherd Sisters and we need not refer to this any further. As HIA 7 was only just fourteen when she was admitted on the first occasion she was still of compulsory school age, although two of the five weeks she spent at that time would have been the Christmas holidays. In her statement she said that she went to school while she was in the Good Shepherd.
- 146 In HIA 7's second period in the Good Shepherd in Londonderry she was only there for three weeks. She described how she worked in the laundry, and that some of the older women were bullies. She was allocated to work with SR 49 in the kitchen because she was being bullied, and says that it was SR 49 who arranged for her to be admitted to Coneywarren Children's Home in Omagh where she went at the end of her short stay in the Good Shepherd and where she was very happy.

## Positive Accounts

- 147 HIA 7 recalled how a number of girls in the Good Shepherd told her that SR 49 had made positive changes to the place, and we have already referred to the improvements made to the living accommodation in the 1970s with the creation of the Bellevue Hostel. We should also record that we accept the evidence that from the mid to late 1960s onwards there were classes provided for all the women, including the children under eighteen who are within our Terms of Reference, in various skills such as typing and embroidery. SR 49 described music as a core part of life in St Mary's and girls were encouraged to take part in choirs and musicals. There was a recreation room with a TV, and in the summer there were holidays in Rathmullan, and later in Rossnowlagh, both in Co Donegal.

## Admission of Young Children

- 148 The matter which troubled us most in relation to the Good Shepherd in Londonderry was the admission of very young children. While accepting that HIA 7 may have been a special case because she was only there for five weeks between December 1976 and January 1977, and that was perhaps understandable in view of the policy of the Good Shepherd Sisters of never turning anyone away, the same cannot be said for children such as HIA 107. HIA 107, GSC 16 and GSC 17 were very young when they were admitted in 1960, and the figures available would suggest that subsequently other children around fourteen years of age were admitted.
- 149 In its general submissions relating to all its homes the Congregation “accepts that having teenagers with adult women was not ideal”, but they point out that efforts “were made within the existing facilities to make suitable safeguarding arrangements for those teenagers”.<sup>72</sup>
- 150 We consider that an institution consisting predominantly of adult women working in a laundry was an entirely inappropriate place to bring up children as young as twelve. We recognise that in Londonderry HIA 107 (and it seems GSC 16 and GSC 17) were placed there under a court order, but we are in no doubt that the Good Shepherd Sisters should have refused to take the children on a permanent basis. **By accepting them on a long-term basis, which turned out to be over four years in the case of HIA 107, the Good Shepherd Sisters failed to ensure that proper care was provided for these children and that was a systemic failing on their part.**

## Inspections

- 151 Although very few inspection reports of the Good Shepherd in Londonderry have survived, it is clear from occasional references in other documents that it was regularly inspected by inspectors from the Ministry of Home Affairs in the 1950s, 1960s and early 1970s. That was also the position for the Good Shepherd in Belfast and in Newry. Thereafter the responsibility for such inspections transferred to the SWAG (Social Work Advisory Group) of the DHSS. As we consider in greater detail in Chapter 2 (Finance and Governance) the SWAG did not carry out regular inspections of children’s homes until at least the late 1970s, **and its failure to do so in relation**

---

72 GSC 24013.

**to each of the three Good Shepherd Sisters Homes was a systemic failing.**

- 152 Whilst no inspection reports of the Good Shepherd in Londonderry now exist for the early 1960s, we are satisfied that it was regularly inspected during that time. If there were inspections when HIA 107 and her companions, and other children under school leaving age, were living there, there is nothing to suggest that the inspectors expressed concern that such young children were living in an entirely unsuitable environment, or recommended that they be moved to a more suitable environment such as the Sisters of Nazareth in Bishop Street or a statutory home. In its response to the Inquiry Warning Letter the Department of Health argues that HIA 107 and her companions were deemed by a court not to be suitable for placement in a traditional children's home, and because the placement was in accordance with the contemporaneous advice of the Children's Welfare Council, there should not be a finding of systemic failing on the part of the Ministry of Home Affairs. We do not agree. Notwithstanding that a court order had been made, by the 1960s it should have been appreciated by all concerned, especially the inspectors, that it was completely unacceptable to place children under school leaving age in an institution of this type. These children should not have been there. If the inspectors did not detect this they failed in their duty to properly inspect. If they were aware and did not take any steps to try to get the order changed, they were equally at fault.

## Administering Authority

- 153 There was also a failure for many years to appreciate that the Good Shepherd Sisters was the administering authority for each of the three homes, and as such obliged to put in place a system of monthly visitors as required by the Voluntary Home's Regulations. It appears that it was a SWAG inspection of Marianville in Belfast in 1984 that first brought the absence of such a system to light,<sup>73</sup> after which the position was rectified and a system of monthly visitors put in place.<sup>74</sup> **The absence of such a system is a systemic failing by the Good Shepherd Sisters. The failure to detect that absence was a systemic failing on the part of the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Social Work Advisory Group.**

---

73 GSC 6408.

74 GSC 6434.

## Apology by the Good Shepherd Sisters

154 In her evidence on behalf of the Congregation on Day 194, Sr Ethna said:

“...we all would like to communicate to the Panel and the Inquiry that we welcome this Inquiry. We appreciate -- we appreciate it is important for all voices to be heard and we regret that some of our former residents have painful memories of the time spent in our care. Our Sisters have maintained contact with some of the applicants and many other former residents over the years, and we remain open to engaging with former residents in a pastoral context, and we hope that through our cooperation with the Inquiry and through any future pastoral outreach to former residents, who have painful memories of time spent in the care of Good Shepherd, that they may find healing.”

## Conclusion

155 We have concluded that there were the following systemic failings on the part of The Congregation of the Good Shepherd Sisters.

- **It was unacceptable for young girls under the age of eighteen to be expected to do industrial work in the Good Shepherd laundries.**
- **Permitting girls to be asked by a priest whether each was a virgin.**
- **The practices of reading out misdemeanours in front of others and making the offender kneel, or making an offender stand to eat her meal.**
- **By accepting children under school-leaving age, such as HIA 107 and her companions, into one Good Shepherd institution that was not completely child-centred in the way that other Good Shepherd institutions were designed to be on a long-term basis the Good Shepherd Sisters failed to ensure that proper care was provided for these children.**
- **The failure of SWAG to carry out inspections of each of the three Good Shepherd Sisters Homes was a systemic failing.**
- **The failure of each of the three Good Shepherd Sisters Homes to put in place a system of monthly visitors was a systemic failing.**

- 156 Systemic failings by the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- **Failing to take steps to prevent children under school-leaving age, such as HIA 107 and her companions, being in the Good Shepherd on a long-term basis.**
- 157 Systemic failings on the part of the Ministry of Home Affairs and/or the DHSS.
- **Failing to detect the absence of a system of monthly visitors was a systemic failing on the part of the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Social Work Advisory Group.**